TeachingEnglish

Gender and Sexuality in English Language Education: Focus on Poland

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British Council statement

Introduction

Is English as a foreign language (EFL) education inflected by gender and/or sexuality? Some teachers might see little – if any – connection between the three. Others will recall instances of, for example, non-normative themes during their classes, as this teacher reported while participating in a Facebook discussion with other members of an English teachers' group:

7-year-olds. We're playing a memory game. The word: 'gate'.[1]

Amanda: Miss, what is gay?

Me: It's a man who loves other men more than women.

Amanda: Well, my mother's got a gay friend. And he dresses well and goes partying with her.

Sara: Well, then gay in Polish is gentleman.

I've got the best job in the world. I swear :)

7-latki: Gramy w memory. Słowo 'gate'.

Amanda: Proszę Pani, a co to jest gej?

Ja: To pan, który bardziej kocha panów niż kobiety.

Amanda: No, a moja mama ma kolegę geja. I on się ładnie ubiera i chodzi z nią na imprezy.

Sara: No, to gej po polsku to gentleman.

Ja mam najlepszą pracę na świecie. Przysięgam :)

Such classroom exchanges constitute powerful evidence that children from an early age are genuinely interested in all spheres of life and are able to use language (including a foreign language) to communicate their need to know all sorts of things. Students, and EFL students in particular, learn about the world from textbooks and classroom talk, and these two perspectives weave their way through this book. While we acknowledge the importance of teacher–student classroom interaction and students' own agency, we also aim to highlight the special role of the teacher in communication and negotiation of various diversity-inclusive themes, especially in the light of recent findings concerning reasons for discrimination within the schooling environment in the EU (European Commission, 2015) and – importantly – in Poland (Gawlicz et al., 2015). We strongly believe that inclusiveness within the classroom is a must. Without it, some students will feel marginalised; with it, all students are much more likely to feel wanted and appreciated, which is surely fundamental to realising their full learning potential. In the recent words of the OECD:

> There is a growing body of evidence that shows that the highest-performing education systems are those that combine equity and quality. Equity in education is achieved when personal or social circumstances, such as gender, ethnic origin or family background, do not hinder achieving educational potential (fairness) and all individuals reach at least a basic minimum level of skills (inclusion) (2012: 11).

We hope that this book will be of use to practising teachers, teacher educators, policy makers, textbook writers and illustrators, publishers, series editors and reviewers, by raising their awareness of gender- and sexuality-related issues in actual and potential relation to the EFL classroom. It is our contention that broad and deep improvement is required. For this reason we conclude the book by offering constructive, realistic and practical guidelines for all these stakeholders. Various materials in the form of fliers and brochures are also freely available online at www.wa.amu.edu.pl/eflproject/.

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[1] We have received permission to use this Facebook post. The author's name has been removed, and the students' names have been replaced with English-sounding ones to ensure anonymity.

1

What are the issues?

1.1 What is gender?

Leaving aside the notion of *grammatical* gender*,* the word *gender* is used in different ways in English. Least productive of these, we suggest, is as a 'polite' synonym of *biological sex,* as in the phrase 'the two genders'. Certainly gender is associated with people of different biological sexes, but with ideas of learning, socialisation, social construction and representation rather than what is innate (musculature, genes and sexual characteristics, for example). We can thus talk about the 'gendering' of social groups and individuals, and 'gendered' social practices, and mean that the notion of biological sex is being *made* relevant in some, perhaps prescriptive, way.

The notion of gender as applied to human individuals, and hence almost inevitably associated with biological sex, is what Jane Sunderland (2011) has called 'Model 1' of gender (a 'people-based' model). While it is reasonable to refer to someone's 'gender identity' – their sense of themselves as a woman, man, girl or boy – the danger with neatly equating gender with actual 'sexed' human individuals is that the popular, and often academic, focus then tends to be on 'gender differences', a politically unhelpful notion (see Cameron, 1992). Slightly better is the phrase 'gender tendencies', as differences are rarely absolute, there is huge variation among women and among men, and 'gender similarities' (in many contexts) are in fact the order of the day. Other caveats to this model are that gender tendencies vary with culture, context and community of practice (see Section 1.4); that gender is not fixed, as 'gendering' is on-going throughout our lifetimes, and hence is always in a state of flux; and that human beings are not passively 'socially constructed' but themselves always have a *measure* of agency and potential for resistance (we are not 'victims of socialisation'). We look at these points in more detail below.

'Social construction' is more subtle than 'socialisation', connoting not only agency but also influence beyond childhood and adolescence. The notion of the 'social construction of gender' has been particularly important for gender and language study, as it entails the idea that language and language use could also have a role in this construction – reversing the old sociolinguistic idea that sex/gender, and variables such as class and age, were simply reflected in language use. An extreme example of social construction of gender from language is found in Kira Hall's classic (1995) study of sex workers, in which a male employee, Andy, successfully impersonated women, in ways which his (heterosexual) male clients enjoyed.

Andy's success was due to certain ideas about how women talk – how they do and/or should. But these ideas are likely to be variable and contingent – Andy was 'being' a female *sex-worker* – and ideological. We can therefore see Model 2 of gender as being not people-based but *ideas-based,* where the ideas are about women, men, boys, girls and/or gender relations, and are socially and ideologically shaped. Sunderland (2011) recalls part of an announcement by a chief purser on a flight: 'I'm joined this evening by two lovely young ladies, Vicky and Jo'. The speaker was constructing the flight attendants' gender as relevant to (at least some of) his passengers, but was able to do so 'successfully' given hegemonic ideas about gender, sexuality and indeed gender and power relations on a commercial airline. It is then possible to talk about gender and language in terms of *what* is said (or written) and *how*, rather than by *whom*. Gender may here be indexed directly (e.g. 'He doesn't behave like a real boy should') or indirectly (e.g. 'My daughter's really keen on football' – spoken in a worried tone). This is to see language as *discourse,* in which meaning is identifiable through all relevant aspects of the context in which the spoken or written language in question occurs, and which, for post-structuralism (see Foucault, 1972) and critical discourse analysis (see Fairclough, 1992), is constitutive – in this case, of gender identity and gender relations. In this book we also refer to *discourses* – socially informed ways of seeing the world – in relation to language education and gender and/or sexuality.

To the important notions of *gender relations* and *gender identity,* we can add that of *gender representation.* The notion of representation is usually applied to written, visual or multimodal texts, but we can also see gender as represented in talk.

1.2 Gender and sexuality

Over the last two decades, the study of language and gender has expanded conceptually to take on board the notion of *sexuality*, such that the second edition of the Wiley-Blackwell *Handbook of Gender and Language* (2003) is entitled *The Handbook of Language, Gender, and Sexuality* (2014). This is not just because of the rise in Lesbian and Gay Studies and of Queer Theory, but also because of an increasing recognition of the intertwined nature of gender and sexuality – whether we are talking about sexuality as identity, practice (linguistic and otherwise) and/or desire (Kulick, 2014; Queen, 2014; Cameron and Kulick, 2003). Helen Sauntson (2008: 274) refers to the 'unique relationship' between gender and sexuality, exemplified by Paul Baker's observation that 'A masculine man is expected (or required) to be heterosexual. A feminine man is usually ... regarded as homosexual ... masculine women are usually regarded as lesbians' (2008: 7). Sauntson writes: 'once we begin to examine real-life language practices, gender and sexuality intersect to such an extent that it becomes impossible to separate them in linguistic analysis' (2008: 274). A useful reminder of this is Baker's observation that 'one way that people are expected to express their gender is through their sexual behaviours and desires' (2008: 7). These are highly heteronormative (see Section 1.3), so that in some contexts, for example, men who do not visit prostitutes or use heterosexual pornography, or at least do not talk about these, may risk being seen as 'unmasculine' and may behave and/or talk accordingly to avoid precisely this (see also Cameron, 1996).

When talking about sexuality it is important to look at what is often seen as transgressive behaviour, and at the consequences of this, which can be severe. While in some cultural contexts two men walking down the street holding hands is now an unremarkable sight (though of course this is not always a sign of gayness), in others, homosexuality is punishable by death. At the same time, female homosexuality has always been less disapproved of than male, to the point of denial of its existence – a likely downplaying of women's sexual desire more generally.

Sexuality is important in the EFL classroom for different reasons. It is likely that one or more learners in a given class of teenagers or adults will be gay, as indeed may the teacher. As the language classroom is one in which any topic is potentially relevant (e.g. for a written exercise, for oral discussion), and most topics involve humans in some way, and human relationships, not only gender- but also sexuality-related issues are likely to arise. These may be planned, or otherwise, and the teacher will need to be prepared for both. This is of course not only because we do not want to offend non-heterosexual participants; it is about what might be called 'diversity education' for all (see Gray, 2013a).

1.3 Sexuality and heteronormativity

With very few exceptions, one being *Framework Level 3* by Ben Goldstein and Ceri Jones (2003), no mainstream textbooks include representations of explicitly gay characters, for example, in dialogues, or even in reading comprehension texts (say) on the topic of sexuality, or gay rights as a dimension of human rights. This is a factor of the global market for language textbooks (see Gray, 2013b), and EFL books as big business, but is in contrast to the familiar discussion of gender and of women's rights in textbooks, as well as to such discourse in the public domain more generally (as we write, Ireland has just held a referendum which is now ushering in legalised same-sex marriage).

Many people are familiar with the notion of *homophobia,* i.e. hatred of gay people, a hatred which may be manifested in language, other behaviour, or even outwardly not at all. Homophobia is unlikely to be an issue in textbooks, given the absence of characters represented as gay, although it may occur in classroom talk. More subtle and less well known is the notion of *heteronormativity,* i.e. assuming that or behaving and talking as if everyone is heterosexual. People who are aware of and condemn homophobia, and whose language and other behaviour is not homophobic, nevertheless often act in a way which espouses heteronormativity. A simple example is someone asking a teenage boy if he has a girlfriend, or a teenage girl if she has a boyfriend, questions which are likely to be highly irritating (if familiar) to a gay teenager, whether or not they are 'out' in one or more communities of practice (see below). Heteronormativity is ubiquitous, and dominant in Hollywood films (especially rom-coms) and soap operas, so it is unsurprising to find heteronormativity thriving in everyday talk (see Motschenbacher, 2010, 2011).

It is however possible to talk about *degrees* of heteronormativity, in textbooks and in talk (see also Chapter 5). For example, constant textbook representations of nuclear families with a married mum and dad, with a son and a daughter, can be seen as *highly* heteronormative, as can continual storylines featuring heterosexual romance and weddings, and the teacher's 'top of the head' examples have potential for this too. Written and visual representations of mixed-sex groups of adult and teenage friends are much less heteronormative, as they open up the possibility of different readings, which are then available for class discussion. Representations of single-sex pairs of teenagers and adults can be seen as *even* less heteronormative, for the same reason.

1.4 The EFL classroom as a community of practice

First introduced in 1991 by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in the field of education, the community of practice (CofP) notion was introduced to gender and language study by Penny Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet (1992), where it has been very influential. CofP is related to the broad notion of context and a more specific one of culture, but acts as a reminder that within contexts and cultures, and often across cultures, other groupings exist – including online ones. A CofP can be very small (for example, a book club) or very large (for example, a Facebook English teachers group). The 'practice' notion includes both linguistic practices and other (associated) practices. Book club members discuss a book – but whether they discuss other things too will depend on the specific group. Is the discussion a free-for-all, or is there some sort of chair? Is there food? Prepared by whom? Wine? Brought by whom? When are these consumed? And how does someone actually join a book group? Again, these will be specific to the group in question. Facebook users, for example, use language (actually languages, and sometimes code-switching) to communicate, but other practices include 'liking' a post, and adding (and 'unfriending') friends.

The implication of the CofP notion for language and gender study is in part ideological, as taking it on board means that it is then no longer possible to generalise about women in a particular culture or broad context. A woman may, for example, be in a powerful position in her family (one CofP), a chair of the board of governors (another CofP) at her children's school, but a secretary on the lowest grade at work (a third CofP). These different CofPs are more generally associated with different forms and degrees of power for women, but also with different sets of linguistic practices.

A foreign language classroom can also be a CofP, constituted by a host of linguistic and other practices. While some of these may be unpredictable, many will be familiar and recurring. If the foreign language in question is English, and if the students share a mother tongue, what is the (official and unofficial) role of the mother tongue in the class? What functions does it have? As regards non-linguistic practices, do the students stand up when the teacher comes in? As regards gender, does the teacher tend to assign certain tasks or roles, academic or otherwise, to female and to male students? If so, is this accepted, or resisted?

1.5 Naturally occurring classroom interaction

In gender and language study (and indeed in the social sciences generally) it is important to make a distinction between what is naturally occurring behaviour and what is elicited (and also what is represented – see Section 1.6). Naturally occurring behaviour is basically 'what would have happened anyway', including what is said, written, or otherwise done, whether or not a researcher was investigating it. Most lessons are naturally occurring, even ones used for data collection – in that even if the researcher's presence may affect the participants somewhat, that lesson itself as it plays out would broadly have taken place in the normal course of events. In this study and book we are concerned in part with such naturally occurring behaviour. Something that would not have happened anyway, such as a researcher's interview with a teacher, results in elicited data. Other examples are questionnaire data, and focus group data. Both interview and questionnaire elicited data are relevant to this study and book: both needed a researcher to come along to bring this data into being.

Lessons in classrooms, like most public events, are mostly not only naturally occurring, but also typically interactive. Even if a given lesson consists mostly of teacher talk, that teacher cannot but consider their students in the delivery. More often, the teacher will ask questions and students will usually answer; sometimes students ask the teacher questions; sometimes students interact with each other, in on-task pair or group work; often there will be off-task talk among students. All these are forms of classroom interaction. In a mixed-sex classroom, all can be gendered: are there, for example, identifiable patterns in the way the teacher addresses male and female students?

1.6 Representation and construction

Representation is *of* someone or something (an individual, social group, or institutional practice) *by* someone(s) (an individual, social group, or institution) and *in* a certain way. This 'certain way' extends to talk, writing, images, and hence discourse more widely. For example, members of a certain ethnic group may be represented stereotypically in the talk of one speaker, and in a nuanced way in the talk of another – perhaps the first person's interlocutor. Representation can then involve articulating particular discourses. This is to an extent a matter of choice, i.e. of selection from available possibilities – something that applies in classroom talk too. For example, the teacher may (or may not) refer to male and female students as members of specific social groups (stereotypically: 'Can some strong men help me move this table?'), and may (or may not) pit boys and girls against each other, in, say, a quiz. To do so is to explicitly represent men and women, or boys and girls, as different, hence downplaying the many 'cross-gender' similarities.

More usually, though, representation is seen as evident in written, visual and multimodal texts. In the language classroom, this most usually refers to textbooks, but also to other pedagogical materials such as teacher's books, grammars, dictionaries, workbooks, worksheets, and of course online as well as print versions. Gender representation in language textbooks has been a focus of research for several decades now, and a shift towards 'fairer' gender representation evidenced (see Mustapha and Mills, 2015). The representation of sexuality in textbooks is a newer, and more controversial topic, and one we address in Chapter 5.

The word *representation* is sometimes used interchangeably with *construction*. While there is a profound debate to be had here, in this book we take as given that *construction* entails that a given representation may also reflect, in some way, but can also construct (to use these verbs non-transitively), perhaps newly, certainly on the printed page, screen or in the words, but also perhaps in the mind or even behaviour of the reader, viewer or hearer. Of course, a single multimodal text, such as an advertisement, alone is unlikely to have much constructive (or 'constitutive') power, but in conjunction with a range of related texts certainly has such potential. This is not, of course, to equate construction with determinism, as readers, viewers and listeners can (to different degrees) resist the representations they are exposed to, and many have the ability to experience them critically.

1.7 Masculinities and femininities

To see masculinity in a stereotypical way as associated with (say) men's strength and femininity with (say) women's prettiness is to grossly oversimplify the notions of masculinity and femininity. What is *feminine* is more accurately that which is seen as saliently associated with women and girls; what is *masculine* is that which is saliently associated with men and boys. This will vary with both culture and context.

Within any culture or context there will be a range of masculinities and femininities. Two which have received considerable treatment, including debate, in the literature are 'hegemonic masculinity' (often, these days: white, professional class, moneyed and, crucially, heterosexual) (Connell, 1987; Kiesling, 1997, 2002) and 'emphasised femininity' (less clear-cut, but again, crucially heterosexual) (Connell, 1987; Coates, 2008). In addition to these will be a range of 'subordinate' masculinities and other femininities. These also vary over time. For example, in the past and in some contexts today, hegemonic masculinity was/is very closely associated with physical strength; these days, in many contexts, it is not.

In the classroom, a relevant identity is a broadly academic one. However, while the institution and the teacher may welcome this in their students, the students themselves may not wish to embrace (even temporarily) an academic identity. Gender may be relevant here, with 'academic femininity' being more acceptable than 'academic masculinity' in some classrooms, and the reverse obtaining in others. The foreign language classroom can be seen as an 'already gendered' site in that in many cultures and contexts, once language learning is a matter of choice, or of subject selection, classrooms tend to be populated by women and girls. Language learning itself may then appear or be experienced as 'feminine' in nature, with particular implications for the (gender) identity of any male students (see Sunderland, 2000a, 2000b).

Masculinities and femininities may also frequently be represented or constructed in the language classroom, perhaps most obviously in the textbook, as discussed above, but also in the teacher's talk (for instance, in their examples). Questions here concern the range of masculinities/femininities represented, including whether these are all heterosexual ones.

1.8 'Gender differences', 'gender similarities' and 'gender-blindness'

In Section 1.1 we pointed to the notion of 'gender differences', so frequently encountered in popular (for example, media) discourse, and we suggested that 'tendencies' might be a more accurate term. More important, however, is surely the notion of 'gender similarities': men and women, like boys and girls, have far more in common than they do not; otherwise, linguistically, we simply would not understand each other. Research frequently seeks but also frequently fails to find statistically significant 'gender differences'; accordingly, we argue that the notion of 'gender similarities' is underexplored, and, we would also argue, when similarities are found, they should be welcomed (Sunderland, 2015a). While the notion of gender differences may be popular, it is unhelpful in terms of social progress generally, gender relations and gender equality in particular, and in hindering the opening-up of the widest possible range of occupations and activities (broadly speaking) to women, men, boys and girls regardless of biological sex.

At the same time, there may be occasions when the notion of 'gender tendencies' is useful, and not only for strategic reasons. 'Gender blindness' refers broadly to not making a distinction between women and men, boys and girls, and accordingly not 'making gender relevant' in discourse or representation. At first glance this may sound like a progressive concept, equivalent to fair and equal treatment. It is not always so, however. Let us say, for example, that boys in a class consistently receive lower marks than girls. This may be for a host of reasons, including that the boys in question are unmotivated, or lack ability. But it may be that the teacher is (for some reason) marking the boys down. To fail to investigate this situation (in which 'gender tendencies' need to identified, explored and addressed) would be to be gender-blind, in an unhelpful and unprofessional way.

1.9 Educational disadvantage

As suggested above, if there are gender tendencies in some aspect of language education, in particular in the classroom, these may not only be a question of social variation, but of actual disadvantage. For example, if, in a mixed-sex secondary foreign language classroom, the teacher pays more attention to boys than to girls, or allows girls to talk in the foreign language more than boys, this may be a source of academic disadvantage to girls, and boys, respectively. If there is a quantitative imbalance of represented girls and boys, women and men, in language textbooks, this may adversely affect students' self-image. If equal numbers are represented, but women and men, girls and boys are represented in stereotypical, limited or degrading ways, this may similarly affect self-image, as may a relentless, unchallenged heteronormativity for those (many) students who are not heterosexual. Indeed, it may also be a source of irritation and perceived unfairness for those students who are heterosexual. Of course, students respond to different things in different ways; the same gendered/sexualised representation or (recurring) discursive event will affect different students differently, but it is important for teachers to be vigilant (i.e. not gender-blind) here.

1.10 *Gender and Sexuality in English Language Education: Focus on Poland;* this study and this book

In the rest of this book we discuss the above issues in depth, taking as data texts and talk from various Polish educational contexts. Poland is important in this respect: English is taught as a foreign language but an important one, given globalisation and Poland's membership of the European Union. It is the most commonly chosen modern foreign language from year one in primary, *gimnazjum* [2] and high schools and is allocated a substantial number of hours within the core obligatory number of hours within a given school year. For instance, in *gimnazjum*, out of 16 core subjects, modern foreign languages are allocated 15.9 per cent of class time (450 out of 2,825 hours), while in high school, out of 16 core subjects, foreign languages are allocated 16.6 per cent of class time (450 out of 2,700 hours). Each *gimnazjum* and high school is obliged to offer at least two modern foreign languages, and all students need to take two different language courses, the relative total duration of which are regulated by the principal of a given school. [3]

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[2] *Gimnazjum* is a three-year school in the Polish educational system between primary school and high school.
[3] http://men.gov.pl/pl/zycie-szkoly/ksztalcenie-ogolne/ramowe-plany-nauczania (accessed 31 May 2015).

However, despite the importance of the social world in language education (e.g. in textbook content, and in role plays), gender and sexuality have become virtually taboo concepts. In education generally the notion of 'gender' has of late taken an interesting but highly problematic twist – as we show in Chapter 3 – and sexuality can be a cause of bullying; indeed, next to poverty it is the main reason for bullying (Gawlicz et al., 2015). This makes it difficult for EFL materials, and for teachers, as mediators of foreign culture, to follow/reflect in particular modern European socio-cultural and legal changes concerning civil partnerships and same-sex marriage. At the same time, relatively little work has been done on gender in language education in Poland (but see Jaworski, 1983, 1986, and also Section 3.4).

Our study is based around three research questions. These are:

RQ 1: How are gender and sexuality portrayed verbally and visually in a selection of Polish EFL textbooks?

RQ 2: How are gender and sexuality manifested in teacher-student and student-student spoken interaction (a) in relation to EFL textbooks, and (b) more generally? Do teachers and students draw on gender ideologies? If so, how?

RQ 3: How do three groups of language education stakeholders, i.e. students, teachers and Ministry of Education textbook reviewers, respond to examples of gender and sexuality portrayals in textbooks? How do students and teachers respond to cases of classroom interaction related to gender and/or sexuality?

We address our findings in relation to these questions in Chapters 5–8.

In the next chapter, Chapter 2, we review work on gender and sexuality research in EFL to date, looking at classroom interaction, classroom materials, 'talk around the textbook text', and sexuality (how this has been addressed, and needed developments), and we also consider the notion of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991; Block and Corona, 2014) in relation to sexism and homophobia.

Chapter 3 is on the Polish context: politics and education. Considering the broad educational context, we also look at current struggles around 'gender' and the current 'ideology of gender', and at the notions of and practices around diversity and ex/inclusion in the world of education. We also review Adam Jaworski's early (1983, 1986) exceptional studies of sexism in Polish as a foreign language and Polish EFL textbooks.

Chapter 4 documents the methodology of our empirical study of gender and sexuality in Polish EFL classrooms, including details of data selection (which textbooks, which participants), collection (what we did in the classrooms) and generation/ elicitation (how we conducted our interviews and focus groups).

In Chapter 5 we report and discuss our findings as regards gender and sexuality representation in textbooks (RQ 1).

In Chapter 6 we look at what teachers and students 'do' with these representations in classroom talk (if anything) and if, when and how classroom talk in general 'makes gender and/or sexuality relevant' (RQ 2).

In Chapter 7 we draw on focus group and interview data to represent the perspectives of three key EFL 'stakeholders': students, teachers, and Ministry of Education reviewers who evaluate published teaching materials (RQ 3).

Finally, in Chapter 8, we make some concluding comments as well as some all-important recommendations: for EFL teachers, teacher educators, Ministry of Education officials and materials designers.

2

Gender and sexuality research in EFL to date: a review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter we look at different dimensions of language education research as regards gender and sexuality. We start by considering classroom interaction, then move on to language teaching/learning materials in the form of textbooks. These aspects of language education are not discrete, and we also look at 'talk around the textbook text'. We then focus on issues of sexuality, hitherto much neglected, and conclude the chapter with a consideration of intersectionality – for this book, sexism and homophobia – in language education.

2.2 Classroom interaction

Classroom interaction, a basic tool for social life and meaning-making in the classroom, has been a salient topic in the literature on language and gender in educational contexts (Menard-Warwick et al., 2014: 472). Below we look at classroom interaction in terms of two dyads, i.e., teacher–student and student–student. One of the most significant characteristics of classroom interaction is, however, that even student–student talk is often mediated (if not directly controlled) by the teacher (Swann, 2011: 162; see also Gardner, 2013).

Of course, much teacher–student talk is actually teacher–students, i.e. whole-class talk. But what does this (not) consist of? In our conversations with EFL teachers (both male and female) who participated in the project, we often heard comments such as 'Oh, I only teach English, there is nothing related to gender in my classes'. This view aligns with Gabriele Linke's (2007) claim that a great deal of the neglect of gendered features of the target language can be attributed to teachers' preoccupation with the 'language issue' itself:

> … the constant struggle by language learners and language teachers to find the right words and the appropriate grammatical forms to satisfy even basic communicative needs leaves little scope to take account of non-sexist language (2007: 137).

Comments such as 'I only teach English' aptly summarise EFL teachers' lack of awareness of the various ways in which gender (and other social categories) *is* often unconsciously drawn on in the acts of teaching and learning. EFL teachers, whether they like it or not, are constantly teaching about society, which to a great extent entails teaching about gender and may involve reinforcing, for instance, the often subordinate role of girls and women and the often dominant role of boys and men (Freeman and McElhinny, 1996: 261; see also Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015; Swann, 2011). While Linke (2007; see also Sunderland, 2000a, 2000b) comments on the low profile of gender in foreign language teaching, Helene Decke-Cornill and Laurenz Volkmann (2007: 7) argue that 'gender [in foreign language teaching] continues to be conceived in a trivialised, everyday, unquestioned form, and the common-sense belief in an essentialist, self-evident existence of 'women' and 'men' remains uncontested', a claim with which we would agree.

Students' classroom interactional behaviour can be influenced by 'gender as a system of social relations and discursive practices' (Pavlenko and Piller, 2001: 23). Following the tenets of feminist poststructuralism (Pavlenko, 2004: 55; see also Baxter, 2008), we see gender as playing *different* and *changing* roles in foreign and second language teaching, roles which may disadvantage female students in different ways – but do not always do so.

Classroom interaction research details potential gender differences in student talk to other students or teachers, as well as differential tendencies in the way teachers talk to female and male students. At the same time, and rather differently, it also explores multiple teacher and student identities (Menard-Warwick et al., 2014: 473; also Sunderland, 2000a).

Early studies of the gendered nature of *student talk* to the teacher typically found that male students tended to talk more to the teacher than do female students (e.g. Sadker and Sadker, 1985; see also French and French, 1984). Jane Sunderland (2000a: 159) further notes that in the 1970s and 1980s, many studies of *teacher talk* in all sorts of classrooms found that both male and female teachers talked far more to the male than to the female students (Merrett and Wheldall, 1992; Croll, 1985; Spender, 1980, 1982; see also Swann, 2011). In a meta-analysis of 81 such studies, Alison Kelly (1988: 20) concluded that:

> It is now beyond dispute that girls receive less of the teacher's attention in class … It applies in all age groups … in several countries, in various socioeconomic groupings, across all subjects in the curriculum, and with both male and female teachers…

Such findings were often interpreted as evidence for and a manifestation of male dominance, or for male students receiving preferential treatment. Yet as Sunderland (2000b) observes, more attention being given to male students involves a collaborative process between teacher and students rather than intentional behaviour (see also Swann and Graddol, 1988; Swann, 2011). Consequently, such behaviour should be referred to as 'differential teacher treatment by gender' rather than 'discrimination' or 'favouritism'.[4]

Sunderland (2000b: 208) also pointed to the distinction between amount of attention and kind of attention in 'the provision of learning opportunities', noting that Kelly (1988) had found that the larger part of teacher attention being paid to boys was disciplinary rather than academic. She also asks whether any 'differential treatment by gender' apparently in favour of male students may be less salient, or less relevant, in a foreign language classroom, in which women and girls often do well (Arnot et al., 1996; Menard-Warwick et al., 2014). Yet relatively few studies have been conducted in foreign language classrooms. In her own research in a German as a foreign language classroom, Sunderland (1996, 1998) examined the ways in which the boys and girls spoke to the teacher. Although overall gender similarity was more evident, two cases of statistically significant gender difference were: (1) the 'average girl' produced more 'solicit-words'[5] than the 'average boy'; (2) when the teacher asked a question without naming a student to answer it, the 'average girl' volunteered significantly more answers in German than did the 'average boy'. The point is

that male students may be more forthcoming in some ways, female students in another, and in most ways there may be no statistically significant gender difference at all.

Indeed, most studies demonstrate no conclusive differential tendencies between men and women or boys and girls in classroom interaction. For example, Shujung Lee's (2001) research (cited in Menard-Warwick et al., 2014) on how instructors directed talk to students in a Taiwanese college found they did not favour either men or women, and Terese Thonus (1999, similarly cited) found that in US college contexts tutors did not change strategies when speaking to male and female students. And yet Julia Menard-Warwick and colleagues in their recent (2014) overview of language, gender and education research concluded that:

> … although the quest for generalisable gender differences is considered passé by many researchers in the language and gender field, studies comparing male and female students continue to be published regularly in educational journals [p. 485].

Of course, while 'differences' as a concept may be passé, an idea with which we broadly agree, gender differential and differentiating practices may still be ongoing, but these always need to be contextualised in relation to similarities (see Sunderland, 2015a).

Menard-Warwick et al. (2014) claim that 'gender rarely stands alone in research on second-language (L2) and foreign-language (FL) education but rather connects with other research topics, such as attitudes toward L2 learning, or the connected but more contested topic of language learning motivation' (2014: 480–481; see also Norton, 2000). This is, however, not always the case, and studies with a feminist agenda (e.g. to reveal classroom domination by male students) were evident in the 1980s (see Spender, 1980, 1982). In their review of the early studies, Helene Decke-Cornill and Laurenz Volkmann (2007) make a distinction between research that falls into the quantitative paradigm of teacher–student/student–teacher interaction (e.g. Batters, 1986; Alcón, 1994; Sunderland, 2000a; Munro, 1987; Holmes, 1994; Yepez, 1994) and peer interaction (e.g. Politzer, 1983; Gass and Varonis, 1986; Chavez, 2001), on the one hand, and those studies which adopt an exploratory and interpretative paradigm (e.g. Siegal, 1994, 1996; McMahill, 2001; Willett, 1995) on the other.

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[4] Some studies (e.g., Yepez, 1994) indeed found no differential teacher treatment at all. Yet the students in Yepez's study were adults, and age may be an important variable in this sort of research.

[5] A student solicit was defined as 'an utterance which requires and often results in a verbal response (or which results in or requires a behavioural one) from the teacher very soon after the uttering of the solicit' (1998: 60).

Critically assessing the quantitative studies, Decke-Cornill and Volkmann (2007) write that these researchers took 'the binary notion of gender as a premise, and starting from there, display[ed] an interest in the amount, range, and type of gender-related interactional behavior' (2007: 80) – for example, distribution of praise. They view these early quantitative studies as excellent starting points for further investigation and teacher self-reflection, but also as methodologically and theoretically problematic. As regards the exploratory and interpretative paradigm, whose studies were concerned with identity, their criticism is again of the general assumption of a binary gender order (p. 85) but also and rather differently of the researchers' ignoring of any impact of their research (with the exception of Nelson, 1999). Aneta Pavlenko and Ingrid Piller (2007) relatedly point to oversimplified assumptions about gender in and inherited from earlier research which have created problems and difficulties for current research in language education. Much earlier research, Pavlenko and Piller (2007) claim – although this may be overstated – assumed essentialised gender dichotomies and considered neither diversity in the classroom nor values assigned to different discursive practices in different cultural and other contexts. Another problematic assumption was that a high amount of interaction (e.g. between teachers and male students) was sometimes taken to be a positive phenomenon automatically leading to higher achievement (see Kelly (1988) above for why this might not be). At the same time, findings of the earlier studies are important reminders of the need to be vigilant: several language and gender researchers (e.g. Mills, 2008; Lazar, 2014), reject the assumption that 'male dominance is a thing of the past' (Menard-Warwick et al., 2014: 486) and call for a renewed attention to gender inequities in educational research.

In terms of educational progress and associated improvements in relation to gender research, it is important to fully contextualise any given study, which means going beyond considerations of gender. Male dominance, for example – found across many settings – may or may not affect learning outcomes, depending on a whole range of contextual factors, social variables and systems of oppression (see Section 2.6 on 'intersectionality'). Culture needs to be taken into account, i.e., 'classrooms in

different cultural contexts with different discourses surrounding gender are themselves likely to be gendered differently from each other' (Sunderland, 2000b: 164). It is important, however, to consider both the wider cultural context of how identities are produced in school settings and 'how local factors intersect to create complicated gender dynamics' (Menard-Warwick et al., 2014: 473). Commenting similarly that findings will vary with context and community of practice (e.g. what happens in a secondary school classroom may not happen in higher or primary education or even in another secondary school even in the same sort of socioeconomic or geographical area), Sunderland (2000a) underlines that 'neither differential teacher treatment by gender nor male students' verbosity should … be seen as automatic or universal classroom phenomena'. 'Community of practice' (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Lave and Wenger, 1991; see also Section 1.4) is a useful concept which is highly applicable to studying gender in educational settings. Kelleen Toohey (2000) showed how a single classroom can be regarded as a community of practice by the participants engaging in similar activities (linguistic and otherwise), aiming towards the same goal and making sense of their identity performances. Yet the same group of children attending their various classes with different teachers may also (re-)enact different identities. Gender dynamics may also take on different forms and trajectories in each of the different curricular classes. In this sense it is difficult to make any general assumptions concerning the relationship between gendered practices and educational achievement for any one group of classroom children, outside their particular subject classrooms. Again, even in a single classroom, and even when there is homogeneity of age, ethnicity and social class, gender will not be a straightforward masculine–feminine binary as there will always be diversity among and overlap between 'gender groups' (Sunderland, 2000: 164), and variation across individuals.

While in 1990 Alastair Pennycook criticised previous research in applied linguistics and language education in particular for largely ignoring 'the role of gender in classroom interaction and language acquisition' (1990a: 16), poststructuralism-informed/inclined (English) language educators considered *more broadly* what 'the troubling of identity' notion (Seidman, 1995; see also Butler, 1990) implied for language teaching and learning (Nelson, 1999: 372; Peirce, 1995; see also Pennycook, 1994; Rampton, 1994). The issue of an ESL learner's *sexual* identity and how it should be addressed in classroom interaction was taken up in the pioneer work of Cynthia Nelson (1999, 2006, 2007, 2009). Sexual identity issues are different from those of gender in terms of classroom interaction, not least because non-heterosexual students are likely to be a minority, and may well not publically self-identify as LGBT. The issue is not, then, how sexual minority students talk to or are talked to by the teacher, including how much and what sort of attention they get, as with gender, but rather how the issue of sexual diversity itself is addressed, in classroom talk, in classroom materials, and in talk about those materials – by all classroom participants.

Nelson (1999) argued that a queer theoretical framework adopted in an ESL classroom shifts the focus from 'inclusion' (i.e. of lesbian and gay students) to 'inquiry', which may be pedagogically more useful. Inquiry implies examining how language and culture work with regard to *all* sexual identities, including heterosexual ones. The role of the teacher is crucial in the inquiry process in their role of facilitator of classroom interaction and discourse. They are not expected to answer every question about sexual identity, but rather:

> *... to frame the questions, facilitate investigations, and explore what is not known ... [A] queer approach to pedagogy asks how linguistic and cultural practices manage to naturalize certain sexual identities but not others* (Nelson, 1999: 377–378).

The use of lesbian/gay themes is recommended to explore divergent *cultural meanings* of local, everyday interactions and meaning-making practices rather than *personal feelings* concerning the social issues discussed (Nelson, 2007). This has not remained a matter of theory but has been drawn on by practitioners: Gloria de Vincenti et al. (2007) and Robert O'Mochain (2006) documented positive results when attempting to incorporate non-heteronormative themes into their classroom practice (see Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015; also see Section 2.4).

Classroom interaction can also be used to unpack students' normative assumptions and questions, aiming at challenging heterosexual hegemony. Nelson (2009) illustrates how challenging classroom discussions concerning identity, diversity, equity and inequity can be constructive educational experiences, 'especially in increasingly globalised classrooms, which are characterised by multiple perspectives and vantage points'. The potential challenges for teachers and students alike can be understood as pedagogic opportunities, she claims, 'if they are framed as such' (2009: 205). Nelson (2009) proposes five strategies that may help teachers make use of the pedagogic potential of queer themes and perspectives in advancing language learning:

1. recognising that sexual literacy is part of linguistic/cultural fluency

2. facilitating queer inquiry about the workings of language/culture (i.e. challenging taken-for-granted assumptions)

3. unpacking heteronormative discourses for learning purposes

4. valuing multisexual student and teacher cohorts

5. asking queer questions of language-teaching resources and research (e.g. whether and how language teaching materials perpetuate heteronormativity).

The decision as to which of the strategies should be applied and when is very much contingent on the teacher's local understanding of a specific group of students combined with their professional judgement (Nelson, 2009). In fact, given that *any* topic provides valuable language practice, and, following Claire Kramsch (1993), EFL classroom interaction, in particular discussion, can be used as a 'third place' in which challenging issues with regard to all sexual identities are discussed with due respect to all participants.

Nelson's suggestions and guidelines concerning the recognition of all sexual identities in a language classroom echo Aneta Pavlenko's (2004: 59) agenda of feminist and critical approaches to FL/L2 pedagogy, according to which teachers need to offer their students a safe space and adequate linguistic resources for development of the students' various social voices. The safe space then allows the students not only to recognise and acknowledge existing discourses of gender and sexuality but also to explore alternative ones. Pavlenko (2004) claims that the key way to explore such alternative discourses and possibilities is through *authenticity* (see also Nelson, 2007), i.e. moving beyond gender and sexual identities to acknowledging students' multiple identities and that the various forms of

linguistic and cultural capital they bring into the classroom should be taken advantage of in the process of teaching and learning. Students' 'multi-voiced consciousness' simultaneously needs to be maintained by continuous exploration of similarities and differences in the discourses of gender and sexuality across cultures and communities (Pavlenko, 2004: 67; see also DePalma and Jennett, 2010; Morrish and Sauntson, 2007; De Vincenti et al., 2007).

We emphasise that inequities are almost always nuanced and gender inflected with other variables – not least sexual identity. Like many other researchers of gender and language education (e.g. Linke, 2007), and indeed those involved in classroom research generally, we also advocate a continuing focus on the need to translate research findings into progressive classroom practice, through pre-service and in-service teacher education, teachers' associations, ministry policy, and direct networking between researchers, language education practitioners, and those in both roles. We make relevant recommendations in Chapter 8.

2.3 Classroom materials

An obvious case of representation in the language classroom is materials: textbooks, and their online equivalents, and also teacher's books, workbooks, grammars, dictionaries and teacher-produced worksheets. These are full of represented human characters, fictional and actual, who carry out a range of social actions (van Leeuwen, 2008). And while textbooks are pedagogically motivated, students may learn from them beyond documented curricular intentions.

Findings of early, pioneer work on language textbooks consistently found relative invisibility of women and girls – as speakers in dialogues, as referred to in texts, and as shown in visuals. In Karen Porreca's (1984) study of 15 ESL textbooks in the USA, the male–female ratio was 1.97:1. Relatedly, in English language textbooks used in German schools, Marlis Hellinger (1980) found greater anonymity of women, in expressions such as *John's wife*. A second general finding was that of greater subordination and distortion/degradation of women and girls: women and men in gender-stereotypical occupations with predictable differences in prestige, gender stereotyping more broadly (e.g. the 'nagging wife'), women and girls being described in terms of physical appearance (Carroll and Kowitz, 1994) and emotion (e.g. being over-emotional), and, linguistically, in

Hellinger's (1980) study, women being represented by 'speaking' rather than 'material' verbs (e.g. *tell, admit, say*). Porreca (1984) also found ten times more occurrences of *mother-in-law* than *father-in-law*, usually with negative connotations. In the Polish context, Adam Jaworski (1983, 1986) considered omission and negative stereotyping of women in Polish and English language textbooks, as well as women's negative contrast with men, and found the predictable (but particularly pronounced) gender imbalance in favour of men, a range of types of gender stereotyping, and considerable use of 'generic' *man* and *he*. (See Chapter 3 for discussion of these studies.)

Recent studies do suggest improvement, with, for example, some male–female ratios getting closer (e.g. Pihlaja, 2008; Healy, 2009). Representational differences may still be pronounced, however (Lee and Collins, 2009; Barton and Sakwa, 2012). In the Hong Kong context, men in language textbooks still tended to be found in public settings, women in household settings (Law and Chan, 2004), and men and boys were more active and sporty (Lee and Collins, 2010). There is still therefore, again, a need for vigilance.

We can certainly expect changes in gender representation in language textbooks since the early studies. Social climates are changing, with a raised profile of women in public life globally; there is a new if patchy social awareness of the importance of inclusion, of the unacceptability of different sorts of social exclusion, and indeed of diversity. Equal opportunities/sex discrimination policies and legislation are commonplace, and, in the world of publishing, guidelines for 'inclusive language' for curricular materials abound. For example, the Hong Kong Education Bureau's *Guiding Principles for Quality Textbooks* (2014)[6], point C9, identifying the desiderata, reads:

> There is not any bias in content, such as over-generalisation and stereotyping. The content and illustrations do not carry any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, religion, culture, disability etc., nor do they suggest exclusion.

Omitted of course is *sexuality* or *sexual preference,* although the 'etc.' may leave the door open for this.

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[6] www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/textbook-info/GuidingPrinciples/index.html (accessed 3 August 2015).

Methodologically, as was characteristic of early classroom studies of gender and naturally occurring talk, many early studies of gender representation in textbooks did not look for similarities, and some recent ones are little better in this respect. The importance of this is shown in Chi Cheung Ruby Yang's (2014) study of two frequently used primary English textbook series in Hong Kong, *Primary Longman Express* (2005) and *Step Up* (2005), in which she found that:

> … *although there is some variation [in gender representation] with textbook series and sub-genres …* **there are obvious similarities in gender representation across the whole data set** [our bold].

We use this work to illustrate the points below.

Some past (and indeed some recent) textbook studies were also arguably limited in their claims about frequency of occurrence of male and female characters. Although some did distinguish between text and visuals, few made representational distinctions between (1) types and tokens, *type* referring to an actual person (e.g. Susan Smith), *tokens* to all references to Susan Smith, including repeated ones: *Susan Smith, Susan, Sue, Miss Smith, she, her,* etc., (2) human/non-human characters (e.g. robots, ghosts, fairies, who may be particularly evident in primary school language textbooks), and (3) different sorts of visuals (e.g. line drawings/ photographs).

In her frequency counts, Yang found 75 male and 74 female 'types' in the two textbooks series, but the male–female token ratio was 733:522, a statistically significant difference. So while we can say that the characters who populate *Step Up* and *Primary Longman Express* are represented quantitatively equally in terms of gender in one way, they are definitely not so in another: the findings are patchy.

The distinction between *human* and *non-human* is interesting in that non-human characters, especially fantasy ones, including talking animals, are arguably not subject to the same social representational constraints (or at least expectations) as human characters. In principle, they do not 'need' to be gendered in a human way. On the other hand, illustrators, and perhaps writers, may feel a need to do precisely this, and indeed more or stereotypically so: for example, giving a rabbit an apron to indicate that she is female. It is thus always interesting to ask whether non-human characters are 'humanly' gendered, and, if so, how. In Yang's study, in the *Step Up* series, non-human females were noticeably frequently portrayed with accessories such as handbags and/or with bows in their hair.

The distinction between different types of visuals (e.g. photographs and line drawings) is interesting in that a modern photograph (unless it is digitally altered) must show what is happening at the time it is taken. Many years ago, commenting on the 1970s series *English for Today,* Pat Hartman and Eliot Judd (1978) observed that the photographs showed women 'in a variety of occupational roles not reflected by the text itself' and were far less gender-stereotypical than the drawings. They commented, 'Perhaps photographs capture a reality that has not yet thoroughly impressed itself on our more conservative imaginations' (388). We can again expect patchiness of findings here. Yang (2014) found human males quantitatively over-represented in the line drawings, and non-human females in the (fewer) photographs – both significantly, i.e. there was a relationship between visual type and character type.

Most early studies also did not distinguish (sufficiently) between different sub-genres. It is entirely possible that gender representation will vary between, say, reading comprehension exercises, listening exercises and dialogues. Yang (2014) found significantly more gender imbalance in terms of tokens of male characters in the reading passages in both textbook series than in the dialogues. And dialogues are of particular interest, given their implications for classroom practice – if, say, the teacher asks male students to play the male roles, female students the female roles. We return to this in the next section, but to make the point: a study of an early textbook, *Functions of English* (1977), found that the 15 dialogues all included at least one male character, but seven included no female characters and all were initiated by a male character (Jones et al., 1997). On the other hand, Yang found significantly more utterances in the between-female than the between-male dialogues in *Primary Longman Express,* a reminder that imbalance is not always 'in favour' of males.

To summarise Yang's (2014) findings concerning *Primary Longman Express* and *Step Up,* what is represented is mainly gender similarity. There were, however, in total six cases of statistically significant over-representation of males, three of females: predictable patchiness, but the direction suggests that this is still a matter of concern.

The distinctions identified above are needed as they allow for heterogeneity of findings, rather than un-nuanced findings about a given textbook (or set of textbooks). In today's social climate, heterogeneity in terms of gender representation – let us say, representational differences on some dimensions (e.g. *tokens* of *humans* as represented visually in *line drawings*) but not others – is to be expected. Another, rather different but important distinction, is between texts and use of texts in the classroom, and we look at this briefly below.

2.4 'Talk around the textbook text'

The distinction between textbook texts and *uses* of those texts in the classroom clearly concerns the teacher. Teacher behaviour is unpredictable from the text itself: the teacher may be in a hurry, they may misinterpret or re-interpret the textbook writer's intention, they may not feel confident about the particular teaching point, they may like or dislike the particular content, they may feel they can deal with it in a way better than that proposed in the textbook itself. This is challenging but interesting: the researcher does not know what they will find. They must go into a classroom, with prior permission, where they know that a 'gender critical point' is evident in the part of the textbook about to be covered. A gender critical point can be anything concerning humans who are identified as female or male (see also Section 6.2). This is of course the case in most textbook texts.

As an example, a teacher in Portugal was planning to use a textbook text about a wedding. The researcher (Julie Shattuck) thought it would be interesting to see what he said about this: it is impossible to teach a text without talking about it. In the event, the teacher decided to tell his students about weddings in the UK, or at least as he saw them. He said (and '(.)' represents a pause):

> *And the bride (.) usually (.) if it's for the church wedding will wear white (.) and (.) the bridesmaids (.) she will often choose the (.) the outfit for them (.) usually she chooses something horrible so they (.) don't look as good as her* (Shattuck, 1996: 27).

While this utterance represents women as vain and as jealous of other women (it may have been intended as a joke; it may or may not have been received as such), the utterance itself was completely unpredictable from the text itself. Of more interest than the text was what was said about it.

Conversely, a sexist text can also be critiqued (rehabilitated?) by the teacher. Angela, a French teacher, referring to gender-stereotypical portrayals in her textbook, said in an interview:

> *… we used to laugh at this – Madame Lafayette … we used to ask them 'look at this, 'where is she? in the kitchen' – and where else would she be? She couldn't possibly be anywhere else' so we used to make fun and make jokes of it* (Abdul Rahim, 1997).

The point is that texts which go beyond a traditional representation of gender can be ignored, endorsed or subverted; ones which maintain a traditional representation of gender, similarly (see Sunderland et al., 2002). Even inherently sexist texts can thus be put to good use by experienced teachers.

Students are also important in how a text will be used: we cannot predict from a given text what the students will think or say about it. In particular, sexist representations do not have to be passively accepted; they can be recognised and resisted/ critiqued. This may also impact on student–teacher interaction and how the text is treated by the teacher, or collaboratively by the class as a whole.

Of course, students can also be intentionally introduced to texts where 'where gender and sexuality may be constructed and performed differently than in their own culture' (Pavlenko, 2004: 55; see also Pavlenko and Piller, 2007). This may help provide a safer environment for exploration and discussion.

2.5 Sexuality: needed developments

Sexuality-related themes in language education in general and textbooks in particular have received some attention to date (e.g. Nelson, 2006, 2009), and Elizabeth Morrish (2002) interestingly considers the situation of the lesbian teacher who is not 'out' to her students and how (unlike her straight colleagues) she may conceal her sexual identity in class. However, any claims here need to be location-specific as some geographies and contexts allow more freedom in addressing sexual diversity than others. When looking outside Poland, we observe that:

> *In some other countries the situation seems healthier with numerous books, projects, reports and journals devoted to social justice and equity in education, including the situation of LGBTQ students in schools (Elia and Eliason, 2010; Franck, 2002; Gorski and Goodman, 2011; Hickman and Porfilio, 2012; Kehily, 2002; Toomey et al., 2012)* (Pawelczyk et al., 2014: 57).

Poland does not enjoy such luxury. The question that needs to be addressed at this point pertains to the different reasons for such discrepancies, and here we can talk about politics and economics: the political climate of a given country coupled with the financial resources allocated for research – often at the disposal of the powerful – both, we argue, influence whether a given (social) issue will be hindered or fostered. John Gray (2013b: 43) claims that heterosexuality is 'strategically privileged' and rests on the ideology of commercialism. Relatedly, most equality-driven projects carried out in the Polish context (see Chapter 3 for more details) are funded by external sources.

Despite a commitment to looking critically at representations of gender and traditionally gendered relationships, most language textbook *studies* of gender representation have also failed to look adequately, or even at all, at sexuality or heteronormativity (exceptions are Pawelczyk et al., 2014; Gray, 2013b; Nelson, 2009). In this sense, they are behind the times in the field of gender and language. It does not take a detailed study to see that textbooks do not represent gay relationships, but closer consideration would reveal that they also tend to be extremely heteronormative, with continual representations of heterosexual couples, conventional nuclear families and possible heterosexual romance. Implications for textbook analysts are that they not only critique gender imbalance and stereotyping, but also critically highlight the textual prevalence/ flaunting of heterosexuality (which is not hard!). Analysts can also look for and welcome possible readings of non-heteronormativity, and at degrees of heteronormativity in multimodal textbook representations (consider a traditional wedding, vis-à-vis a gathering of women and men with no obvious heterosexual pairings). Heteronormative representations themselves (in particular, those which are more/less heteronormative) can and should also be considered in studies of 'talk around the textbook text' – what does the teacher (and students) do with such representations? We look at this briefly below.

As regards classroom practice, Nelson (2007) advocates the incorporation of sexual diversity themes. One way of integrating such themes into classroom practice, in a non-threatening and non-alienating way, might be through 'narrative-based pedagogy' (O'Mochain, 2006: 63), based on triggering in-class discussion of potentially challenging themes by introducing real-life 'queer narratives' by locally based agents, which 'makes it possible to acknowledge and engage with the lived experience of individual members of social groups

that tend to be marginalised' (2006: 64). Nelson (2007) similarly draws attention to the possible use of 'the life history narratives of queer[7] residents who are part of the same local communities as the language learners' to enable students to relate the classroom discussion to an actual individual they know or have known. This may be of value in social transformation, and hence merits special attention on the part of both practising teachers and the research community (see also Section 2.1).

Several important studies in fact have researched language education and sexual diversity. As demonstrated by Brian King (2008), self-identification in the process of foreign language learning may be instrumental. King investigated the learning trajectories of three Korean gay men who, when away from home, due to their not being heterosexual, enjoyed freer access to target-language native speaker groups, in particular those of their native speaker partners. For these men, non-normativity could be viewed in advantageous terms when they found themselves in a target-language culture in which they felt 'freer' than in their home country. This study reinforces the need to debunk the myth of the 'one-dimensional language learner' and points to the importance of recognising all identities within different learning environments (see also Liddicoat, 2009).

In an interesting study, Matthew Ripley and colleagues (2012) probed perceptions of the frequency with which gay themes were introduced into the classroom by an openly gay instructor. On average, the students overestimated the ratio of gay to heterosexual themes as 4:1 while in reality it was 39 per cent to 61 per cent respectively. This finding appears surprising in the light of the 'progressive' attitudes towards gay and lesbian identities as self-reported by the students. To account for this discrepancy, Ripley and colleagues draw on the concept of *novelty attachment,* i.e. novel themes receive more attention and their content might have been perceptually exaggerated as the students 'viewed [the teacher's] actions through a heterosexual lens' (Ripley et al., 2012: 126). Another reason, they suggest, may be *content substitution,* i.e. unmarked content is seen as non-content, while gay-imbued content was considered as marked. For instance:

> *... the instructor was discussing the expense of buying tickets to a professional sporting match, giving an example of how 'Rob and his husband' were unable to afford them. Three of the four students interviewed after this lecture erroneously listed this as an example of a time in which the*

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[7] 'Queer' is understood in this book as an all-encompassing concept referring to non-heteronormative identities (see Bucholtz, 2014).

instructor talked about homosexuality as content. They did not recognize the content as about the ability of sport to highlight economic matters (Ripley et al., 2012: 126).

Gloria de Vincenti and colleagues (2007) looked at their own experience of integrating queer perspectives into their teaching and concluded generally that such tactics need to be tailored to meet the needs of a given culture, with which we agree. They also point to the problematic nature of both inclusion and exclusion, arguing that 'inclusion serves to reinforce the marginalisation of non-heterosexual identities, while exclusion fails to acknowledge the existence and relevance of all sexual identities' (De Vincenti et al., 2007: 70). As regards inclusion, we would argue however, that marginalisation need not be thus reinforced, depending on the approach taken.

As regards the question of representation, publishers' response to the absence of gay characters in language textbooks may be that large-scale, commercial publishing of language (especially English) textbooks is subject to global market forces (again see Gray, 2013b). Textbooks could nevertheless safely move some distance from 'extreme' heteronormativity and include, for example, more portrayals of single parents and/or same-sex friends and friendship groups (which would allow a reading of gayness), representations of social diversity more generally, and fewer explicitly heterosexual interest narratives.

2.6 Intersectionality: sexism and homophobia

Sociolinguistic work often refers to the 'intersection' between two variables (or sometimes identities), such as age and social class, or gender and ethnicity (Labov, 1966, 2008; Trudgill, 1972: what Elizabeth Spelman (1988) called 'the ampersand problem'). In educational research, scholars have also refocused their efforts to understand how aspects of identity such as ethnicity, class, or sexuality intersect with gender to create or limit learning opportunities (Menard-Warwick et al., 2014: 471). *Intersectionality* is, however, more interestingly and fruitfully used to mean a complex system of power/oppression, *as experienced*. In this case we would not be talking about, say, gender and ethnicity, but sexism and racism – for a good reason. As Michelle Lazar writes:

> *Even though women as a social category are structurally disadvantaged in the patriarchal gender order, the intersection of gender **with other systems of power** based on race, social class, sexuality and so on means that gender oppression is neither materially experienced nor discursively enacted in the same way for women everywhere* (2014: 189; our bold).

The term used in this sense can be credited to legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, who, with a focus on race, argued that:

> *The problems of exclusion [in gender studies] cannot be solved simply by including Black women within an already established analytical structure … the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism.* (1989: 40).

David Block and Victor Corona (2014) note that intersectionality usually has a 'dominant dimension': for them, this is social class; for Crenshaw, it was race.

The question is then twofold. First, do some language students experience, say, bullying in class as an intersectional manifestation of homophobia and sexism? Are, say, non-heterosexual male students who are 'out' to their classmates bullied more than their female peers? If so, is the homophobia greater than the sexism? Is this even a sensible question to ask?

Second, can we talk about 'representational intersectionality', for example, in textbooks? Interestingly, Crenshaw did extend the concept (in principle, at least) to representation. With reference to a set of song lyrics, she wrote:

> *'… representational intersectionality' would include both the ways in which these images are produced through a **confluence of prevalent narratives** of race and gender, as well as a recognition of how contemporary critiques of racist and sexist representation marginalise women of color* (1991: 1282–3; our bold).

The question for *this* study is then whether we (can) have representational intersectionality in terms of sexism and homophobia. There may be a greater case for sexism (with which the very evident textbook heteronormativity cannot be neatly equated) than homophobia. So, if we have sexism but not homophobia, can we ask whether representational intersectionality actually *requires* the distinction between and confluence of two 'systems of oppression'. One dimension of the intersection may rather be a concept/social category/identity (here, heteronormativity). But given the close relationship between gender and sexuality, this 'lite' version of intersectionality is still likely to have analytical and theoretical value (for a discussion of intersectionality in relation to picture books for young children featuring same-sex parents, see Sunderland, 2015a).

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter we have provided a summary of work on gender and language education from over the past 45 years, in which sexuality has only enjoyed very recent consideration. And while the situation as regards gender can be said to be improving, as regards both classroom interaction and textbook representation, presumably because of increased social awareness, vigilance is still important. It is also important to always expect nuances as regards findings – for example, boys may appear to be advantaged, or do better, in some ways, and girls in another. It is also important, perhaps even more so, to look for and expect 'gender similarities' in both representation and interaction, especially if and when this means that gender is not being inappropriately made relevant.

In Chapter 3, against this background, we look at gender, sexuality and language education in modern-day Poland.

3

The Polish context: politics and education[8]

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to the socio-political context in which the project was carried out. After looking at the wider Polish context, we move on to discuss the most pertinent equality-related research in the domain of education. Following that, we narrow the perspective down to research on gender in the Polish EFL context. We hope to demonstrate how these factors have shaped our endeavour and many of our findings.

3.2 The Polish context

Grandfather is sitting in an armchair, smoking a pipe. The rest of the family are scattered around the room. It's 2014, and compilation of the first state-funded primary school primer is in progress. This illustration undergoes alterations due to the intervention of an editorial member who deals with equality issues in this textbook. As a result the grandfather gets up from the armchair, loses his pipe, gets equipped with a watering can instead, and starts looking after plants. There's also another man in the room – his adult son. This seemingly subtle change, however, then resulted in harsh criticism on part of some religious and conservative communities.[9] They accused the editors of introducing ambivalent representations by allowing a same-sex romantic interpretation of the relationship between the two characters (Chmura-Rutkowska, 2015).[10] Some organisations launched open petitions to the author of the primer not to 'surrender' to the new 'ideologies' whose aim is to ensure gender equality.[11]

This situation seems symptomatic of the current equality-related state of affairs in Poland. On the one hand one notices substantial progress; on the other, opposition to this trend along with a backlash is palpable. The political popularity of Robert Biedroń, a former out MP and the current mayor of Słupsk, and of Anna Grodzka, the first openly transsexual

Polish MP,[12] constitute powerful evidence of the progressive changes with regard to public perception of non-heteronormative identities in present-day Polish society. Yet, the fierce opposition to ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention, CoE, 2011)[13] and lack of in-vitro fertilisation regulations (see below) seem to point to Poland going backwards when it comes to equality rights.

The dynamics of egalitarian processes in Poland are clearly something of a maze. A complex assessment of the equality-related changes taking part from the beginning of the democratic era in Poland (i.e. 1989) is beyond the scope of this book; moreover, others have successfully done it already (e.g. Piotrowska and Grzybek, 2009). However, since this book is intended for an international audience, our aim is to present the broad socio-political climate in which this study and report have been carried out. Educational research cannot be divorced from the social world, and elaborating on this connection is a crucial factor in our undertaking.

Despite the fact that Poland has come a long way in promoting women's rights since 1989, women are still a subordinate group in terms of political and economic participation (Fuszara, 2009). For instance, although women's participation in *Sejm* (the lower chamber of the Polish parliament) fluctuated over the past two decades, rising from 13 per cent in 1989 to 20 per cent in 2007, the opposite tendency seems to prevail in *Senat* (the upper chamber) as the numbers there, despite an initial rise, declined from 24 per cent in the term 2005–07 to a mere in 8 per cent in the term beginning in 2007 (Fuszara, 2009: 190). The present, i.e. 2011–15, lower chamber is made up of 350 males and only 110 females (76 per cent versus 24 per cent respectively),[14] while the upper chamber consists of 87 males and only 13

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[8] This chapter is a substantially expanded version of a discussion of the Polish educational context and the 'ideology of gender' in Pawelczyk and Pakuła (2015).

[9] http://sliwerski-pedagog.blogspot.com/2014/04/ele-miele-men.html (accessed 11 June 2015); http://wpolityce.pl/lifestyle/206615-genderystka-konsultuje-elementarz-czyli-nowy-sposob-komunikacji-na-linii-men-radni (accessed 11 June 2015); www.radiomaryja.pl/informacje/genderystka-konsultuje-elementarz/ (accessed 11 June 2015).

[10] This researcher has been a target of harsh criticism which has been verbalised, inter alia, in the articles mentioned in footnote 7.

[11] www.mamaitata.org.pl/petycje/list-otwarty-do-marii-lorek (accessed 11 June 2015).

[12] And the only one in the world at the time.

[13] www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/convention/Convention%20210%20English.pdf (accessed 14 May 2015).

[14] www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm7.nsf/page/poslowie_poczatek_kad (accessed 11 July 2015).

females (87 per cent versus 13 per cent respectively).[15] Analyses of public opinion polls point to complex reasons for this: starting with systematic discrimination against women (including favouring of men in the public sphere), a male perception of the threat of female rivalry, chauvinism, and the 'double' responsibilities expected of women (salaried work plus unsalaried housework, which is frequently seen as women's responsibility and has been dubbed 'the pink economic zone' (Dryjańska and Piotrowska, 2012). Polish women are often stereotyped (e.g. as sexual objects), not only in advertisements and commercials (Chmura-Rutkowska, 2015) but also in political campaigns.[16]

Fierce opposition to ratifying the Istanbul Convention (CoE, 2011) inaugurated an elaborate, regressive discussion on women's rights and ways of preventing violence. The opponents, from right-wing circles, claimed that certain regulations in the Convention document stand in stark opposition to traditional Polish and Christian values. They selectively referred to fragments which recommend teaching about non-stereotypical gender roles and contested the identification of the family as a potential locus of domestic violence. The Convention is equated with the 'sexualisation of children' and with opening up avenues for questioning the very idea of 'family'. This rhetorical strategy can be seen as inscribed in a broader fight against what is called 'the ideology of gender' (see Section 3.2). Moreover, women often experience immense financial struggles when attempting to access their full reproductive rights, due to the lack of proper legal regulations concerning IVF and severely limited state funding for this medical procedure.[17] Powerful Catholic Church rhetoric targeting IVF exacerbates this situation by discursively dehumanising it (and its outcome, i.e. children) and constructing life and family as endangered due to its availability (Kamasa, 2013).

'Sexuality', a target of the backlash along with gender, is a blurred concept which means many things to many people, including in the academy (Weeks, 2009; Jackson and Scott, 2010; Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers, 2001). Deborah Cameron and Don Kulick (2003: x), posing the fundamental question 'what do we mean by 'sexuality'?', conclude that, in the field of language and sexuality, the concept is used synonymously with *sexual orientation*. We here adopt a broader definition, acknowledging the complexity of sexuality by seeing it as the sum of such components as

sexual desire, sexual health, and identity. Public and institutional talk on this understanding of *sexuality* is however highly taboo in Polish society. Even sociological and psychological knowledge often results in othering those whose sexuality does not conform to the heteronorm (Krzemiński, 2008).

Having said that, sexuality-wise, Poland has made some remarkable progress (O'Dwyer, 2012), however unsatisfying. Prior to regaining full sovereignty and the transformation from a communist to a democratic state in 1989, gay people (mostly men) were persecuted. Despite the fact that Poland was one of the first European countries to decriminalise homosexuality, there was no possibility for gay people to live openly. A communist-regime-orchestrated 'Hyacinth Operation' *(Operacja Hiacynt)* (1985–87) carried out by the communist police *(Milicja Obywatelska)* resulted in creating a database of around 11,000 (allegedly) gay people who were blackmailed and forced to become secret collaborators (see also Kurpios, 2002; Tomasik, 2012). The post-1989 period could be deemed a more promising era as far as the rights of sexual minorities are concerned, but a lot of work of local activists has not been mirrored in opinion polls. The Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS, 2013) report reveals that only 12 per cent of the respondents think that homosexuality is 'something normal', 68 per cent do not accept same-sex marriage (the same figure as in 2001), and an overwhelming majority (87 per cent) does not approve of such couples adopting children (3 percentage points more than in 2001). Such opinions might be maintained due to the relative public invisibility of gay people, with the exception of few celebrities and politicians: the report reveals that only 25 per cent of the respondents know a gay person personally; this number has been on a steady rise, though (from 16 per cent in 2005). Most respondents (63 per cent in 2013, but down from 78 per cent in 2005) did not wish to see the gay community 'display their lifestyle in public'.

While the 2001 *Niech nas zobaczą* ('Let them see us') LGBTQ-visibility campaign, which featured same-sex couples on city billboards, was deemed inappropriate and controversial by the then authorities,[18] in 2015 same-sex couples became a staple discussion theme in the mainstream media. Yet the notion of non-heterosexual identities is still far from unproblematic: the increase in LGBTQ visibility has been met with a strong conservative backlash. While even the Tories (Conservative Party) in the UK vote for the

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[15] www.senat.gov.pl/o-senacie/senat-wspolczesny/dane-o-senatorach-wg-stanu-na-dzien-wyborow/ (accessed 11 July 2015).

[16] In 2015, one of the left-wing candidates running for president was a woman (an ex-model) who was mostly talked about with regard to her physical attributes, rather than her skills, political experience or competence.

[17] E.g. only heterosexual couples can apply, hence single women and lesbian couples are excluded. www.invitro.gov.pl/faq (accessed 11 June 2015).

[18] www.archiwum.wyborcza.pl/Archiwum/1,0,7470493,20110912WA-DLO,POZWOLILI_SIE_ZOBACZYC,zwykly.html?t=1434027884324 (accessed 11 June 2015).

recognition of same-sex marriage, conservatives in Poland invite Paul Cameron [19] to universities to legitimate equating same-sex desire with paedophilia. Hate speech aimed at LGBTQ is omnipresent in Poland even without importing it; it has been symbolically sanctioned by some politicians equating gay people with paedophiles and framing their relationships as barren (jałowe) on numerous occasions. This is possible due to the lack of any legal sanctions against homophobic speech despite numerous attempts to introduce them. Given this unfavourable political climate, it is hardly surprising that attempts at introducing same-sex partnership bills have reached a complete deadlock. Meanwhile, however, an extensive project into the life of non-heteronormative families has been underway. *Families of choice* (Mizielińska and Stasińska, 2013; Mizielińska et al., 2014), a pioneering and extensive investigation of same-sex couples in Poland, [20] has propelled the debate on same-sex couples into the Polish legal system. The authors, however, acknowledge the difficulty of conducting informed discussions due to the fact that even the mention of non-heterosexual families sometimes evokes social unease.

An anti-LGBTQ poster in Poznań. [21] (It reads – from the upper-left-hand corner: This kind wants to educate your children. Stop them! 31 per cent lesbians 25 per cent pederasts rape the children they bring up* – source Regnerus (2012). [22] Sex educators want: to teach masturbation from kindergarten, to teach six-year-olds how to use condoms and contraceptive substances, to promote 'homo-relationships'. The government co-operates with sex educators.)

Organised homophobic campaigns are run by different organisations/foundations (e.g. Fundacja PRO – Prawo do życia ['The right to life'] – responsible for the poster above) on a systematic basis and some take the form of presenting pseudo-scientific 'facts'. These are then powerfully reinforced by means of accompanying pictures. As can be inferred from the poster, the borders between sex educators, gay people (including these scantily dressed ones during Pride parades outside Poland) and paedophiles have been deliberately blurred with the intention of putting all these concepts on a par, as if making them synonymous. Such campaigns silence any informed talk on sexuality and sex education in the public sphere. The lack of relevant knowledge and official data (which could be obtained through the census) and little research carried out on Polish LGBTQ all contribute to this situation (Mizielińska et al., 2014: 16–17). NGOs along with the Government's Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment point to numerous other spaces prone to systematic LGBTQ discrimination, such as hospitals. [23] Thus, while Poland has undeniably leaped forward when it comes to gay (and women's) rights, there is still a lot to strive for. [24]

3.3 Struggles: the 'ideology of gender'

Possible measures that could be taken to address these issues are often instantly confronted with accusations of importing the 'ideology of gender' from the West. 'Gender ideology' is conventionally defined in the academy as 'attitudes regarding the appropriate roles, rights, and responsibilities of women and men in society' (Kroska, 2007: 1867). Gender ideologies are society-specific but also within one society, one can be exposed to a number of different ones (Philips, 2014). In Poland the academic understanding of gender ideology sharply contrasts with what has been lately a political buzzword, namely, *ideologia gender* ('the ideology of gender'). We intentionally use a prepositional phrase instead of the more usual nominal one to differentiate between the two. While the former is part of a sociological conceptual apparatus, the latter is a political construct that has recently been invented and successfully included in mainstream right-wing political discourse in Poland, and can be seen as a 'moral panic' (see e.g. Cohen, 2002) triggered by the Polish Catholic Church along with right-wing politicians.

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[19] Paul Cameron is a controversial psychologist from the United States, well known for his anti-homosexuality campaigns as well as controversial research surrounding homosexual parenting and homosexual teachers, inter alia. His papers have been heavily criticised for not meeting ethical and professional standards, hence we do not quote them here.

[20] Exceptionally funded by a state funding agency.

[21] Photograph by Łukasz Pakuła.

[22] Having been made aware of the use of his study, Regnerus made a public statement in which he rejected the claims made by the campaigners, saying that his research does not make it clear who was the abuser, e.g. http://wyborcza.pl/1,134642,16489372,Klamstwa_homofobow.html (accessed 11 June 2015).

[23] http://prawo.gazetaprawna.pl/artykuly/855315,fuszara-pacjenci-nieheteroseksualni-sa-dyskryminowani.html (accessed 10 June 2015).

[24] Strikingly, some EU equal-treatment regulations, despite being present in the Polish legal system, are very rarely drawn on by the courts of law, which might be indicative of a lack of awareness of equality-related issues (Kukowka and Siekiera, 2014).

Some of the most prominent Catholic Church representatives seem to see 'gender' as their main enemy. Gender here is viewed not as an analytical tool or concept but rather is an umbrella term encapsulating a number of negatively loaded concepts and ideas – from the perspective of the Catholic Church, such as sexualisation of children, same-sex marriage, radical feminism, compulsory challenges to traditional gender roles, and paedophilia.[25] This has had tremendous consequences, inter alia, for academia. Some university curricula featuring gender have been attacked by the Church, in tandem with right-wing politicians and activists.[26] Some lecturers and researchers have cancelled lectures in fear for their safety.[27] At the same time, a number of right-wing-inclined academics and priests working within the academy have delivered, or attempted to do so, lectures and public talks demonising the idea of culture-sensitive and variable gender identity. The content of such talks is clearly expressed in their titles: *Gender, jak się przed tym bronić* ('Gender, how to defend ourselves against it?') or *Gender – dewastacja człowieka i rodziny* ('Gender – destruction of the human and family').[28]

Several intellectuals (e.g. Chmura-Rutkowska, 2015) using the term 'gender' for genuinely research-related analytical purposes have pointed out how the phrase 'ideology of gender' has been successfully introduced into public and political discourse by the conservative powerful. This coinage was granted a quasi-secular stamp of approval once a parliamentary panel, whose sole ambition is to eradicate the 'ideology of gender' from the Polish public life, had been established (Parlamentarny Zespół 'Stop ideologii gender' ['Parliamentary Panel 'Stop the ideology of gender'][29]). The panel itself seems to have been a political fad,[30] on which a new right-wing party – Zjednoczona Prawica ('United Right') – attempted to build their ideological brand, and became an attention-seeker for the mainstream media. Unfortunately, the discourses they perpetuated have become solidified in public opinion, evident when a random person in the street is asked for the definition of 'gender' (something many television programmes have managed to demonstrate). Very often the understanding of this concept revolves around a blurred idea of a blend of homosexuality, paedophilia and a perverse need to change children's 'natural' gender roles (e.g. making boys wear skirts in kindergartens).[31] Over 2014–15, a vast number of newspaper articles and weekly magazine supplements[32] warning Polish society of the disastrous effects of passively incorporating 'the ideology of gender' have been published. Some politicians and academics have gone on to claim that this ideological concept should be deemed worse than Nazism or communism. The height of absurdity, some might claim, was reached when an 'anti-gender' online course was launched by one of the priests campaigning against the 'ideology of gender' and, perhaps predictably – another concept worthy of mention – *homoideologia*[33] ('homoideology').

Ironically, heated debates over *gender* have resulted in it being voted the most popular Polish word of 2013.[34] Despite this popularity, however, as shown, there is little evidence that the society understands what *gender* means as a sociological concept. Numerous polls testify that the very consistent right-wing propaganda has been immensely successful. Regrettably, this has been met with little response on the part of the academic world: only a few publications in the press and – to the best of our knowledge – only two books on gender as a *sociological concept* (i.e. Środa, 2014; Kapela, 2014).

In the next section we narrow the perspective down to the educational context and Family Life Education textbooks in Poland, where a plethora of factual errors have been reported (Świerszcz, 2012). Coupled with the omission of discussion relating to sexuality, this is a serious failing of the Polish educational system.[35]

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25 Paedophilia is very often mentioned as associated with homosexuality, especially in the context of adoption by same-sex parents. The widely discredited 'research' by Mark Regnerus (2012) is often drawn on as a (quasi) *argumentum ad verecundiam* and tool of scientific grounding for and legitimisation of discrimination against lesbian and gay people.

26 www.fronda.pl/a/rektor-kul-odpowiada-bp-meringowi-obowiazkiem-uniwersytetu-zwlaszcza-uniwersytetu-katolickiego-jest-analizowanie-waznych-watkow-dyskursu-publicznego,28954.html (accessed 11 June 2015); http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,14149974,Rektor_KUL_o_wykladzie_na_temat_gender__Uczymy_tez.html (accessed 10 June 2015).

27 Personal communication. No personal details are given here to protect our informants.

28 http://rdn24.pl/index.php/religia/4193-gender-jak-sie-przed-tym-bronic-konferencja-w-krakowie (accessed 11 June 2015); http://wyborcza.pl/1,75248,15068690,_Gender____dewastacja_czlowieka_i_rodziny____Naukowcy.html (accessed 11 June 2015).

29 www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm7.nsf/agent.xsp?symbol=ZESPOL&Zesp=270 (accessed 11 June 2015).

30 Its last meeting took place at the beginning of February 2015.

31 Ironically, the members of the panel also find it difficult to provide a clear and reasonable definition of the term. Frequently, to evoke the most negative associations, these politicians refer to Money's failed sex-reassignment experiment (Money and Ehrhardt, 1972), which has in fact been widely criticised by social scientists.

32 With such titles as 'Gender kontra rodzina' ('Gender versus family') (source: www.wsieci.pl/gender-kontra-rodzina-dodatek-specjalny-pnews-738.html) (accessed 15 May 2015).

33 More information about the course contents can be found here: http://stop-seksualizacji.pl (accessed 15 May 2015).

34 The word itself has no equivalent in Polish and the descriptive equivalent (płeć społeczno-kulturowa; lit. 'socio-cultural sex') seems to be losing out to the incorporation of gender into the Polish language (Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak and Pawelczyk, 2014).

35 Cultivated homophobia results in 'recursive marginalisation' (Bogetić, 2013) whereby non-heterosexual students bully other non-heterosexual students for their non-conformist gendered behaviour (Świerszcz, 2012).

3.4 Diversity and ex/inclusion? The broad educational context

'Education systems need to focus on equity and quality' (OECD, 2015: 44). This 2015 report on the state of education in an international perspective is clear about the priorities for present-day education. While the report recognises the positive processes and implemented systemic changes in Polish education, it also draws critical attention to student–teacher relationships. In terms of student satisfaction, out of 34 countries analysed, Poland came last (OECD, 2015: 79). This may be symptomatic of a narrower malignant problem eating away at the Polish educational system: the lack of understanding of student (including gender- and sexual-identity-related) needs.

As we have argued elsewhere (Pawelczyk et al., 2014; Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015), more research into gender and, especially, sexuality, is a current social imperative, including in the field of applied linguistics. Bullying and harassment are present in educational settings (Rivers, 2011; Monk, 2011; Birkett et al., 2009); [36] both occur with respect to non-heteronormative identities (and gender identity/expression), and can be 'correlated with a variety of [negative] psychological and health outcomes' (Collier et al., 2013: 331). Silencing, marginalisation, stigmatisation, and bullying have had disastrous effects on individuals' lives, including homelessness and suicide (Rosario et al., 2012; Agostinone-Wilson, 2010; Świerszcz, 2012). Despite this knowledge in certain academic quarters, Poland is a long way from coming of age with regard to systemic changes and raising teacher awareness as regards sexual diversity in the student population.

To do justice to recent developments, though, the last decade has witnessed some research pertaining to diversity within Polish school and university contexts. The most important is presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Groundbreaking research on equality in Polish schools and learning materials

	Editor/author	Publication name (shortened)	Issues addressed
1	Żukowski (ed) (2004)	Szkoła Otwartości [School of openmindedness]	Textbooks (Polish language, history, civics, and family life education)
2	Abramowicz (ed) (2011)	Wielka nieobecna [The great absentee]	Anti-discriminatory education in education, teacher training programmes inspection, analysis of obligatory education for students
3	Drozdowski (2011)	Przemilczane, przemilczani [The silenced f/m]	The situation of LGBTQ students at the University of Warsaw
4	Świerszcz (ed) (2012)	Lekcja Równości [The lesson of equality]	Attitudes and needs of staff and students with respect to homophobia and homosexuality
5	Kochanowski et al. (2013)	Szkoła Milczenia [The school of silence]	Homophobic content in biology and family life education textbooks
6	Rient et al. (2014)	Męskość i kobiecość w lekturach szkolnych [Femininity and masculinity in school set books]	Set book content analysis with regard to gender equality
7	Gawlicz et al. (2015)	Dyskryminacja w szkole – obecność nieusprawiedliwiona. O budowaniu edukacji antydyskryminacyjnej w systemie edukacji formalnej w Polsce [Discrimination in schools – presence unexcused. On building anti-discriminatory education in the formal system of education in Poland]	Patterns and axes of discrimination in Polish schools
8	Chmura-Rutkowska et al. (2015)	Gender w podręcznikach [Gender in textbooks]	Qualitative and quantitative analysis of gender and gender relations in Polish textbooks

[36] LGBT youth are more likely to experience bullying (Berlan et al., 2010; Poteat et al., 2009; Williams et al., 2005). (We would like to thank Mark McGlashan for helping with these references.)

To date, then, there have been only a few inquiries into the issue of equality at various levels of education in Poland. [37] Relatively, however, there is a preponderance of studies of gender and just a little on sexuality *per se*.

Sunderland's (2015a) observation that while much research into gender representation (and construction) in EFL coursebooks has been carried out, sexuality has been under-explored, is also applicable to the studies above. Consequently, while research into gender (discrimination) in education globally has witnessed a long tradition (Menard-Warwick et al., 2014; Kehily, 2002; Carr and Pauwels, 2005; Kopciewicz, 2011), insights into sexuality are still relatively poor, probably due to the fact that bringing up the subject is likely to bring about opposition in many school communities worldwide (Meyer, 2010: 58). We now look at some of the studies in Table 1.

The early 2004 'School of open-mindedness' report (Żukowski, 2004) foregrounds issues pertaining to national identity, ethnic and religious minorities, and national stereotypes, but devotes only one (sub)chapter to sexuality, giving a little more space to gender roles and stereotypes in the context of *Wychowanie do życia w rodzinie* – family life education (FLE). The report criticises the Ministry of Education for legitimising Catholic Church bias in the FLE curricula which enables FLE textbooks to smuggle in quasi-scientific data – among others – for example about the (non-)use of condoms and about sexual identities, which runs counter to current research evidence.

These observations are congruent with those in a report on LGBTQ and homophobic content in school textbooks. Jacek Kochanowski and colleagues have corroborated these results in a comprehensive and in-depth research survey of biology, FLE, and civics textbooks from the perspectives of sexology, gender studies, sexual education, and clinical psychology (Kochanowski et al., 2013). The textbooks are generally silent on the issue of LGBTQ people, but if they take it up, do so in a very biased way. Apart from an all-pervasive heteronormativity, instances of conflating homosexuality and bisexuality, pathologising of homosexuality, and mentions of reparative therapy as a cure for homosexuality, were also identified. These textbooks also offer numerous theories of 'becoming' homosexual, ranging from

'seduction' to 'extensive-exposure-to-pornography'. It goes without saying that entrusting students who have not yet fully developed critical evaluation/ thinking skills with such textbooks runs the risk of them accepting these propositions, internalising them and acting accordingly.

Such fears have been documented in a study undertaken by a Sexual Educators' Group known as 'Ponton' (Skonieczna, 2014) which – in a survey-based study – explored not only the contents of FLE classes but also their impact on students' lives. [38] For instance, during certain FLE classes, contraceptive methods such as the rhythm method have been presented as equally effective as modern methods. After exposure to this 'knowledge', some individuals who had been using contraceptives, such as condoms, stopped doing so – which resulted in pregnancies. This testifies to the fact that even though the knowledge of modern methods does reach teenagers, it can be suppressed or subverted by the authority of the teacher and the school environment to the disadvantage of the student. At the same time, the majority of the survey respondents (89 per cent) said they saw knowledge about human sexuality as crucial and needed to be included in the core curriculum. A more detailed study of FLE textbooks found that some impose only one national model of masculinity and femininity, which is represented as fundamental to the values of Polish culture (Abramowicz, 2011: 229).

Robert Rient and colleagues (2014) looked at femininities and masculinities as represented in the content of set books used during Polish language and culture classes in schools. 100 per cent of the male students who took part in the research pointed to only male characters as their favourite ones, as did 54 per cent of the female students. This preference for male characters can be linked both to the lack of visibility of female characters in the set books (19 primary school and 15 middle school books featured stories with male protagonists, and only five and one respectively about female protagonists), and the fact that boy readers generally do not admire female protagonists (Maynard et al., 2008). This may, however, not be because they are female *per se*, but because they are depicted in gender-stereotypical ways, i.e. passive, obedient, and represented in large part in terms of their appearance, as opposed to male protagonists who are heroic, active and rescue the female characters.

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[37] Abroad, the situation seems more optimistic, with more projects and attention devoted to the issue (Franck, 2002; Gorski and Goodman, 2011; Hickman, 2012; Kehily, 2002; Toomey et al., 2012).

[38] We note the limitations of this methodology. The findings summarised above should not be regarded as definitive and merit further attention.

Summing up, a modern model of sexual education is virtually non-existent in Polish educational settings; this finding obtains against a background of parents who may be incapable of handling sexuality-related discussions with their children (Izdebski, 2012). Furthermore, in schools, knowledge about human sexuality is communicated during the non-compulsory family life education (FLE), a course very likely taught by instructors with a conservative outlook on life [39] and highly influenced by a Christian ideology, which obscures research-driven state-of-the-art knowledge. The likely outcome of this situation is easily foreseeable: a huge deficit in awareness and understanding of human sexuality in adolescents and adults (Izdebski, 2012: 720). This state of affairs could be rectified by effective sexual education, but a ban on this has been successfully maintained by right-wing politicians. And so the vicious circle closes. [40] It goes without saying that the predominance of stereotypes over medical, sociological, and psychological knowledge results in othering those whose sexuality does not conform to the heteronorm (Krzemiński, 2008). In light of the socio-political climate in Poland, however, the scarcity of research on the construction of gender and sexuality comes as no surprise. [41]

Some equality-insensitive and power-imbalance-blind research into gender-related tendencies in language learning in Poland has however also been carried out (Główka, 2014) with, regrettably, little awareness of the work that has already been done in this domain (see Chapter 2). Danuta Główka makes claims that girls are better EFL learners than boys on the basis of teachers' grades obtained from different schools (high schools and a state higher school of vocational education), a methodology which needs questioning. Główka does not discuss possible differences in grading policies, nor does she attend to the issue of a teacher's subjective judgements concerning language attainment. Thus, the study investigates *reported* student achievement rather than standardised evaluation of such achievement across the investigated sample. Główka explains the 'poorer achievement' on the part of the male sample in part as a result of boys' greater use of non-standard varieties of a given language:

> All official foreign language tests are based on standard varieties, and, in the case of English, for example, it is either Standard British English or General American English. This school objective

definitely reflects girls' linguistic preferences and therefore might work to their advantage. Moreover, male speakers are more likely to swear or employ slang expressions in their speech. School curricula for foreign languages favor standard languages as the most useful and commonly used varieties of a given language, and therefore they can be said to favor girls (2014: 631).

Such claims regarding gendered linguistic behaviour have been widely discussed in the literature and convincingly refuted (e.g. Milroy, 1980; Talbot, 2010; see Cameron, 2007 for a very accessible discussion), and of course early ideas about male speakers being more likely to use non-standard language referred to their use of the L1. This quote simply raises further questions, in particular why 'standardness' has been singled out as the one factor affecting (gendered) foreign language attainment.

In theoretical terms, at certain points, the study tends to conflate biological sex with cultural gender, which further undermines the theorisation of gendered linguistic attainment in this work. We see such research as very problematic as it perpetuates and unashamedly legitimises unsubstantiated received wisdom about gendered language learning. Główka's essentialist recommendations to practising teachers and policy makers are similarly problematic:

> *… there is a need to officially recognize the gendered differences in foreign language learning by, for example, including specific testing procedures which would result in regular monitoring of gender differences in achievement and introducing new teaching and learning styles that would motivate boys to learn languages* (2014: 632).

Although monitoring gender tendencies (not 'differences'; see Section 1.8) may in principle be to the benefit of both female and male students, the grounds on which these particular proposals are founded are shaky. If and when boys do perform worse than girls in the foreign language classroom, this is likely to be for many, intersecting and complex reasons (see Carr and Pauwels, 2005). Also, the conclusion that males need to receive special attention is also problematic in the light of research findings of frequent differential teacher treatment by gender in classroom interaction which in many ways favours boys (see Sunderland, 2004, for an overview).

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[39] Obtaining qualifications to teach this subject is relatively unproblematic (Izdebski, 2012).

[40] Poor knowledge of human sexuality and numerous stereotypical misconceptions are two causes of marginalisation of non-heterosexual Poles who are denied the right to enter any kind of institutionalised partnership (Mizielińska and Stasińska, 2013).

[41] Miceli (2006) reports on a similar situation in the USA, where sexual education has been established for some time now, yet where many Catholic and Christian fundamentalists have sought to limit or eradicate sexual education from schools with a view to protecting their children against the 'dangers' of sexuality and to 'reinstalling sexual morality to the culture' (Miceli, 2006: 363).

We are convinced that divorcing power issues from gender-related projects in educational settings is a challenge to their validity. Indeed:

> Language teaching and learning has often had associations with concentrations of power where … people have sought to learn languages to gain access to power and to resist oppression, and people have tried to teach languages so as to gain control or extend influence over others (Crookes, 2009: 595).

While this claim may seem some distance from the notion of 'gendered attainment', it is a reminder that classroom language learning is essentially social and hence needs to be seen against a wider socio-political background. Here, for example, we can ask whether girls' reported superiority in foreign language learning is the case worldwide, and indeed, when it is the case, whether this advantages or disadvantages them (relative to young men) when they reach the job market. The realisation that ideology, hegemony and other forms of power are at issue in critical EFL research (see Pennycook, 1990a, 1994) has, however, not been given proper attention in the Polish context.

3.5 Sexism in Polish EFL textbooks: now and then

As we have observed elsewhere (Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015), gender-related investigation into EFL practice and materials has been effectively absent in the Polish context for nearly 30 years. More recent literature suggests that this may be changing. We have already looked critically at Główka's (2014) study of gender and attainment. Much more progressively, and in tune with other current research, Iwona Chmura-Rutkowska and colleagues (2015) have subjected EFL books to quantitative analyses. Within a broader context of foreign language education, interest in egalitarian gender representation has started to undergo a (tentative) revival, as seen in Kinga Jagiełło and colleagues' study of the concept of *family* as represented in Finnish and Polish language textbooks for foreigners (Jagiełło et al., 2014).

We conclude this chapter, however, by returning to two pioneer studies of gender and language learning materials in Poland by Adam Jaworski (1983, 1986). In the first study, Jaworski subjected textbooks for teaching Polish as a foreign language to scrutiny;

in the second, he focused on EFL textbooks. The 1983 study identifies 'sexist patterns' (p. 113) in four textbooks. Despite the seemingly represented emancipation of Polish women, certain stereotypical images of females are built into the materials. These included 'complaining women', 'women not being able to find their belongings', 'women as being always late', and 'women as absent-minded'. At this time, with limited availability of alternative sources about Poland and Polish (e.g. no internet), such depictions could have resulted in 'sexist ways of thinking about the target culture among the students' involved in studying Polish (p. 113). Jaworski finishes this paper with a call for action, urging that it was high time to start writing non-sexist textbooks.

In his second paper, Jaworski (1986) presents his analysis of 11 randomly selected Polish EFL textbooks, adopting two different perspectives: language used about women and androcentrism in language use. He categorised language used about women ('linguistic tactics of sexism') in textbooks into three types: omission of women, negative stereotyping of women, and negative contrast with men. With regard to the first type, number-wise, the disproportion of male versus female occurrences was staggeringly in favour of men. Men also heavily outnumbered women in terms of being represented in a greater range of professions. Moreover, many women were nameless, while most men enjoyed the privilege of being identifiable by a name. And while some of the textbooks featured more men than women in stereotypically female domains, e.g. teachers, there were no women in stereotypically male domains, e.g. scientists.

In terms of negative stereotyping, these textbooks were also guilty of perpetuating the idea that beauty and intelligence cannot go hand in hand in one woman, but also gave women a number of negative characteristics not present in men, i.e. being suspicious, indecisive and emotional; also women worry, wives are a pain, are trivial, and females are forgetful. The prototypical textbook woman was not equal to textbook man and was cast in a secondary, supportive role. These findings corresponded to those of many other such textbooks studies, i.e. that both women and men were shown stereotypically, though this was more to the disadvantage of women, and that women were far less visible than men (see also Section 2.2).

Jaworski's findings about androcentric English language use included the heavy use of (pseudo) generic 'man' and 'he'. Exceptions, i.e. of splitting, that is, using the gender-inclusive *his or her*, were rare, and exercise instructions seemed to be inconsistent here. For instance, when exercises referred to stereotypically male pursuits, only masculine pronouns were employed, yet when the topic shifted to getting married, splitting *(his/her)* was used instead. Moreover, the occasional translations revealed a preponderance of masculine grammatical gender and/or terms of address. For example, the sentence 'What can I do for you?' was translated as *Co mogę dla Pana zrobić?* (literally: 'what can I for you Mr do?'); clearly, the original question has a greater referential potential in that it can be used with an interlocutor of any gender. While translations into Polish usually take the masculine form, [42] breaching this tradition can also be telling, e.g. *conceited* in one textbook takes the feminine gender *(zarozumiała)* while *colleague* is rendered as *kolega* (masculine gender). Jaworski also observed that, although *Ms* is – and was then – used by native speakers of English, it was missing from all the textbooks.

Jaworski's (1986) study was original in that it was not informed by guidelines designed by other (feminist) reviewers (e.g. Schmitz, 1984) and introduced interesting points not present in the literature of the time. In particular, Jaworski posed important questions regarding the subjective evaluation of potentially sexist materials. What is sexist, he contended, is not always agreed upon unanimously, and he warned other researchers against 'impressionistic judgements in evaluating FLM [foreign language materials]' (1986: 74). He also noted that men too are portrayed in stereotypical ways, something which had hitherto been underplayed. Jaworski cautioned against unrealistic expectations of EFL textbooks by rightly saying that they 'cannot be blamed for being the sole instigators of sexism in students' use of the target language', but added, 'However, there is no reason why FLM should serve to reinforce and justify sexist usage of the target language by foreign students' (1986: 87).

While Jaworski tended to treat the materials as if they were autonomous objects and downplay uneven power distribution, the study was not unusual in this, for its time; indeed, both studies (1983, 1986) were exceptional for the time and under the limiting communist regime, and Jaworski's work anticipated related developments in this field of enquiry.

3.6 Conclusion

We hope that this chapter has shed informed light on the socio-political context surrounding our study, which will facilitate the understanding of our findings for non-Polish readers. To conclude, at the moment of submitting this book, one primary school in Poznań is considering joining the 'crusade' against 'gender'. The parent council of this school wishes to act against, among other things, 'sexualisation' of their children and 'questioning the stability of sex and gender' by participating in a programme called *Szkoła Przyjazna Rodzinie* ('Family Friendly School'). [43] The 'ideology of gender' moral panic really has been a successful political invention and constitutes a genuine challenge to academia, in particular education and the social sciences. Following Burr, we can only urge other intellectuals to commit themselves to socially engaged research (Harding and Norberg, 2005), and/or relevant exploratory practice (Allwright and Hanks, 2009) or action research (Burr, 1995; see also Baker, 2008).

In the next chapters we move on to document our own study of gender and sexuality in relation to EFL textbooks, classroom practices, and perspectives of different language education stakeholders. In Chapter 4 we look at our methodology.

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[42] This is also standard practice in designing headword structure and providing equivalents in bilingual dictionaries, i.e. all forms are masculine.
[43] http://poznan.gazeta.pl/poznan/1,36001,18120416,Szkola_bedzie_walczyc_z_gender__Rada_rodzicow_jest.html (accessed 15 June 2015).

4

Exploring gender and sexuality in Polish classrooms: methodology

Authors: Aleksandra Sokalska-Bennett and Bartłomiej Kruk

4.1 Introduction

The study pertaining to gender and sexuality we now report on had three different foci: EFL materials (mainly textbooks), classroom practice, and stakeholders' understandings: those of teachers, students, and Ministry of Education textbook reviewers. (See Chapter 1 for the detailed research questions.)

Accordingly, in the course of the project, three major studies were conducted, in three stages. For stage one, the investigation of materials, we carried out a multimodal discourse analysis of selected EFL coursebooks with the main aim to scrutinise ways in which gender and sexuality were constructed. The textbooks and selected findings also later served as stimuli during the focus groups (see below). In the second stage of the study we investigated situated classroom practice of EFL teaching in Poland, drawing on the principles of ethnography. We participated in a number of EFL lessons as classroom researchers, audio-recorded the lessons, and transcribed selected extracts for analysis. In stage three we ran (and moderated) three focus groups – one with high school students and two with practising EFL teachers – and conducted in-depth interviews with two Ministry of Education reviewers of EFL textbooks. The focus groups and interviews were also audio-recorded.

4.2 The textbooks and data selection

4.2.1 The corpus

The corpus of EFL textbooks selected for this study was chosen from five sets, a 'set' potentially including student's books, teacher's books and workbooks, tailored for different levels of learner proficiency. Two 'part-sets' came from primary school, two from *gimnazjum* (middle school) and one from high school levels. All have been officially approved by the Polish Ministry of National Education and are used widely throughout Polish schools. The textbooks were those used in the schools in which observations were undertaken (the second stage of the project), in order that as well as the textbooks, we could look at how they were used, as far as gender representation in particular texts was concerned. The textbooks chosen from each institutional level were:

Primary school

a. *Evolution* (Macmillan)
This is a three-level EFL book series aimed at grades four to six. The *Evolution* series consists of a student's book, workbook and teacher's book. Level 1 was selected.

b. *Project* (Oxford University Press)
This is a five-level programme designed for young English learners at higher levels of primary school. Level 3 – consisting again of a student's book, workbook and teacher's book – was selected.

Gimnazjum

c. *Voices* (Macmillan)
This is a three-level series of textbooks. Each level includes a student's book, workbook and teacher's book. Level 3 of the series was chosen.

d. *Exam Explorer: Repetytorium do gimnazjum* (Nowa Era)
This is designed to be used at any of the three levels of *gimnazjum* education. It consists of a student's book and a teacher's book and was created in accordance with the current requirements for the end of middle school exam. The student's book was mainly used for the analysis.

High school

e. *New Matura Solutions* (Oxford University Press)
This is a five-part course with levels ranging from elementary to advanced. All levels consist of a student's book, workbook and teacher's book and are aimed at students from years 1 to 3. The course was designed with a view to preparing EFL high school students for the official final examination (*matura*). The upper-intermediate level was chosen.

Our selection of books at primary level was to ensure the coverage of different proficiencies, at *gimnazjum* level, different pedagogic objectives, and within the high school set, a 'non-extreme' level. Our aim was to look at each student's book as a whole, and sometimes relevant parts of the teacher's book or workbook, and give prominence to the most interesting and telling texts. The analytical procedure is detailed in the following section.

We also drew on data from other teaching materials which we encountered during observed classes or which were brought to our attention by the participating teachers (see e.g. Section 5.2). These are clearly indicated.

4.2.2 Procedure

A basic framework for analysis was developed. Following Sunderland (2014), rather than looking at gender and sexuality representation holistically throughout the different textbooks, a distinction was made between different textbook sub-genres. Sunderland argues that gender (and sexuality) representation might vary between such sub-genres such as dialogues, reading comprehension and listening exercises. Of particular importance is their different practice potential in the classroom, e.g. dialogues featuring males may be read only by male students.

The initial framework developed for a multimodal analysis of the textbooks consisted of six generic categories: dialogues, reading, listening, grammar exercises and explanations (e.g. grammar boxes), lexical exercises, and speaking. After a pilot analysis,[44] we considered the reliability of the analytical framework and because of the many differences in structure between textbooks, the framework was modified, developed and unified. The new categories were reading, listening, grammar and lexical exercises, speaking, and 'other' (a category which included phonetic exercises, writing projects, and warm-ups). For each of the categories, images as well as texts were considered, and the relationship between images and text.

The general analytical foci for each of the sub-genres were:

- gender critical points
- stereotypical or non-stereotypical representation of femininity and masculinity
- gender roles ascribed to characters
- gendered discourses
- heteronormativity.

With 'gender critical points' (Sunderland et al., 2002), teacher's books were also consulted to see whether they contained any associated recommendations.

4.3 The classrooms and data collection

The second study, of EFL classroom practice, involved fieldwork in Polish schools at three different levels (primary, *gimnazjum* and high schools) between November 2013 and June 2014. This investigation entailed methods of data collection borrowed from ethnography: non-participant observation of EFL classroom interactions, making field notes and audio-recording EFL lessons (see Dörnyei, 2007: 130). Such an eclectic use of data collection techniques, i.e. triangulation of data sources (see also Sarangi and Roberts, 1999), helped us to generate a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of the research site. The ultimate objective was to enable a full and sensitive interpretation of the data.

The data were collected in nine schools in western Poland: three primary schools, four *gimnazja* and two high schools . Five schools[45] (one primary, three *gimnazja*, one high) were in a city with a population of over 500,000; the remaining four, two primary, one *gimnazjum* and one high, were located in two smaller urban centres each with a population ranging from 60,000 to 80,000 inhabitants.

Altogether, the audio data used for this project comprise 47 EFL lessons. In Poland, irrespective of school type, a standard lesson unit lasts 45 minutes. This translates into 35 hours and 15 minutes of naturally occurring classroom interactions. Twenty-five teachers (seven males and 18 females) from nine schools consented to be observed and recorded. They were all professionally trained and had experience of teaching EFL to students at various levels of proficiency. About 240 students [46] participated in the research project; they all attended mixed-sex EFL classes comprising between seven and 18 students at the time of recording. Primary school pupils were all recruited from the fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, as well as the guidelines for foreign language teaching proposed by the Ministry of National Education in Poland, their proficiency in English could be roughly estimated as A1. *Gimnazjum* students were taught to reach B1 or B2 level, depending on the type of course, elementary or advanced. Finally, high school students recruited from the tenth and eleventh grades were not only taught English as a curricular

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[44] Four different textbooks were selected for the pilot study, two primary books: *Starland* and *New English Zone;* and two *gimnazjum* books: *Repetytorium gimnazjalne. Poziom podstawowy i rozszerzony* (Longman) and *Exam Explorer: Repetytorium do gimnazjum.* They were chosen because of their different structures. Each was analysed by two researchers in order to test the analytical framework and check reliability.

[45] According to the Act of the Implementation of the Education System Reform of 8 January 1999, which defines the current structure of the Polish school system, six-year primary education used to start when children turned seven, or optionally six upon parental request. Since 2014 the age of commencement of compulsory primary school education has been gradually lowered to six. *Gimnazjum* lasts three years, after which students join one of three types of high school: high, vocational *(zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa),* or technical school *(technikum)* for three, two or four years respectively.

[46] According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, A1 is the level reached by beginners, A2 by elementary language users; B1 and B2 correspond to intermediate and upper-intermediate levels respectively; C1 and C2 denote proficient language users where C1 is understood as advanced competence in a foreign language and C2 as native-like proficiency.

subject but also for other courses, such as history or geography, where English was the medium of instruction. Their proficiency could be as high as C1. The audio recordings of all lessons constitute naturally occurring data as far as this is possible for such a study.

Like all research projects, this project necessitated the adoption of certain ethical procedures. The research protocol and ethical approach adopted were reviewed and approved by Lancaster University's Ethics Committee.

Being aware that our primary responsibility to our participants was not to harm them, and indeed if possible to benefit them, we engaged the principle of informed consent. We approached all participants to obtain their agreement to participate in the research. We first solicited school principals' permission. They were presented with a general description of our research objectives and activities. Out of 18 schools we initially contacted, nine refused to participate for various reasons and at various stages of the research project. Drop-out decisions were motivated by, for example, ideological considerations (mostly misconceptions about the 'ideology of gender' (see Chapter 3)), lack of time, teachers' lack of interest in social problems in EFL teaching, or objections to being observed and recorded. In most cases, the decision was communicated to us immediately. However, in two instances, principals chose to consult with teachers first, after which they informed us of their withdrawal.[47]

Given the go-ahead, we approached the EFL teachers, some of whom had been delegated by their school principals. The teachers were informed that our research objective was to examine how the representation of men and women in EFL textbooks is addressed and received by students and teachers during classes. It was necessary to be explicit about this because the details were already on the information sheets. Whether and what the primary and *gimnazjum* students taking part in the project knew about our research objectives depended on what their parents had told them, if anything. The teachers were provided with a research description and consent form (see Appendix F), and were asked to distribute copies among their students. The 'being informed' aspect of consent referred to what participation in the research project entailed, i.e. the aims of our investigation, the tasks that the participants would be asked to perform,

possible risks and consequences stemming from participation, the degree of confidentiality of the classroom interaction, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time, as well as dissemination of research findings (cf. Dörnyei, 2007: 69). Two of the head researchers' email addresses were given on the consent form so that legal guardians could ask any questions about their children's participation. In all but one case the parents did not raise any objections.

'Passive consent' was sought directly from the teachers and high school students aged over 18. For those participants under 18, passive consent was obtained from their legal guardians, i.e. if students themselves and/or parents on behalf of their minors consented to participate, they were asked to keep the form and take no action (see Appendix F for the parents' consent form). Conversely, if students refused to take part, or parents/guardians wished them not to do so, they were asked to clearly state their refusal on the consent form, sign and return it to the researchers. The time gap between being informed of the research project and the actual recorded classroom interactions gave participants and their legal guardians plenty of time to make informed decisions about participation or withdrawal, as well as whether they would consent to the recorded material being analysed and published.

All classroom interaction was recorded with a non-obtrusive high-quality digital recorder, Zoom H2 Handy Portable Stereo Recorder, which, when possible, was located at the back of the classroom. Audio-recording made it possible for the researcher at the same time to make 'thick' field notes. These included observations on the context and setting, the teachers' and students' facial expressions and gestures in the course of the recorded classroom interaction, as well as communication after the digital recorder was turned off. As soon as each lesson started, we actively scanned the EFL textbook material to be covered in class with the aim of identifying any sexuality-related content and 'gender critical points' (see Section 2.3). While observing, we made notes on how these two aspects were handled, as well as whether points about gender occurred spontaneously and for what didactic functions, if any. After each class we consulted the relevant teacher's book to see if any guidance pertained to gender or sexuality representation, and, if so, whether this was transformed into situated practice.

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47 Additionally, in one *gimnazjum*, the students themselves objected to the audio recordings when their teacher told them about the research project. In one high school, although all students and their legal guardians had consented, the teacher decided to withdraw from the project before observations started.

Prior to the recording proper, we agreed with the teachers that we would observe at least one or two additional lessons without recording so that our participants could familiarise themselves with our presence and would feel more comfortable when the actual recording took place. We then sat at the back of the classroom taking notes on classroom procedures as well as the teachers' and students' reactions and comments, with the recording equipment switched off to make it appear that the lesson was being recorded for real. This proved particularly effective in the case of one class of primary school pupils who during one first observed lesson treated us as a sort of 'attraction'. They seemed distracted by our presence and even more so by that of the audio recorder: they turned round, peeked at us and explicitly commented on our activities and the equipment, but the novelty wore off when they had become used to us. Although our request to observe extra lessons without recording them met with general approval from the teachers, in one school we were denied this: the teacher claimed that the students would not be ashamed to speak as they were used to their lessons being observed by various external visitors. In fact, during the first recorded lesson, it turned out otherwise: the pupils remained mostly silent if not addressed by the teacher.

At this point it is important to consider the role of paradoxes, especially the *observer's paradox* and *participant's paradox* (Sarangi, 2002), affecting the validity (quality and authenticity) of collected material. The former refers to the observation of a situation being influenced by the investigator's presence at the research site, the latter to a situation of the participants observing the researcher. The participating teachers, in particular, were very aware of our presence in the classroom, and of the fact that they were being observed and recorded. Some treated the observations as a sort of test whereby certain teaching practices or classroom management techniques might make them lose face. This could be observed in the way they conducted their lessons in order to present their best selves.

For instance, during non-recorded observations, some told the students that when the lesson was being recorded, they should not say anything unless explicitly asked. Surprisingly, some teachers also exhibited a high degree of self-disclosure here: for example, in post-lesson small talk, they openly admitted to having separated talkative students, or they asked us if they had done well. Being cognisant of our research objectives, two teachers confessed that they had purposefully selected gender and/or sexuality-related topics in order to facilitate their emergence in class discussions and to provoke students' greater reflection on these social issues than they would normally have done. Finally, a relatively small group of teachers openly admitted to changing their regular classroom practice into one involving the interactive whiteboard, believing that lessons with a standard blackboard are too dull to be fruitfully observed by visiting outsiders, and that the use of technological aids could make the lessons richer in researchable content. Nevertheless, we feel that these points did not invalidate our research findings.

Once every lesson was over, the recorded material was downloaded into a password-protected computer, inaccessible to anyone but the researchers. The files containing the data were numerically coded to maximise confidentiality of the material and the anonymity of the participants. The recordings were listened to carefully, several times, and key extracts transcribed. Orthographic or near-orthographic transcription was applied to all the interactions discussed in this book, to aid readability, and the extracts were lightly edited for the same reason. The exception is Extract 1 in Chapter 6, where a simplified version of Jeffersonian transcription conventions (Jefferson, 2004) was used for conversation analysis of this extract (see below; also see Appendix E for transcription symbols).

All information that could identify our informants (first names, surnames, class names, and locations) were omitted or fictionalised to protect the participants' anonymity.

4.4 Identifying teachers' and students' perspectives: focus group interviews

Focus groups are discussions with multiple participants, including a moderator. What differentiates focus groups from interviews is that whereas in interviews, interviewees normally communicate solely with the interviewer, in focus groups, participants are expected to interact with one another, to elicit perspectives the researcher may not have thought of. In focus groups, the moderator facilitates or moderates discussion by introducing topics but does not take a leading or evaluative position. They also ensure the discussion flows and is not dominated by certain individuals. Focus groups are usually audio-recorded and then transcribed using documented conventions.

The focus groups were 'focused' around portrayals (conservative and progressive) of women and men, girls and boys in EFL textbooks, and their potential uptake in classroom interaction. Focus groups are typically used within a multi-method research design (see Silverman, 2011: 210) and the aim of these groups was to clarify/verify and/or extend the findings from the other stages of the project (involving observation and text analysis) by giving voice to students and teachers concerning gender and sexuality in EFL contexts. We wanted to better understand when and why for these language education stakeholders gender and sexuality become (ir)relevant in the Polish EFL classroom, and more specifically account for certain patterns identified in the classroom interactions (see Chapter 6).

Three focus groups were carried out: two with EFL teachers and one with EFL high school students. The teachers and the students were encouraged by the facilitators (Joanna Pawelczyk and Łukasz Pakuła) to interact with each other, i.e. not only to address their remarks to the facilitator. A third researcher (either Aleksandra Sokalska-Bennett or Bartłomiej Kruk) made detailed notes to be used to support the audio recordings during analysis. Each session lasted between 60–90 minutes and was held at a school with which participants were affiliated. After each interview, researchers' impressions and observations were compared and documented.

Details of the three focus groups are shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Focus group details

Focus group	Number of participants	Participants' status	Location	Length of recording
1	10	Teachers	Big city	70 mins
2	6	Teachers	Small city	51 mins
3	11	High school students	Small city	67 mins

Before the actual discussion, the researchers introduced themselves and the purpose of the focus groups. The participants were assured full anonymisation of any data that could potentially expose their identity, and their consent to be recorded was obtained.

All focus groups were conducted in Polish. First, a few warm-up questions unconnected with gender were asked in order to show that the interaction should primarily be between the participants rather than participants and researchers. The focus groups were semi-structured (cf. Krzyżanowski, 2008) with a number of questions and prompts utilised in order to stimulate discussion. Prompts were in the form of extracts of texts, dialogues and pictures from selected coursebooks (e.g. *Starland* and *New Matura Solutions*), and transcripts showing either 'gender triggered points' (see Section 2.3) or 'gender emerging points'[48] from recorded classroom talk. The same set of prompts was used to facilitate all the focus group discussions, with the exception of the student group, where certain materials which contained classroom interaction were omitted because they came from lesson observations from their school. A full list of the prompts used in the focus groups can be found in Appendices A and B.

Certificates of participation were given to all the participants as tokens of gratitude.

4.4.1 The first focus group: teachers
The first focus group was held in a *gimnazjum* in a large urban centre in western Poland. Ten Polish female teachers of English volunteered to participate. The number fluctuated slightly in the course of the discussion but this did not cause any disruption to the ongoing focus group interaction.

All the teachers were affiliated with the school where the group took place and knew each other, so the data were not affected by lack of familiarity of the participants with each other. Figure 1 presents the seating arrangement of the first group.

Together with the two researcher-moderators, the teachers were sat in a circle facing one another to facilitate communication. The third researcher was sitting at the back of the classroom and taking field notes. This gave him a good view of the non-verbal aspects of the exchanges between the participants.

Although all the teachers contributed to the discussion, they did so to varying degrees. Some, in particular Teachers 2 and 6, actively shared their experiences and commented on the prompts. Teacher 5 was the least talkative, but manifested engagement through minimal acknowledgement tokens (such as *mhm* or *yeah*), nodding and eye contact.

Figure 1: Focus group 1 seating arrangement
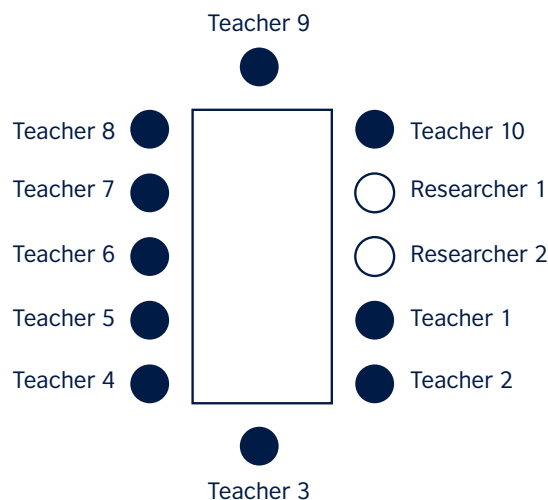
4.4.2 The second focus group: teachers
The second focus group interview was with six EFL teachers, one man and five women. All were Polish and knew one another very well as again they taught in the same school. Some participants were already acquainted with the researchers as they had previously taken part in classroom observations. A room for the focus group was arranged by the teacher participants themselves in the school. This time we provided refreshments for the participants with the aim of creating a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. The seating arrangement, with the teachers sitting in a circle facing one another as well as the researchers, allowed for smooth communication. The third researcher sat outside the main area in order to avoid distracting the participants. Figure 2 shows the seating arrangement, again around a table.

In general, the interaction took place mostly between the teacher participants, rather than teachers and researchers. Although all the teachers were engaged and eagerly shared their experiences and views, the contributions, as is often the case, were not equally divided. Female teacher 2 was least active verbally, but contributed to the interaction with minimal responses and gestures such as nodding and smiling.

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[48] Gender triggered points' and 'gender emerging points' are both concepts which we have developed in the course of this project and which pertain to the 'gendering' of classroom talk.

Figure 2: Focus group 2 seating arrangement

Male teacher

Female teacher 1

Female teacher 2 — Researcher 1

Female teacher 3 — Researcher 2

Female teacher 4

Female teacher 5
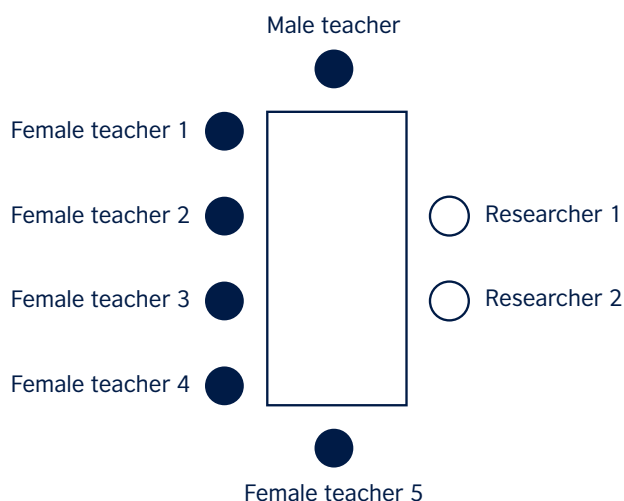
4.4.3 The third focus group: high school students

The third focus group discussion consisted of 11 second- and third-grade high school students from a city of more than fifty thousand inhabitants: five boys and six girls. All participants were over 18 and were chosen by their form tutors from different classes, meaning that some were not acquainted with each other. The participants tried to organise the seating arrangement (which was in a classroom) in a circle so that everyone could see one another. Unfortunately, because of the number of students and the design of the classroom, this posed some difficulties and not every participant could see all the others. This did not, however, affect the discussion between the students significantly, and the interaction was successful despite the seating arrangement difficulties. Figure 3 shows the resulting arrangement:

Figure 3: Focus group 3 seating arrangement

Male student 1
Male student 2
Female student 1
Female student 2 — Researcher 1
Female student 3 — Researcher 2
Female student 4 — Male student 5
Female student 5 — Male student 4

Female student 6   Male student 3
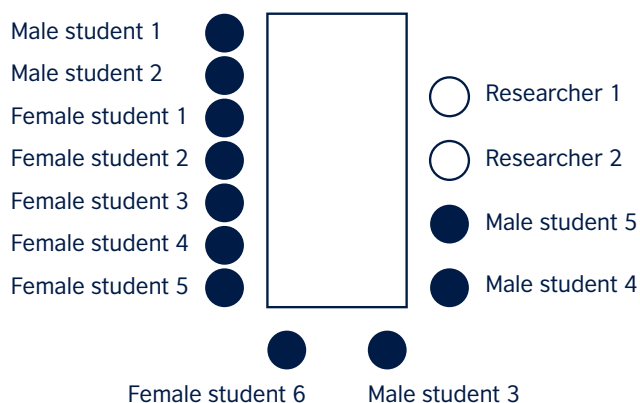
As can be observed from Figure 3, the students arranged themselves in all male–male or female–female groups. Initially, they tended to interact with the researchers rather than with each other, but then they were reminded by the researchers about the purpose of the focus group, i.e. to interact with one another, which they did. Some students were particularly active and some almost completely silent. Those who were particularly vocal were Female student 1 and, especially, Male student 4, who dominated the discussion, often spoke over others and confidently voiced his views. This, and his conservative opinions, repeatedly stirred up clear opposition on the part of others, especially the female participants; this was both verbal and non-verbal, such as shaking of heads and rolling of eyes. The discussion became increasingly heated between Male student 4 and others who expressed opposing standpoints. It was evident that, towards the end of the discussion, the situation negatively affected the atmosphere and the mood of some participants.

During the discussion, an EFL teacher was present at the back of the classroom, engaged in her own professional activities. Although she did not take part in the discussion and had probably decided to be there to keep an eye on the students, she was paying attention to at least some of the interaction, as she once contributed by directing a disciplinary utterance to the students. She never, however, gave any value statement, and did not influence the talk in any way as the students neither responded to what she said nor acknowledged her presence.

4.5 Identifying Ministry of Education textbook reviewers' perspectives

To access a key institutional voice, we conducted interviews with two Ministry of Education EFL textbook reviewers. Both are female academics with many years of experience of reviewing EFL materials and are thus familiar with how the review criteria have changed over the years.

Each interview took about 60 minutes and started with general questions concerning the role of culture in acquiring a foreign language, followed by more specific questions regarding the requirements as regards the avoidance of stereotypes, if any, or requirements of more progressive portrayals of women, men, gender relations in general or of references to sexual diversity, again if any (see Appendices C and D). We were also interested in taking a diachronic perspective to identify the timeline of changes.

In the second part of the interview, the reviewers were presented with the same sample textbook materials that we had used with the students in the focus groups and asked to comment on examples of stereotypical/conservative gender portrayals used in grammar and vocabulary exercises.

4.6 Analysing the data

Four related qualitative methodologies were employed to analyse data from different aspects and stages of the project. Below we provide a brief description of each.

Multimodal discourse analysis allows researchers to investigate the various modes of communication (e.g. verbal and non-verbal) employed by interlocutors in an interaction (cf. Kress, 2010; Norris, 2004; cf. also Vestergaard and Schröder, 1985). It can also be applied to scrutiny of the meanings encoded in not only images (cf. Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996) but relationships between the verbal content (text) and accompanying image(s). For example, non-dominant, alternative discourses of gender relations constructed in the written text may be supported or undermined by accompanying image(s); images may also be supported or undermined by accompanying written text. Images play a crucial role not only in the contemporary media landscape in general, but also in EFL materials, so it is vital to explore their role in conveying gendered and sexual messages.

Qualitative discourse analysis of focus group data[49] is increasingly popular throughout the social sciences (cf. Krzyżanowski, 2010). We were originally inspired by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke's (2006: 87) six-phase model of focus group data analysis:

1. familiarising yourself with the data
2. generating initial codes
3. searching for themes
4. reviewing themes
5. defining and naming themes
6. producing the report.

The analysis in this type of approach is not linear but is a more recursive process, 'where movement is back and forth as needed, throughout the phases' (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 86). Data tend to be presented as accounts of social phenomena or practices corroborated by quotations from focus group discussions (Wilkinson, 2011: 170).

However, given the highly ideological nature of gender and sexuality, and talk around these, we decided to look for discourses rather than themes, a *discourse* being a social, potentially constitutive way of seeing and understanding the world (see Foucault, 1972; see also Sunderland, 2004 on 'gendered discourses'). Discourses are articulated in talk or written text but cannot themselves be seen, or heard; rather, 'traces' of discourses (Talbot, 1998) in talk and written text allow the inference of particular discourses. Silverman (2011) writes that thematic analysis assumes 'a one-to one link between utterances in focus groups and people's views' (p. 212), however, we share Rapley's (2001) view that focus group data can best be treated as accounts where 'the interview data collected are seen as (more or less) reflecting a reality jointly constructed by the interviewee and interviewer' (p. 304). The point is that, however constructed, focus groups generate different ways of seeing and understanding the social world, which is why we chose to use them for this project.

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[49] Three methods are typically used to analyse focus group data: content analysis, thematic analysis and constructionist methods (discourse analysis and conversation analysis) (Silverman, 2011: 211; Wilkinson, 2011).

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an umbrella term for a variety of methodologies and approaches. All, however, take as given that the existence of certain social practices are related to and constructed by discursive as well as material practices (see Wodak, 2009): one of the key theoretical assumptions underpinning CDA is that discursive practices are vital to 'sustain and reproduce the social status quo' (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997) and the social problems generated by it. CDA practitioners draw on concepts such as 'power', 'ideology', 'hegemony', 'dominance', 'domination', 'social problems' and 'social practice'. Uncovering power relations and ideology in discourse can explain the maintenance of the status quo, which CDA, as a problem-oriented approach, attempts at transforming (Wodak, 2009). The 'problems', for this study, include lack of acknowledgement to the point of erasure of the non-heteronormative, male dominance (quantitative and qualitative) in representation, and restrictive understandings of gender roles.

With its origins in ethnomethodology, **conversation analysis** (henceforth CA; Sacks, 1992) provides insights into how individuals perform various actions in their everyday life through the sequential organisation of talk-in-interaction. According to Madill et al. (2001: 415), this qualitative analytical approach can be best described in terms of three characteristics: activity focus, turn-by-turn analysis and the interactants' orientation to the business at hand. The application of CA tools to a stretch of our data (Extract 1, Chapter 6) helped illuminate particular classroom interactional dynamics when less normative voices are not oriented to by the teacher.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter we hope to have explained our research methodology in terms of what we did and why in a way that can be replicated, if others would like to follow a similar research journey. In the next three chapters we look at our findings: on gender and sexuality in textbooks (Chapter 5), gender and sexuality in naturally occurring classroom interaction (Chapter 6) and perspectives of students, teachers and language textbook reviewers (Chapter 7).

5

Gender and sexuality in textbooks

5.1 Introduction

In the first part of this chapter we present the findings of the analysis of selected textbooks at the levels of primary, middle *(gimnazjum)* and high school concerning the social representation and construction of women and men, girls and boys. The second part of the chapter is devoted to our findings regarding sexuality and heteronormativity representation in the selected EFL textbooks at the three school levels.

5.2 Gender representation in textbooks

Textbooks, as Jane Sunderland (2014) observes, are important to the study of language, gender and language education as they constitute a textual form of gender representation and as such are an 'epistemological site' for gender and language study. They are important not only for their ubiquity, but for their potential for 'taken for granted', traditional gender representations which may not be challenged because the main purpose of the textbook is likely to be seen as a facilitator of language learning and teaching, not an agent of the status quo, or even of social change.

The research question for this part of the study, RQ 1, was: 'How are gender and sexuality portrayed verbally and visually in a selection of Polish EFL textbooks?' In contrast to many textbook studies, our analysis was qualitative. Below we present the findings of the analysis of five EFL student's books at the three school levels (for further details of the textbooks, see Section 4.1.1):

■ primary school (*szkoła podstawowa*)*:*
Evolution 1 (Macmillan Polska);
Project 3 (Oxford University Press)

■ middle school *(gimnazjum): Voices 3* (Macmillan);
Exam Explorer (Nowa Era)

■ high school (*szkoła średnia*): *New Matura Solutions upper-intermediate* (Oxford University Press).

For each textbook we followed the same criteria of analysis, taking into account how gender features in different textbook sub-genres [50] (listening tasks, reading comprehension tasks, speaking exercises and grammatical/lexical exercises, as well as 'other', e.g. lead-in exercises and project preparation, depending on the textbook; again see Chapter 4 for details). We took into account the visual aspects of several texts, thus acknowledging the multimodal aspect of textbooks. A crucial concept in the analysis was the 'gender critical point' (GCP), i.e. a part of a text in which gender is relevant in some way. Given that most texts refer to humans (and hence social action), gender critical points are not hard to find. This concept was originally used in a study of 'talk around the text' (Sunderland et al., 2002), i.e. that at a GCP the teacher must do something (even if only to ignore it), and in Chapter 6 we look at what was 'done' with gendered texts by the teacher and/or students ('talk around the text'). However, it can be applied to analysis of the text alone. It allowed us to identify the texts (or part-texts) where gender particularly 'mattered', for example in that:

The gender representation might appear to maintain or exaggerate traditional gender roles (with or without irony), or might appear 'progressive', representing gender roles saliently broadened so as to extend the range of activities normally available to men or women, boys or girls (Sunderland et al., 2002: 231).

To deepen our analysis we also occasionally consulted workbooks and teacher's books to examine whether there is consistency in the construction of gender (workbook) or whether and how teachers are recommended to orient to an identified 'gender critical point' (teacher's book).

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[50] Sunderland (2014) suggests that different textbook sub-genres are likely to have different potentials for gender representation (see Chapter 2).

5.2.1 Primary school textbooks

Evolution 1

Evolution 1 is written for beginners and consists of nine units with three lessons in each. It can be seen to promote gender equality both textually and visually with a representation of boys and girls in various exercises. In the Polish rubric, variants of *she/he* are given, for instance: *jesteś na wakacjach u kolegi/koleżanki* [you are on holiday at your male/female friend's]. This strategy of splitting is salient as typically the generic (masculine: *kolegi*) form would be used.

Listening tasks

Listening exercises have the potential to convey normative expectations in a covert manner, in part because they often involve repetition. For example in one task (exercise 1, p. 113), students are asked to match the name of a(n extreme) sport with an appropriate picture featuring a male protagonist (a visibly male or female silhouette) and then to repeat the names of the sports after listening to a recording. Repeated exposure to the portrayal of men, but not women, functioning in agentic roles may suggest to young learners a sense of 'naturalness' of such portrayals. Similarly in exercise 2 (p. 47), where the students' task is to put pictures featuring different male protagonists in an appropriate order, all the portrayed boys are 'on the go' in an active position.

As regards the characters, a man, *Host*, appears in almost every unit to facilitate the 18 dialogues between the learners, who are always a girl (Carla) and a boy (Darren). An image showing both Darren and Carla accompanies each dialogue. Both take on various discourse roles: both ask questions and answer them and both give correct answers as well as make mistakes.

Some exercises refute dominant or at least traditional gendered expectations, for example of women's acceptance of men's opinions. In exercise 3 (p. 60), for example, a female protagonist (Mara) overtly disagrees with the male protagonist (Joe) by challenging his claims without mitigation or hedging (for example when referring to another person's clothes: 'I don't agree with you. They're fantastic'): a 'masculine interactional style' (see Holmes and Stubbe, 2003).

Readings

There are relatively few readings, perhaps due to the students' low level of language proficiency. However, in those that do exist, there are both female and male protagonists, and conservative and progressive portrayals of boys and girls. In exercise 2 (p. 23) there is a short text about Debbie (an actress) and Mike (a musician). Both are 19 and also attend secondary school. The accompanying image enhances the text (Unsworth and Cléirigh, 2009) as Debbie is portrayed as working on the computer with an essay page visible on the screen and a pile of books on her desk. The image thus additionally positions her as interested not only in acting but also schoolwork. Some departure from gendered expectations can be observed when boys are referred to as 'shy' (exercise 8, p. 79). Some texts also feature female protagonists only. For example, in exercise 2 (p. 100) Vicky describes her female classmates and their drinks preferences. Importantly, of the two pictures accompanying the reading, one features Vicky working on the computer, again enhancing the reading by positioning her as potentially skilled at mathematics since next to the image is some statistical data.

Two exercises (2 and 3, p. 49), however, draw very much on a discourse of gender difference. In exercise 2, we learn that the girl's room is 'very tidy'. In exercise 3, the students are asked to describe the male protagonist's room, which is 'very messy'. The discourse of gender difference is in fact commonly present. Females are positioned as mothers and preferring 'quiet festivals', men as interested in 'loud music' and 'music from different countries'.

In exercise 2 (p. 99), the reading features Kevin and two other people who are introduced in relation to him, i.e. Kevin's mother and Kevin's sister (whose names are not given). The reading is accompanied by a 'true and false' exercise where similar 'relational' references can be found, e.g. 'his mother'.

Speaking

Both boys and girls again perform various discourse roles: female and male protagonists ask questions and answer them. The most interesting example was presented above in the *Listening* section where the female protagonist (Mara) adopts a masculine interactional style (see above).

Grammatical/lexical exercises

The grammatical/lexical exercises also feature a range of female and male characters, as indicated by pronouns (she, he) and specific first names. In the fill-in exercises, male and female characters both again take on various discourse roles: girls and boys both ask and answer questions. In exercise 2 (p. 55), Karin and Nigel take on the discourse roles of questioner and answerer interchangeably.

Equality is also maintained in the images. The pictures in exercise 1 (p. 8) show female and male characters performing various jobs. Two out of eight pictures present non-gender-stereotypical professional roles: a male shop assistant and a female trainer. The 'male shop assistant reference' is then used in the grammar exercise (exercise 2, p. 9). In the visuals accompanying other exercises, male and female characters are presented in comparable/similar social/professional roles, e.g. as a singer and an actress (exercise 4, p. 19), and a football player and a trainer (exercise 9, p. 41).

To conclude, *Evolution 1* mixes conservative and more progressive gender portrayals and gender relations. More specifically, the textbook sub-genres of speaking and grammatical/lexical exercises depart considerably from the stereotypical division between a feminine domain occupied by women engaging in communal tasks and masculine domain where men function in agentive roles.

Project 3

Project 3, written for students in their last level of primary school education, is generally structured around two types of narrative content:

1. interactions between schoolboys and girls *(Lewis, Trish, Sonia* and *Martin)* characterised by a discourse of heterosexual romance/partner-seeking

2. texts about two private detectives *(Sweet Sue* and *Smart Alec).*

The detectives' names align with gender-normative expectations. Even though Sweet Sue takes on challenging tasks (discussed below), repetition of the two names reinforce gender stereotypes.

Listening tasks

The listening tasks revolve mainly around these two main narratives and characters. Other listening exercises feature famous female and male protagonists (e.g. Beatrix Potter and Lewis Gordon Pugh). The presence of both female and male characters is reflected in the accompanying pictures. Some tasks feature both a female and a male character (e.g. exercise 4, p. 49) or a female character only (exercise 1b, p. 66).

Readings

A general theme in the readings in *Project 3* as a whole is the portrayal of women and girls whose main preoccupation is shopping, while men (and dads) tend to get new jobs in distant/new places and consequently the whole family is forced to relocate. The readings also revolve around the two main narratives concerning the group of friends and the two detectives. Sweet Sue is sometimes portrayed as assertive and brave despite her nickname. For example on page 7, commenting on how she gets on with her fellow male detective, she says: 'I'm going to fight back …'. This is because generally the two detectives compete with each other and the male detective tends to be more successful. Sue also makes some mistakes, for instance she (by chance) gives directions to some bank robbers. At the end of the story, Sue suggests that they should be working as a team rather than rivals, thus being positioned as co-operative –something of a feminine stereotype. She however challenges the male detective's suggestion of their agency's name, asserting that it should be 'The Sweet Sue and Smart Alec Detective Agency' rather than 'The Smart Alec and Sweet Sue Detective Agency'.

The readings featuring Lewis, Trish, Sonia and Martin as indicated draw on discourses of heterosexual romance and gender difference. The interactions and positioning of the four young people further constitute a discourse of 'heterosexual sociality' (Lazar, 1999, 2003). In one of the readings ('Virtual Soap'), the girls are presented in the accompanying images as talking on mobile phones and working on the computer. Although the text reveals that they are actually playing the computer game 'Virtual Soap' and taking on the roles of romantic heterosexual partners, these portrayals also offer a reading of the girls as technologically savvy.

Two readings are dedicated to 'My family' (p. 9) and 'Families' (p. 16). 'My family' portrays a nuclear family with descriptions of family members. 'Families' presents 'a typical British home' consisting of 'two parents and one, two, or three children' (p. 16). This could in principle allow a non-heteronormative reading of *parents*. Yet the accompanying pictures clearly define who the parents are: a man and a woman, shown hugging each other. The reading, however, signals that 'divorce is common in Britain' and thus 'a lot of children live in a single-parent family, or in a family with a step-parent and step-brothers and sisters' (p. 16). This could be a nice starting point for a class discussion about other family models, as children living in single-parent families,[51] for example, can feel left out from the 'ideal' image – but this is not suggested by the follow-up exercises or in the teacher's book.

One more text concerning human relationships merits a comment (p. 24). Question 3 in a questionnaire asks: 'What will your ideal partner be like?' The use of 'partner' is very inclusive and at least in principle opens up various possibilities including non-heteronormative readings.

Speaking
Speaking is often combined with listening and writing tasks, featuring female and male characters in various social roles. Here we draw attention to just one exercise (p. 13). The protagonist is Uncle Eric, and the students are instructed to make sentences which show how he 'always mixes things up', for example: 'My Uncle Eric was supposed to give the baby a bottle of milk and take the dog for a walk. But he gave the dog a bottle of milk and took the baby for a walk'. The students are also offered a list of jobs which include chores (e.g. putting rubbish in the dustbin). Following the exercise guidelines, the students will thus – with their sentences – construct Uncle Eric as a hopeless individual, i.e. a helpless male unable to perform basic chores. This echoes common themes in current advertising that depict men as failing in performing housework (see Gill, 2007). The exercise reinforces a dominant discourse of gender difference which positions only women as (conveniently) being able to excel at housework.

Grammatical/lexical exercises
Evident here is an overarching discourse of gender difference and a much more peripheral discourse of gender equality. In a unit entitled 'My life', the students are to practise the language of a 'typical' life path (exercise 1, p. 8). By 'typical' we and probably the textbook writers mean following normative gender expectations whereby a woman and man get married and have two children. This lexical exercise is accompanied by images of a newly wed couple and a family with two children (seemingly a boy and a girl). The exercise ends with a gapped sentence: 'My dad ___ got a new job last year', a theme which is echoed in many texts of this textbook. (In a reading text, on p. 8, for example, Carl narrates his experiences concerning living in a new place: he had to move when his father got a new job).[52] The 'life stages' theme is also taken up in exercise 2 (p. 18) where a discourse of conservative gender relations and heteronormativity predominates. This is to say: a woman and a man get married, move into a new house and then the woman walks the child to school. She does also get a job – and we then see in the picture how she is being congratulated on this by her male boss.

In exercise 5 (p. 35), a female caretaker is however positioned as in control in an emergency. The theme of life-saving situations is continued in unit 3 in a fill-in exercise (p. 42) featuring the male and female protagonists Mark and Jackie, who have both saved people's lives.

To sum up, *Project 3* greatly utilises discourses of gender difference and a gendered division of labour. Compared to *Evolution 1*, *Project 3* depends more conspicuously on positioning women and men in different social roles. This is most evident in the reading sub-genre and in grammatical/lexical exercises where discourses of heterosexual romance and gender difference prevail.

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[51] The national census of 2002 showed that 15 per cent of children in Poland lived in single-parent families. The number is currently much higher, yet there is lack of precise data. For explanations see: http://irss.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Samotne%20rodzicielstwo%20%E2%80%93%20mi%C4%99dzy%20diagnoz%C4%85%20a%20dzia%C5%82aniem.pdf (accessed 14 May 2015).

[52] We also read about Carl's interest in sports – a traditionally masculine representation.

5.2.2 Middle school (*gimnazjum*) textbooks
Voices 3
Listening

In *Voices 3,* three main areas concerning the portrayal of women and men were identified: men and sport, men as criminals, and women and men as experts. The examples from listening tasks discussed below come from the *Voices 3* workbook.

1. Men and sport

Male characters rather than female ones are presented as interested and engaged in sports. This is often achieved by juxtaposing a male character who is doing something sports-related with a female character who is not. For example (p. 21), Mr Granger gives directions to Paul and his sister Ellie: Paul is going to the sports hall while Ellie is going to the library. In another exercise (p. 31), a boy comes into a shop and wants to buy a T-shirt; the shop assistant is a woman. Additionally (p. 44), a famous male skateboarder, Hawk, is presented in a reading and listening exercise.

2. Men as criminals

One listening exercise (p. 23) features Butch Cassidy, a famous American robber and gang member, who is eventually shot dead. The theme of 'men as criminals' reflects a general finding across the textbook and the accompanying workbook.

3. Women and men as experts

Several exercises present male and female characters as experts. Interestingly, their expertise does not always accord to conventional gender(ed) expectations. On page 33, Stephen is talking about car boot sales and what they are. In another exercise (combining listening and reading, p. 35), a woman is presented as an expert on coins. However, we only learn from her voice on the CD that she is a woman. Both men and women give advice on health (p. 41). A few exercises feature exclusively male or female characters as experts, e.g. a woman talks about a famous skateboarder (p. 44) and a man about stunts (p. 45; both are also reading exercises – see below).

Reading (and listening)

In *Voices 3* several reading comprehension tasks are in fact matched with listening exercises, i.e. students are asked to read something and on that basis do a task (e.g. decide what to put in gaps and then check their answers from a recording). Two main gendered themes were identified: men and crime, and women occupying a symbolically feminine sphere (but see also above on women and men as experts).

1. Men and crime

The topic of crime is gendered in that the great majority of characters connected with crime (both criminals and policemen) are men.

The student's book features a text entitled 'Vanished! The mystery of Dan Cooper' (p. 21). Dan Cooper was a hijacker who threatened a female flight attendant, had a bomb in his suitcase, demanded money and forced the plane to go to a different destination. A visual shows him wearing a suit and bow tie with a suitcase full of money and making a parachute jump.

One reading comprehension (p. 24) consists of three separate texts on the topic of crime. All are about men: two men committing crime and a police officer. All have a pictorial representation enhancing the gendered reading, where collectively the features attributed to them are: dropping litter, anti-social behaviour and a visual representation of the police officer as male.

The workbook exercises follow the same convention, i.e. men are described as criminals, detectives or law protectors. One exercise (p. 25) consists of two texts about crime which also feature only men. Text one is about gang member Jesse James, described as engaged in robbing banks and coaches, whose fellow members were infamous for murder and armed robbery. Text two is about the famous American outlaw William Bonney, described as being arrested for stealing, escaping from jail, committing murder and being sentenced to death. The person who caught him was also a man: Sheriff Pat Garrett.

2. Women occupying a symbolically feminine sphere (shopping, magazines or fashion)
In the student's book, one text (p. 36) consists of three sub-texts about teenagers' spending habits. Text one features a boy who wants to open a savings account and buy a house and a car. In contrast, texts two and three feature girls who like shopping (one says she loves it). One could be described as a shopaholic and the other says she buys clothes and CDs with her pocket money. In the visual representations, the girls are presented during shopping or just after, carrying shopping bags, whereas the boy is presented simply sitting down in some unknown location. In this way the girls are presented as engaging in normatively feminine activity, the representation of the boy standing in contrast.

In another reading comprehension text (p. 66), boys and girls are juxtaposed. This consists of two sub-texts comparing paper and online magazines. The paper version is represented by two teenage girls who are smiling and reading a magazine together. The text describes 'girls' magazines with articles about boys and fashion and interviews about famous people. They also have problem pages, horoscopes and competitions'. In contrast, text two describes the phenomenon of online magazines and the visual shows two boys in front of a computer. This can be read as men being more able technologically – in line with popular stereotypes.

Lexical and grammatical exercises
An important theme here relates to the positioning of men in the sphere of sport, either very interested in or actively engaged in it, in the sentences and accompanying pictures. For example, on page 50, the majority of pictures of extreme sports feature male characters.

Both women and men are however positioned as successful. Several sentences feature a well-known male personality, e.g. Nelson Mandela (p. 13), Marek Kamiński (p. 48), or a female one, e.g. Gertrude Elion, who invented a drug for leukaemia (p. 19), and Katy Whittaker, one of the UK's top female climbers (p. 52). One interesting dialogue (p. 57) is about a female doctor helping a man who may have a skateboarding injury. The dialogue does not point to the sex of the interactants but the picture presents the doctor as wearing a pink sweater rather than a professional uniform.

In the workbook, mums and dads are presented differently. Fathers are shown through the jobs they do, so that their professional identity is highlighted. Examples include:
- 'What is your father doing in Africa at the moment?' 'He is working as a volunteer.'
- 'What does your father do?' 'He is an engineer.'
- 'My father has to be at work at 6.30 in the morning.'

Mums, on the other hand, occupy the domestic sphere. They tend to be 'other-centred' (cf. Lazar, 2002), doing things for their families. Some examples are:
- Mum: It's cold outside. Do you want to take a scarf? (p. 26)
- Look! Mum bought some popcorn for tonight. (p. 29)
- My mother drew this picture for me. (p. 115)

Overall, *Voices 3* tends to mix conservative gender relations with a seemingly more progressive depiction of women and men in various social roles. The theme of men as actively interested in sports features prominently in the listening and grammatical/lexical exercises, but these sub-genres also mix conservative and more progressive gender relations quite prominently. The reading and listening exercises tend to promote a dominant discourse of 'consumer femininity' (Talbot, 1995) where women shop and are interested in fashion.

Exam Explorer
Exam Explorer aims at preparing middle school students for the middle school final exam by allowing them to practise and develop the skills to be tested.

Listening
Here we found three main themes: men represented in powerful positions and as professionals, gender-stereotypical job division, and women being constructed in terms of appearance.

One task (p. 48) features a doctor whose expertise is stress and how to deal with it, who is invited to take part in a radio programme. The written part of the exercise does not reveal the sex of this professional, but the recording shows 'Doctor Stephens' to be male. He is constructed as a knowledgeable expert. A second task (p. 223) features Professor Nertlett, another male expert asked to participate in a radio programme. He talks to the female presenter about smartphones: she asks questions, he shows his expertise. She says she previously liked her old phone, but changed her mind (thanks to the professor) and now likes her smartphone.

The exercise on page 28 shows a stereotypical presentation of 'dream jobs', with pictorial representations that students are asked to match with recorded descriptions: these include a male pilot, a male truck driver, a male builder, a female 'cashier' at a petrol station and a female designer. One example deserves special attention: a girl is talking about the job of ski instructor. She says that she wanted to be a ski instructor only because she had a crush on a guy, and this allowed her to be close to him. On page 32, people talk about their experiences of work: a woman who is a cook (or perhaps a housewife) says: 'I feel I am more a manager rather than a cook'. However, in the same exercise, a 'real' manager is talking about their job experiences, but this manager is a man.

As regards women being constructed within the stereotypically feminine domain of appearance, in one exercise (p. 8), students have to match what they hear on the recording with a pictorial description of what Anna is going to wear to a party. In the recording, women wondering what to wear are thus presented in the traditionally feminine sphere of appearance. In another exercise (p. 56), students have to match the recording with a pictorial description of what a girl is going to buy for herself. Out of three options, we can see skiing shoes, skis and skiing goggles. The girl is, however, talking about skiing clothes and accessories. In contrast, in the same exercise, one example features men going to a match, and the pictures present three watches showing different times. On page 8, there is another listening exercise featuring boys going shopping. While this might seem quite progressive, it turns out that the boys decide to buy trainers in a sports shop.

Readings
The readings tend to feature men occupying powerful or prestigious positions and present them as having expertise in various fields: they are inventors, experts who give opinions, or famous people (with talent). Examples include Manuel Torres – inventor of a spray fabric, Alexander Parkes – inventor of plastic, Laurent Cantet – film director, Charles Darwin, Salvador Dalí, Leonardo da Vinci, Picasso, and van Gogh. Being good at something seems to be the preserve of men.

There is also a contrasting juxtaposition of men and women in texts on the same topic. For example, in one text (p. 218), a man and a woman talk about their worst holidays. Paula Rainburn wanted to go to Paris to do sightseeing and shopping, but had acute food poisoning: 'When I got better, I wanted to cry when I

realised my holiday in Paris was not going to happen.' Shopping and crying are both normatively associated with women. Colin Preston, on the other hand, was careless, went bungee jumping, and 'As he was falling head first into the river canyon, the passport fell out of the pocket and fell into the water.' Engaging in sports activities that involve risk and danger is stereotypically ascribed to men.

Lexical exercises (dialogues)
In *Exam Explorer* there were a few lexical exercises in the form of dialogues; these mostly involved an agentive boy and powerless girl. On page 13 the dialogue is based on stereotypically ascribed discourse roles: a boy (agentively) asks a girl out. He produces questions, using long sentences. She is passive, only agreeing. In the dialogue on page 21, the girl initiates the conversation, asking the boy: 'What do you think of this room?' He responds and she agrees. He produces a further response and she agrees with that as well. On page 153 the boy is given agency, starts the conversation and suggests things. The girl only responds. She is also ascribed gender-stereotypical roles as regards practices: baking (making cakes) and looking after her little sister (taking her to the cinema for her birthday).

Another dialogue on the same page features characters whose gender is not overtly indicated, but they talk about a male friend: a boy who plays sport, has had an accident, has a broken arm and plays computer games. The dialogue on page 157 is between females talking about seemingly trivial matters: a mother and daughter talk about tidying up the room and people's opinion about the untidiness: in the end the mum tidied the room.

To conclude, the three sub-genres of *Exam Explorer* tend to position women and men in different social roles and as predisposed to different activities. Male characters tend to be in power and to be agentive. Female characters, on the other hand, tend to be presented in terms of appearance and to act in a symbolically feminine manner. Compared to the male characters, they are relatively powerless.

These two middle school textbooks rely on discourses of gender difference by positioning women and men in different types of activities. While an exception was the theme of 'men and women' as experts identified in *Voices 3*, overall, both promote conventional gender relations and do not typically display women and men in more progressive social roles.

5.2.3 High school textbooks
New Matura Solutions upper-intermediate
New Matura Solutions upper-intermediate is aimed at high school students preparing for their school-leaving exam, i.e. *matura*. It is divided into sections corresponding to the skills tested during the exam, i.e. reading, writing, vocabulary, listening and grammar. There is also a culture component in all units.

Reading
The reading sections offer a variety of topics featuring both male and female characters, showing both conservative and progressive gender relations. We identified the following main 'gendered discourses' (Sunderland, 2004):

1. *'Males are geniuses'* (pp. 8–9) and *'Computer-savvy males'* (pp. 51–52)

These readings construe males as 'naturally' capable of becoming prodigies as well as being involved in sophisticated computer and software use from an early age. Such portrayals are cemented by the accompanying photographs, which depict exclusively males. Some of these protagonists are also characterised as socially inept and incapable of maintaining interpersonal relationships. This, however, changes with time when the texts introduce the 'heterosexual marketplace' (Eckert, 1996) as encountered by the male characters for the first time. Themes of different-sex romance, then, also seem to be an intrinsic part of the masculine domain.

2. *'Females as professional achievers'* vis-à-vis *'Females fulfilling communal roles'*

Female characters tend to be constructed in various roles, including communal ones; however, female professional achievers are also salient. We come across two female millionaires, who have made their money due to hard work and skills, in a 'Secret Millionaire' (a reality television show) (pp. 18–19), descriptions of whom are complemented by similar characterisations of two men. This seemingly equal representation is, however, disrupted by the fact that women tend to be situated both in the context of their profession *and* their communal role (i.e. women are successful professionals but also mothers and carers).

Such constructions are also contested by a text which talks about mothers as less successful than fathers in communicating with their offspring: a 'Teenager's guide on how to be a good parent' (pp. 30–31), where Ellie – the 'narrator' – complains about misunderstandings with her mother as well as her being overprotective (note: criticism is not voiced against her father). While this is only one text, many exercises are associated with it. This reading of this text is enhanced multimodally with an accompanying photograph of the mother and daughter looking in different directions and a male character (presumably the father) looking down on the mother. This is a reminder of the importance of an understanding of multimodality both for the analyst and for the critically literate student.

Listening (and lexis)
Lexical and listening exercises have been merged in *New Matura Solutions.* The lexical exercises are of greater interest: they point to a spectrum of representations of both male and female protagonists.

We were able to identify several themes concerning both men and women. Women are frequently found in communal roles (e.g. disciplining children) but also as well-known politicians. Here, the book has been localised, i.e. adjusted to Polish reality, as it presents Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz (at the time of writing, the mayor of Warsaw and vice-president of the political party in power) as well as Angela Merkel (the German chancellor). Men, however, are again often depicted as risk-takers, doing extreme sports and occupying roles stereotypically associated with masculinity, for instance kidnappers and murderers. Overall, this sub-genre does not seem to markedly differ from the previous one, i.e. reading, where the representation of gender roles is again diverse and tends to mix roles that can be seen as progressive with those seen as more traditional.

The textbook is also consistent in splitting pronouns, i.e. using the inclusive *he/she* (and derivatives), throughout. However, it does not employ the less formal 'singular *they*', leaving this to the teacher.

Grammar

Similar gender themes are evident in the 'grammar' sub-genre texts – in particular, a welcome range of representations of women. For instance, a text on JK Rowling (one of several successful and well-off women characters, p. 20), designed to introduce the past perfect simple and continuous tenses, differs markedly from a text on two other structures, *used to* and *would* (p. 16), which constructs an absent-minded Molly Higgins character who almost ended up not using her winning lottery ticket and continued to live on benefits instead of in her eventual 'ten-bedroom mansion near London'.

Two other texts caught our attention as they presented issues stereotypically falling in the female domain but seemed non-gendered at first as far as the written aspects were concerned. The first talks about 'magic mirrors' (p. 50) and the second (p. 60) is a food quiz. Although these do not construe the activity of looking at one's image in a mirror or obsession with eating as female domains, the accompanying pictures disambiguate, or close down, other readings by showing exclusively females. Such cases demonstrate the power of multimodality, which rests on the assumption that when one modality is ambiguous, the other, accompanying one may disambiguate it towards a normative reading (see Section 5.2 for a discussion of 'multimodal disambiguation'). Thus, even though one might be tempted to read the texts as 'gender inclusive', the images prevent this. That said, a text on sports featuring female sportspersons and one on females discussing their gym membership (p. 108 and p. 104) contest the conclusion one might otherwise reach from the abundance of pictures depicting male or gender-ambiguous sportspersons.

Speaking

The 'speaking' sub-genre texts are designed to develop speaking skills which are tested during the *matura* exam. In every section, boxes with tips point to the desired language to be used when engaging in a role play, addressing examiners' questions or describing pictures. For this third task type, especially, this section draws on multimodality, as the accompanying pictures serve as a starting point of most discussions.

Due to the welcome spectrum of diverse representations, it is not possible to generalise about gender roles here. For instance, one of the photographs features a young woman holding a gift bag who seems to be unhappy with it (p. 21). The accompanying questions, for instance 'what is the girl feeling' do not seem to be gender stereotypical. Other photographs foreground female characters as active agents during protests (p. 43).

Culture

We decided to look at the 'culture' sub-genre in *New Matura Solutions* independently of other sub-genres as it takes the form of autonomous units. The teacher's book indicates that this sub-genre aims at presenting cultures of English-speaking countries and hopes to facilitate making comparisons with the students' home country. It consists of reading and listening exercises.

The scope of topics is broad and ranges from literature, religion and politics, healthy living and dieting to Facebook fears and sport. It does take up topics which are commonly regarded as controversial in the Polish context (for instance IVF; see Chapter 3) but does not address any issues related to equality gender- or sexuality-wise (see below), despite the fact that the present-day anglophone world is saturated with ongoing debates on same-sex marriage and gender equity. Instead, students are encouraged to problematise high salaries of (male) football players or the use of Facebook by (male) students. These depictions further cement the discourses permeating the other sub-genres. Of course, we need to do justice to the other problems that these subchapters raise: we cannot downplay issues of starvation in some developing countries or of obesity in the USA. However, we propose that only economic-cum-political reasons could have motivated the publishers to impose a 'blanket avoidance' (Gray, 2013b) of *any* mention of gender – and sexuality-related themes – in the textbook.

5.3 Sexuality representation in textbooks

Having addressed gender-related issues in EFL textbooks aimed at the Polish audience, we now discuss sexuality (and sexual diversity). We concentrate on the following textbooks: *New English Zone 3* (primary level), *Voices 3, English Explorer 2* (*gimnazjum* level), *Exam Explorer Repetytorium do gimnazjum* (*gimnazjum* level) and *New Matura Solutions upper-intermediate* (high school level). This selection of textbooks was motivated not by their representativeness but by our awareness of certain 'telling cases' (Mitchell, 1984) in terms of the texts therein.

Over 15 years ago Scott Thornbury voiced the following cry:

> *Where are the coursebook gays and lesbians? They are nowhere to be found. They are still firmly in the coursebook closet. Coursebook people are never gay. They are either married or studiously single. There are no same-sex couples in EFL coursebooks. There are not even same-sex flatmates: coursebook people live with their families, on their own or with their opposite-sex partners* (Thornbury, 1999: 15).

Unfortunately, this observation seems as true now as it was in 1999. Even worse, as Ben Goldstein (2015) has demonstrated, the erasure of non-heteronormative relationships seems to be ongoing and traces of LGBT people are hardly discernible. During his plenary lecture at the 2015 Queering ESOL seminar 5,[53] Goldstein described a case of two different editions of *Framework*, a textbook of which he is co-author, with relation to the inclusion of sexual diversity. The 2003 edition contained two mentions of gay identities. One, in a section 'How we met', depicted a gay couple alongside three heterosexual couples (this section introduced two narrative tenses: past simple and past continuous). The second mention of gay people was in a separate chapter entitled 'Taboo', couching non-heterosexuality in a narrative of the 'deviant other'. While the latter representation leaves a lot to be desired from the vantage point of positive representation and diversity inclusion, the former seems most welcome. The following 2005 edition, however, underwent a major redesign and erased the gay couples from both the 'How we met' section and the 'Taboo' unit.[54] The latter depiction was substituted with an exercise asking students to reflect on the (taboo) status of, inter alia, two men or women holding hands in public – a situation that is not necessarily gay-imbued but has the potential to invoke such associations.[55]

Our synchronic take on the issue starts with reference to the overarching technique that we have observed, i.e. the 'blanket avoidance of any representations of clearly identified LGBT characters' (Gray, 2013b: 49). None of the textbooks at our disposal featured any gay characters or even characters that could be characterised by an overtly ambiguous identity with respect to their sexuality. All the textbooks abound in heteronormative discourse and thus lexis (see below). For this reason, as well as holding realistic expectations of textbook contents, we draw on Sunderland's (2015b) notion of 'degrees of heteronormativity' to look at the *nuances* of heterosexuality-centred narratives.

All the textboooks were characterised by the omnipresence of a heteronormative lexicon regarding kinship terms, for example *husband, wife, girlfriend, boyfriend* – all in heterosexual partnerships. Only a few feature a 'tentative' departure from this trend by introducing lexis such as *stepmother* and *adoption* (e.g. *Exam Explorer*). Other textbooks present their users with ambiguous pictures accompanying exercise. A case in point is *New Matura Solutions,* which in a unit on relationships (p. 27) features a multicultural group of male and female people. The picture itself does not impose any heterosexual reading; however, the heteronormative lexis with it, i.e. *mother, father,* limits any other interpretations. Another example can be found in *Voices 3.* On page 6 we see three pictures showing a family unit; it is not however a nuclear family par excellence as we are unable to determine the relationships between its members. In the first picture there are five people (two young girls, a woman and two men), the second picture shows (what looks like) a single mother with two kids and the third shows an extended family with many people and one can't really say who is who. This is not to say that these families cannot be read as heterosexual, but rather that they are positioned outside prototypically heteronormative understandings.

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[53] https://queeringesol.wordpress.com/seminar-5/ (accessed 31 May 2015).
[54] This unit has been renamed 'Controversy' in the 2005 edition.
[55] See also Gray (2013b: 51–52) for a discussion of this remake.

Even such portrayals are rare, however, and multimodal readings prevent us from making any claims about their 'progressiveness'. This is the case with an exercise in *Exam Explorer,* which includes a listening exercise containing information about heterosexual relationships (this is evident in such phrasing as 'I wouldn't know how to cheer up my friend if she broke up with her boyfriend'; p. 15). The same exercise includes examples where heterosexuality is not directly stated, as in sentences: 'I think young people date too early – it distracts them from school', 'My parents don't approve of the person who's dating their teenage child', and 'I don't mind kissing and hugging passionately in public'. However, the accompanying picture depicts a teenage boy and girl sitting very close to each other, looking into each other's eyes and smiling, which prompts a heteronormative reading. We want to call this process 'multimodal disambiguation'. It draws on the assumption that a single modality (in this case, the text) opens up possibilities of diverse (sexuality-related) interpretations, but such readings are curtailed by the other, accompanying modality (here, the picture) which virtually enforces a heterosexual reading, closing down other possible readings. Such a process gains significance in the light of the concept of 'talk around the text' (Sunderland et al., 2002; see also Chapter 2) which potentially empowers the teacher to introduce 'progressive' readings. In the above mentioned cases, however, non-heteronormative readings expressed in 'talk around the text' is limited – unless the teacher decides to go beyond the text.

Other textbooks hint at non-normative readings. An example is 'Family life in the UK' (*New English Zone 3,* p. 45), which states that '[a]bout 30 per cent of families in the UK are one-parent families' and introduces the concepts of 'separation' and 'divorce'. However, '[w]e witness, a dramatic shift in (…) the quality and type of the narrative in the second part of this text: Phil's family is presented, again, with the mother fulfilling the communal role while the father is the breadwinner' (Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015).[56] Yet another textbook (*Exam Explorer,* p. 12) features a seemingly progressive example of a single uncle with the following words: 'Uncle Tony is my godfather … Uncle Tony treats me like his own son. Maybe it's because he's single and doesn't have kids of his own'. This allows a reading of a non-heteronormative identity, and constitutes a 'lesser' degree of heteronormativity.

With such observations we are left to ponder how to measure 'degrees of heteronormativity' and what level could be seen as 'satisfactory'? If both global and localised textbooks avoid mentions of non-heterosexuality completely, how can we supplement this gap? Gray (2013b: 48) mentions at least three publications[57] that explicitly address LGBT issues and can address the lack of such content in mainstream textbooks. These, sadly, are difficult to access by Polish teachers, and state-funded institutions are highly unlikely to be willing to purchase them. What we are left with, then, are publications which serve as supplementary resources.

One we have personally encountered – but not used ourselves – is *Taboos and Issues* (see Section 7.2 for teachers' reflections on this). *Taboos and Issues* contains 40 photocopiable lessons, some of which reference gay identities explicitly. They do so, however, in a very unfavourable way. The title points to non-heteronormativity but also suggests 'deviance'. The lexeme *gay* is mentioned most extensively in a lesson entitled 'AIDS' and, as such, facilitates a causal reading between the two. Use of *gay* (and *gays*) as a noun instead of as a modifier evokes the image of a person as constituted predominantly in terms of their sexuality (also see Baker, 2008), and also gay people as a monolithic group (consider also the phrase *the gays*).

What to do when a teacher feels that their class could benefit from sexuality-diverse themes? Here we ask and try to answer two questions: what is realistic that is not being done, and what could in principle be done? We suggest seeking out relevant progressive materials available on various websites, and especially those most up to date on the current state of affairs from anglophone countries and cultures where much has been written, for instance, on non-heterosexual people and the extension of legal marriage to same-sex partners. Debates over these 'hot' topics featured in the mainstream media provide fruitful material for in-class discussions. Nelson (2007) advocates incorporating local themes into classroom narratives and we suggest that discussing Robert Biedroń's[58] election for the post of mayor of Słupsk or Anna Grodzka's[59] seat in the Polish parliament – both reported on in numerous newspapers and magazines worldwide – constitute a powerful resource which could enable further self-identification on the part of some students and open up new avenues of thinking about society at large for all (see O'Mochain, 2006, for similar strategies).

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[56] See Chapter 6 for teachers' reflections on the text.
[57] These are *Choice Readings, Citizenship Materials for ESOL Learners* and *Impact Issues.*
[58] First openly gay mayor and former MP in the Polish Parliament.
[59] First transgender MP in the Polish Parliament and at present the only one worldwide.

5.4 Conclusion

Many previous studies of textbooks have taken a quantitative approach and have consistently and regrettably found women and girls underrepresented numerically, and in the range of activities, occupations and discourse roles in dialogues (see Section 2.2). This has been important work, raising also the question of the *desiderata* of gender representation: crudely, given the need for improvement, should there be not only the same number of women and men, boys and girls, as regards both types and tokens, but should women and men also be represented as performing the same range of occupations, with the same frequencies? Or, should textbooks reflect current (and perhaps likely future) social realities?

As our own study adopts a qualitative approach, we do not address such questions (but see Sunderland, 2015b). We do, however, sometimes have to address patterns, which have a quantitative element: a pattern is constituted of several comparable occurrences, enabling us to talk about typicality or representativeness; on the other hand, a single occurrence may be 'telling' (Mitchell, 1984; see also Chapter 6). Our findings are best described as 'patchy': progress was evident, but some books were more progressive than others, for example *Evolution 1* (discussed above). We are aware that this blending of 'contradictory discourses' might 'enable hegemonic masculinity to withstand the risk of larger, more disruptive structural changes' (Talbot, 1998: 186), but are optimistic that while this may be true of representation, progressive 'disruption' may come from users of the textbooks (see below and Chapter 6).

We found no examples of non-heterosexual characters, which was not surprising. Publishers, writers and illustrators may wish to consider creative ways of rectifying this in future. More surprising, and less obvious, was the extent of heteronormativity evidenced (nuclear families abounded), and accordingly the lack of examples of texts which at least offered non-heteronormative readings. Here, publishers, writers and illustrators might like to work with representations which are at least 'less heteronormative' than hitherto, and we see this entirely realistic, even given the considerations of global publishing as well as the current Polish socio-political context (see Chapters 2 and 8).

We remain convinced, however, that even more important than textbook representations is what is 'done' with those representations in class – by the teacher, the students and in classroom interaction more generally. This is the focus of the first part of the next chapter.

6

Gender and sexuality in naturally occurring classroom interaction

6.1 Introduction

Classroom interaction in the verbal sense is a rather special kind of talk. It is institutional and much of it (though not all) can be described as 'public'. Each classroom, i.e. each group of students learning a particular curricular subject with a particular teacher, can be described as a community of practice (see Section 1.4), with particular ways of doing things, including using language. And there are clear elements of power, much of which resides with the teacher, who can influence a given student's classroom life but also their entire career, and who it is generally believed talks approximately twice as much as their students put together. Power may however also make its way into the classroom from outside in other ways, so that students who are disempowered before they start their school day may continue to be so when they arrive at school. Here we are talking about hegemonic relations associated with relations of class, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. In this chapter we look at how the last two of these are manifested, directly or indirectly, in classroom talk.

6.2 Classroom discourse: gender and sexuality made (ir)relevant

Classroom learning and teaching are always social, and explicit and implicit learning and teaching of a curricular subject cannot be separated from learning and teaching about (a) society (see Menard-Warwick et al., 2014). Relatedly, no language (including that produced in a foreign language classroom) is ever produced in a social vacuum, and even self-study of grammatical structures in a textbook involves reading about individuals who are recognisably men or women, girls or boys (Pawelczyk et al., 2014). Steve Jones (2006) proposes that education as an institution constructs and regulates gendered identities and typically endorses hegemonic masculinity, 'emphasised femininity' (Connell, 1987) and heterosexuality-as-the-norm (see also Gray, 2013a). In view of this, it is interesting to examine how Polish teachers and students orient to gender and sexuality in classroom talk in EFL classrooms.

In this chapter we therefore detail how gender and sexuality (alone or together) feature, become relevant or are made (ir)relevant in EFL classes in Poland in primary, middle *(gimnazjum)* and high schools. We present our qualitative analysis of extracts from principled selections of the naturally occurring data that were collected (audio-recorded) during classroom observations. The extracts are accompanied by details from field notes made during the observations. The analysed data presented below illustrate and evidence how gender and/or sexuality are 'triggered' or 'emerge' in EFL classes. We refer mostly to teacher–student and student–teacher exchanges but sometimes to student–student exchanges. In what follows we therefore address Research Question (RQ) 2: How are gender and sexuality manifested in teacher–student and student–student spoken interaction (a) in relation to EFL textbooks, and (b) more generally? Do teachers and students draw on gender ideologies? If so, how?

6.3 'Gender critical points'

We take as our starting point Sunderland et al.'s (2002: 231) concept of 'gender critical points'. Sunderland (2000a: 154) concluded that 'looking at the text alone may be a fruitless endeavour'. Accordingly, how classroom participants deal with 'gendered texts', e.g. what is *done with* the textbook representations in class, needs closer investigation. Since texts can be used in various ways, it is important to scrutinise how teachers and students *engage* with texts (see Martínez-Roldán, 2005). To look at 'talk around the text' (e.g. Lillis, 2009; see also Sunderland et al., 2002) is to explore how language teachers as an extension of their 'read aloud' role talk about gender, as prompted by textbook texts. Explorations of 'talk around the text' in terms of gender representation can then focus first on those textbook sections in which gender is particularly evident – the 'gender critical point':

> …'critical' in the sense that, having reached such a point in the textbook, the teacher would then have to do something about the particular gender representation *(even if that something was 'playing it by the book', or ignoring it).* (Sunderland et al, 2002: 231).

Gender representation entails portrayals of women, men, boys, girls and gender relations more widely, progressive and conservative. What is of interest is how the texts are 'consumed' (Fairclough, 1992) in terms of 'teacher treatment' as well as in teacher–student and student–student exchanges (Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015).

A teacher's 'talk around the text' may constitute a so-called 'teachable moment' (Havighurst, 1952), i.e. an ideal learning opportunity to offer some insight to students. So a teacher's progressive (and appealing) handling of a gendered text may be used as a trigger for a lively classroom discussion during which students are able to explore certain aspects of progressive and/or non-progressive roles (including non-heteronormative ones) that men and women occupy, perhaps in a particular community, along with their social implications and consequences (see Nelson, 2007; Pawelczyk et al., 2014).

The analysis below focuses on gendered 'talk around the text' in teacher–student interactions and the potential and actual negotiation, challenge and/or rejection as well as 'uptake' of different gendered discourses. Various scenarios may emerge as teachers may subscribe to views apparently put forward in the textbook or, in contrast, challenge them and propose new reading(s). Teachers may also actively prompt students to communicate their own opinions on these views (not least to help learners to concurrently further their EFL communicative skills), or they may silence them. Teachers play a vital role in how the texts will be dealt with in classroom interactions and thus how the gendered content will be consumed. Although this 'handling' has consequences for all EFL learners, young students are in a particularly 'vulnerable' situation as their typically limited foreign language skills and associated trust in their foreign language teachers may prevent them from resisting particular, traditional or dominant readings (Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015; Porreca, 1984; DePalma and Atkinson, 2010).

6.4 Gender and sexuality in classroom interaction

Analysis of the EFL textbooks for this study (see Chapter 5) revealed that gender (and heterosexuality) are extensively drawn on in texts. In other words, numerous gender critical points could be and were identified in the textbooks at all three school levels. Our interest here relates mainly to teachers' actual orientations to specific, selected cases of gender and sexuality content and portrayal. Some of the textbooks we look at here in relation to talk were those analysed as *textbooks* in Chapter 5; some are not.

In all three levels of school, EFL teachers typically oriented to the gender critical points in textbooks through acceptance, in the sense that they tended not to challenge represented conservative gender relations or the omnipresent, covert and overt heteronormativity, or to encourage discussion of more progressive gender relations.

However, some teachers treated their textbook texts differently. In this section, drawing on the empirical data gathered in the course of the project, we propose two new notions, i.e. 'gender triggered points' (Section 6.3.1) and 'gender emerging points' (see Section 6.3.2). Based on our observations of classroom interaction, and informed by the rationale behind developing the conceptual apparatus, we aim to illustrate how these concepts play out in real-life classroom interaction. We also look at what we call 'educational chit-chat' (see Section 6.3.3) and at how this can be gendered.

6.4.1 'Gender triggered points' (GTPs)

The teachers we observed sometimes 'gendered' a text in a particular way and unpredictable way in their talk (see Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015). We refer to this phenomenon as a 'gender triggered point'. Extending Sunderland et al.'s (2002) concept of 'gender critical point' to the notion of the 'gender triggered point' we believe enriches the analytical apparatus by highlighting the dynamic character of classroom interaction and in particular the central role of teachers (Pawelczyk and Pakuła, 2015). In the analysis below, we discuss teachers' own 'gendering' of texts and show how texts can be consumed in a *newly* gendered manner.

In contrast to a 'gender critical point', a 'gender triggered point' (GTP) does not reside in the textbook but is an interactional elaboration of a (gendered) textbook text. Hence the term 'triggered', as a GTP would not occur as part of classroom interaction were it not for the textbook text or other materials introduced in the course of a lesson. A GTP can be built on either a 'gender critical point' or a text which is subsequently explicitly gendered by classroom interaction. Importantly, a GTP seems to be a teacher's tactic to facilitate language learning, i.e. gender is used as a resource that (these Polish) teachers *explicitly* draw on in their talk, to facilitate some aspect of foreign language teaching and learning. This reliance on 'gender as facilitator', however, tends (in our data; this may not always apply) to assume a very binary, rigid understanding of gender, with femininity and masculinity treated as bounded and the boundaries not to be transgressed.

We first, however, present two examples (from high school and *gimnazjum*) where identified gender critical points were *ignored*.

The first case involved high school students reading out loud a text about the number of children in families (textbook: *New Matura Solutions intermediate*). The topic revolved around whether it is 'better' (and the meaning of 'better' was to be deconstructed in class discussion) to have one child or more and, along with it, whether it is more favourable to be an only child or have brothers and sisters – a particularly gendered topic with different layers. In the event, students' 'reading aloud' did not lead to any spontaneous discussion: neither the students nor their teacher took up the content of the reading. The students were then asked to work in groups and prepare lists of pros and cons concerning big families, with the aim to prepare arguments that could be used in a larger project, e.g. an essay. The lists of arguments could nicely have been used as prompts in a discussion concerning gender issues, for example, women's career patterns, women's health and the role of modern fathers. The lists were, however, only used by the teacher to explicate the structure of an essay and consequently an important social discussion was missed.

In the second case *(English Plus 2)*, *gimnazjum* students were to complete a questionnaire entitled 'Are you helpful around the house?' The questionnaire consisted of six questions with three answer options for each and was accompanied by an image of a girl sitting on the floor and talking on the phone. The background of the image featured a messy room. The image can be seen as gendered and progressive as it breaks the construct of 'emphasised femininity' which constructs females as concerned with domestic order and neatness. This task could have prompted an interesting class discussion about who (boys, girls, or both) should help keep a house tidy. Such a discussion, however, did not take place: the teacher instead focused on checking the students' answers and scores.

We also observed that teachers rarely oriented critically to quite conservative and traditional portrayals of women and men in textbooks. For instance, in one of the texts at primary level (*Project 3;* see Chapter 5), the girl who played a large role in the robbery is described only in terms of her appearance (as if to make up for her 'unfriendly' personality). Again, however, no gender-relevant discussion was initiated by the teacher. A teacher's overt uptake of gender portrayals in terms of eliciting students' *own* views about it (be they conservative or progressive) could, however, lead to an insightful socially relevant discussion and would also constitute a pedagogically useful exercise in which various communicative skills could be put into practice.

Teachers were indeed sometimes engaged in *validating* a traditional gendered division of labour (here household chores) by overt and critical comment on behaviour that transgresses normative gender expectations. The following dialogue between the teacher and primary school students followed the listening task (in *New English Zone 3*) about housework. Note that this extract in our data has been transcribed using some conversation analysis notation.

(1) Dads don't do housework [60]

T: teacher; S: student, Ss: students [61]

1. T: Who does most of the housework?

2. Ss: Mum!

3. T: Mum, yes. What about your family?

4. Ss: Mum!

5. T: Mum? Mum?

6. S: Mum

7. S: Dad!

8. S: Grandma

9. T: Haha, yes, of course, you've got grandma! so, grandma, yes

10. T: What about your family?

11. S: Dad

12. S: Mum

13. T: Mum? and yours?

14. S: Mum

15. T: Of course Mum

16. S: Dad

17. T: Next question number who?

18. S: Dad

19. T: Dad in your family, really?

20. S: Yeah

21. T: Wow that's something different

In line 1, students were asked by the teacher about the person in their home who is responsible for doing the chores. Within this interaction a traditional division of labour within a household was interactionally constructed. Most of the students' responses aligned with a traditional gendered division of labour (i.e. women do household chores and men tend not to) and are interactionally reinforced by the female teacher (e.g. ll. 3, 9, 15). One of the students – whose response had been so far left unattended by the teacher (ll. 7 and 11) – managed in line 16 to voice that his dad does most of the housework. The interactional strategy of overlap as evidenced in lines 11, 12 and 15, 16 – well described by conversation analysts – allows us to see how the student is attempting to voice his answer which does not resonate with the dominant gendered expectations.

The idea of 'doing chores' is construed as problematic by the teacher who proffered a 'repair' (Schegloff et al., 1977) in line 17 ('who?') – a verbal double-take. The student (l. 18) repeated their answer, 'dad'. The teacher immediately topicalised this by formulating a challenging statement (l. 19), whose format constructs a male figure as *atypically* involved in household duties. When the student confirms (l. 20) that it is actually his father in charge of housework, this is followed by the teacher's overt comment ('wow that's something different') constructing 'fathers doing chores' as diverging from the expected norm.

In this dialogue we can observe how EFL teachers are easily involved not only in interactional and discursive regulation but also legitimisation of a traditional gender order – although this dialogue could have gone differently. As observed by – among others – Karen Porreca (1984) and Renée DePalma and Elizabeth Atkinson (2010), young children in particular are susceptible to their teacher's (authoritative) voice. This, in turn, may lead to children's reluctance to voice any 'less than traditional' gender relations that they experience at home and in this way do not benefit from full participation in the classroom discourse and interaction. As a result they may not develop certain communicative EFL skills as well as others. As Aneta Pavlenko (2004: 59) claims:

> … *students whose voices are not being acknowledged in the classroom may lose their desire to learn the language or may even engage in passive resistance to classroom practices and curriculum demands.*

We also found teachers who in their discourse did challenge the traditional gender order and gender relations. In *New English Zone 3*, primary students were invited to recount the textbook dialogue entitled 'Family life' which they had listened to during the previous lesson. In the dialogue, 'Mum was angry because no one wanted to help her around the house; her husband and children claimed to be busy'. The teacher tried to elicit the details of the dialogue.

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[60] This extract is also discussed in Pawelczyk and Pakuła (2015).
[61] For transcription symbols for this and all other extracts in Chapters 6 and 7, see Appendix E.

(2) Suddenly he wanted to study?

suddenly – said in a lower voice

1. T: What about the first daughter, Jane? What was her problem?

2. S: She wanted to have a bath.

3. T: She wanted to have a bath, OK. What about Matthew? Matthew? Hm?

4. Ss: Matthew has got a lot of homework.

5. T: Yeah oh suddenly he wanted to study yeah? And what about Lucy, hm?

Line 5 shows how the teacher by using a low voice questioned Matthew's motives. The interactional packaging of her comment constructs this boy's excuse as lacking credibility. Jane's excuse was not problematised by the teacher (nor, later, was Lucy's). The teacher's interactional behaviour in line 5, while she is showing scepticism towards Matthew's 'reason', can also be seen as confirming traditional gender relations where men and boys get out of active involvement in household duties.

Following this discussion the same teacher tried to elicit from students how they help at home:

(3) Who cleans the windows?

1. T: Do you dry the dishes? Maybe Allyson? Do you dry the dishes?

2. Al: No I don't.

3. T: 'No I don't', good. Do you dust the furniture?

4. MS: Yes I do.

5. T: Yes? [astonishment]. In your room or in the whole flat?

6. MS: Only in my room.

7. T: Only in your room. Ok, that's the most important yeah?

       [lines omitted]

8. T: Do you clean the windows? Judy? Do you help your mum? Who helps their mum with cleaning the windows?

9. FS: Grandma

10. T: Ah! Grandma yes!! [laughter] Really grandma! [laughter] That's nice. So who cleans the windows – nobody?

The teacher actively asks her students about their involvement in household chores. She begins by directing her question to a girl and then shifts her attention to a boy, only to express her amazement at his answer – thus casting disbelief and constructing him as incapable/unwilling to actively participate in household duties and linking the textbook representation discussed in Extract 2 with real-life practices (ll. 3–7). A few lines later (l. 8), another female student is asked about whether she helps her mother with cleaning windows. The teacher, yet again, and in contrast to her stance in Extract 2, symbolically approves of the distribution of labour when the student responds that it is her mother and grandmother who are involved in the activity.

We also recorded instances of explicit student negotiation of textbook content where students questioned textbook representations. The following dialogue took place when the high school teacher asked the class to proceed to a communication exercise at the end of the *New Matura Solutions upper-intermediate* student's book (exercise 1, unit 8F, p. 160). The intention of the exercise, which used photographs of men engaged in replacing light bulbs, installing solar panels and riding a bike, was to discuss being eco-friendly (picture description is a part of the *matura* exam). However, some students identified a different message they deemed more relevant to the classroom:

(4) Questioning representations: men replace light bulbs, women shop [62]

1. **T:** In general who and what can you see in the photographs?

   [irrelevant fragment omitted]

2. **FS:** Mens [dismissive intonation]

3. **T:** Men men – OK what are they doing?

4. **FS2:** Work work

5. **T:** Working?

6. **FS:** Well I don't think the last one is working, I mean the one in the last picture.

   [irrelevant fragment omitted]

7. **T:** What are they doing in general?

8. **FS3:** They're doing some eco-friendly things.

9. **T:** Mhm OK erm – does it mean that women shouldn't do that?

10. **FS3:** No I think I mean that women also should do that.

11. **T:** OK, so why didn't they pick a picture with a woman in it?

12. **S4:** Just because.

    [whispering]

13. **T:** Just because … [clearly rising intonation] You mean they didn't have any?

14. **MS4:** I mean it isn't necessary. It doesn't matter if there is a man or a woman.

    [laughter in the class, some disagreement]

15. **T:** It does matter, it does matter to me. Girls, what do you think – I cannot identify with those people here?

16. **FS5:** Well maybe they didn't want to offend women but they just forgot.

17. **T:** But just…?

18. **FS5:** Forgot.

19. **T:** Forgot? OK

20. **MS4:** They don't think about it maybe but they should.

21. **T:** Do you think they should when they choose pictures?

22. **FS:** Yeees.

23. **T:** Yes because you can change a bulb – yes but it seems that it's a very male thing.

    [whispering between two female students]

24. **FS:** Yes *no właśnie* [exactly]

25. **T:** What do you think? What's the discussion about? [directs her attention to the whispering students]

26. **FS:** Well in the task from unit 6 there are only women.

    [laughter]

27. **T:** Shopping yes OK

    [the unit is also on food and cooking]

28. **T:** So you think that these serious things can be done only by men?

29. **Many students** [mixed] at the same time: nooo…

30. **T:** No of course not, that's a very interesting thing, and you've noticed it, yes? OK good – so let's read the instructions. OK Kate, could you read the instructions please?

The immediate answer to the initial question posed by the teacher results in an explicit orientation to gender by the students' foregrounding of *men* as performing the activities depicted in the photographs. Having elicited that these pictures all deal with being eco-friendly (ll. 7–10), the teacher herself returns to these gender-related remarks. The interaction that follows (ll. 12–18) downplays the importance of the gender issue signalled in line 1 by the students, who say that it is irrelevant who, i.e. men or women, perform these activities (they include light bulb replacement, solar panel installation, and cycling). Another student (l. 20), however, signals that the choice of pictures to be included in a textbook is important, and this is corroborated by other students.

Following this exchange, the teacher evokes the idea of a male domain (l. 23), and clearly the pictures could be said to show this – repairing, doing sports. This is met with complementary observations by two female students who notice that another communication exercise (on the same page), with a focus on shopping, features women only (l. 26). This instantiates a critical engagement with the particular multimodal representation. This, however, would not have been possible had the teacher not recognised the importance of the student's remark in line 2. The teacher, then, by picking up on the disagreement voiced by the student who intentionally highlighted the all-male presence in the visual stimuli (l. 2), created a safe environment for discussing an off-topic remark. In this way the language classroom can be considered an environment where the social is linked closely to the linguistic, and where students can, with the right teacher, feel comfortable and

[62] This extract has been reproduced at length, as it seems exceptional due to the student-inspired questioning of the textbook representation.

willing to express their observations (see also line 30, where the teacher expresses appreciation of this input).

Also important in this interaction is bringing of the personal into the public. The teacher is open about her own feelings towards such portrayals and brings up the issue of (non-) identification (see also Block, 2014) with the multimodal representations (l. 15). By observing that she cannot relate her own experiences to those depicted in the textbook, she implicitly encourages her (female) students to be critical of the textbook content.

Another extract with high school students concerns age and gender made explicit in a grammar exercise. The teacher, who knew about the objectives of our project, told us she changed the topic and appeared to be responding to a gender critical point in a gender triggered way (*New Matura Solutions intermediate*). However, she did this without any overt request from us. She had apparently decided that this textbook material held more promise in providing us with data than the text she was currently working on with the class. The following talk revolves around a listening lead-in exercise where students are to complete gaps in a dialogue. All the missing items are constitutive parts of the third conditional ('If we had hurried, we would have …. '). Yet the dialogue itself has a powerful multimodal dimension: both the text and the image present a mother disciplining her son for being late. Before listening to the recording, the teacher asked her students to reflect on their personal experiences on either following or breaching rules on coming back home late:

(5) Where have you been?: rules on coming home
1. T: What about you Adrian?
2. Ad: Well I have to be home at about 11.
3. T: Are you 18 or not yet?
4. Ad: No not yet.
5. T: When are you going to be 18?
6. Ad: In August
7. T: August
   [irrelevant fragment omitted]
8. Ad: Nothing will change because my mother is simply worried about me, so I have to be home at 10 or 11pm unless I tell her that I'm going to be later, then I can be out I don't know till 1am maximum, and the next day she has to go to work. If I don't let her know she keeps waiting for me.
9. T: And it's your mum not your dad who stays and waits for you?
10. Ad: No when I'm in [city name] at his house he doesn't seem to care much.
11. T: Or he just gives you more freedom?
12. T: If there are siblings at home are there different rules set for them. Paulina you seem to want to say something?
13. Pa: Because I have more freedom than my sister – my sister is older than me.

This interaction is important for our purposes for two reasons: the talk about the emotional division of labour of parents with their children, and gender-related rights attributed to the students by their parents. In line 8 the student directly orients towards his mother, who is apparently the domestic rule stipulator and keeper. She is to be notified when her son comes back home, and the student does not seem to question this. When gender is made relevant indirectly, i.e. by the teacher invoking the father and his possible insistence on similar rules (ll. 9, 11), the student dismisses this with 'he doesn't seem to care much'. The teacher then urges her students to analyse the rules-on-coming-back-home-late issue in a more complex manner, i.e. she asks for a critical look at rule adherence across siblings:

14. T: Kate and what about you – you have a brother or more brothers?
15. Ka: One brother.
16. T: One brother. Do you think you are being treated differently?
17. Ka: My parents always tell us they love us equally.
18. T: Mhm good
19. Ka: But when it comes to I don't know when it comes to when my brother wants to go to Warsaw they say it's OK he can go, but when I wanted to Wrocław they said that they would go with me, no matter that I um I um I wanted to meet with my friends there, and my brother have no friends in Warsaw.
20. T: Mm hm
21. Ka: But they didn't let me go so…
22. T: I see, but is it a matter of you being a girl and him being a boy or…?
23. Ka: Yes, yes
24. T: Or him being older?

25. Ka: Yes, I think it's because he's a boy and I'm a girl.

26. T: So they worry about you a little bit more, yes?

27. Ka: Yes

28. T: And are more confident about him and do you think it's unfair?

29. Ka: I don't know I think it's normal.

30. T: Hm, so you accept it because this is the way things are – and do you think it's the same in other families where there are boys and girls?

31. Ka: Yes it's the same.

32. T: So you accept it and it's quite understanding understandable for you.

The discussion turns into a gender-polarised analysis of the rights of *boys* and *girls* within a given household, i.e. gender is being made relevant (l. 14). Kate is encouraged to compare the rights she and her brother enjoy and comes to the conclusion that her freedom is somewhat curtailed with respect to her brother's (ll. 14–22). However, when the teacher offers her the possibility of critical evaluation, she rejects it by drawing on a discourse of 'normality' to account for the different treatment of boys and girls. The teacher, however, consistently maintains the classroom as a safe space and secures Kate's stance by acknowledging non-critically what she said.

The following exchange comes from a *gimnazjum* lesson and is a speaking/vocabulary extension exercise (*Repetytorium gimnazjalne,* exercise 11, p. 122). The teacher attempts to involve one of the students, sitting at the back, in the classroom discussion. She does so explicitly and manages to get him talking:

(6) Yoga is for girls

1. T: Do you want to take part in the lesson today, do you want to say anything, yes or no?

2. MS: Yes

3. T: So, which sport would you like to choose, which of the courses hm from two ... [long silence] Do you like yoga?

4. MS: No

5. T: Why not?

6. MS: Becau– because it's for girls.

7. T: Haha, it's for girls, so what is for boys... [long silence] What do you think, ice hockey?

8. MS: Yes.

9. T: Why for boys not for girls? [silence] Why is it for boys according to you?

10. MS: Because it's brutal.

11. T: Ah, it's violent hm ... [silence] Why is it violent, just because of the rules of the game?

[long silence]

12. MS: Yes

13. T: Would you like to choose ice hockey for yourself?

14. MS: No

15. T: So which one?

[long silence]

16. MS: *Jak powiedzieć 'żadne z tych'?* [How to say 'none of them'?]

17. T: None of them

18. MS: None of them

19. T: OK, so what is your favourite sport – do you like sport?

20. MS: Yes

21. T: What is your favourite one?

22. MS: Actually American football

23. T: American football, mm, it's not popular in Poland I think, is it?

In this transcript, we witness a male student being very passive. He does not seem eager to participate in the discussion and for this reason he becomes the focus of the teacher's attention (see Sunderland, 2004: 90–100). When confronted with the question of his preferred sports and the suggestion that yoga might be one (l. 3), he is very clear about who can do it, i.e. 'it's for girls' (l. 6). The teacher does not allow him to critically reflect on his stance and sends a signal of approval by means of 'friendly' laughter and asking for examples of male sports. The boy constructs sports which entail a certain degree of violence, such as ice hockey (a teacher-inspired example), as a typically male domain, but expresses no interest in either yoga or ice hockey, opting for American football. This exchange shows how gendered discourse permeates yet another sphere of young people's lives – sports. While some are 'masculine', others are cast into the female domain. Regrettably, the teacher does not refer to the collective experience of the class to seek diverse stances on the issue but rather uncritically accepts the boy's opinion and moves on. Potentially this could be interpreted, by the rest of the EFL class participants, as tacit approval of this particular form of gender 'appropriacy' and could 'other' their own, different, experiences.

The following conversation took place while primary students were working on a lead-in pre-writing exercise on 'a school uniform project' *(Evolution 2)*. The teacher is attempting to elicit students' opinions on a desirable school uniform:

(7) Skirts are for girls only

1. T: Tell me, what is your ideal school uniform? What would you like to wear to school as a uniform? Who wants to say? [silence] What wants to say about his or her favourite school uniform? Agnes what would you like to wear to school as a school uniform?

2. Ag: A blue T-shirt.

3. T: Aha, you would like to have a blue T-shirt.

4. Ag: And a yellow skirt.

5. T: And a blue shirt too?

6. Ag: Yellow

7. T: A yellow shirt. OK. [long silence] So this would be your perfect school uniform. Do you like blue and yellow?

8. Ag: Yes

9. T: And the combination of yellow and blue is nice?

10. MS1: Is horrible.

11. T: Nick, what about you? What would you like to wear to school as a uniform? [silence] For sure not a skirt, right? Not a skirt. No – you are not Scottish. [laughter]

12. Ni: Yellow T-shirt.

13. T: Aha. [long silence] A yellow T-shirt plus … [long silence] Trousers or jeans?

14. Ni: Blue trousers.

A related discourse of masculinity was observed with regard to student attire. Both the teacher and the female student construct a T-shirt and a skirt as a model school uniform, indirectly signifying femininity. Furthermore, 'symbolic femininity' is reinforced by the orientation to colours of the clothes (ll. 2–9). This exchange is interrupted by a male student expressing lack of his appreciation of the combination of blue and yellow in line 10 ('it's horrible'). In the next turn (l. 11), the teacher orients to pieces of clothing as gendered and reproduces this norm in her penultimate turn ('a yellow T-shirt plus trousers or jeans'). Notice the use of 'For sure not a skirt' further reinforced by 'you're not Scottish' and laughter. The remark about being Scottish and the laughter are utilised as 'policing' tools strengthening the heteronormativity of dress codes (a boy wearing

a skirt would be considered as transgression of such a norm in the Polish context, whereas the reverse – a girl wearing trousers – would not).[63]

In the next extract, a female high school teacher tries to draw the students' attention to gender. In the exercise in *New Matura Solutions intermediate* (exercise 5, p. 85) on which she builds her question, two men – Jim and Mark – are talking about a recently purchased vehicle. The teacher draws her students' attention to the absence of women from this conversation:

(8) Driving and cooking: whose expertise?

1. T: If two women were having this conversation would it look sound different? [silence] Would two women have a conversation like this? I should probably start…

    [whispering]

2. T: [smiling and with rising intonation] no…

    [laughter]

3. T: Why not?

4. MS: Women and cars

5. T: Hm not so much the thing, yes? [rising intonation]

    [laughter]

6. MS2: Maybe about some dishes or something.

    [laughter]

The initial lines (ll. 1 and 3) create a safe space for exploring this exercise dialogue through a gender lens. However, there was no questioning of the all-male representation in the dialogue. In contrast, male students dominate the floor by drawing on gender stereotypes. Despite this, the teacher is persistent in her attempt at making the female voices heard:

7. T: About what? [short silence] OK, what about the cars, could you repeat what you said because I…

8. MS2: Maybe women could talk like that about some dishes or something like that but…

9. T: Dishes, cooking, children, yes … [easily detectable irony]

10. MS2: My kitchen looks great.

11. T: Heh heh … [slight laughter] So if a woman bought a car she wouldn't talk about it with anybody? Do you think?

12. MS3: She would.

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[63] Kopciewicz (2011) talks about disciplining female looks, in the Polish context, but this also applies to men and has the potential to occur in various classes.

13. T: A very exotic idea – a woman buys a car. [easily detectable irony]

[laughter]

14. T: What happens next? What does she talk about?

15. MS4: Because she wouldn't know what is broken down in this car.

16. T: Hha ha ha ha Some women know a lot heh heh … OK, how about your mums? How much do they know about the cars they have?

17. MS4: The colour.

[laughter]

18. T: Only? really?

The teacher consequently keeps the door open for any incoming female opinions. So far, it is only male students who are willing to voice highly stereotypical opinions regarding the female expertise in the domain of cars ('talking about dishes', 'she wouldn't know what's broken down', 'they know the colour of the car') (ll. 8, 15 and 17). The teacher introduces the subversive technique of irony into the exchange to contest the stereotyped images of women as constructed by the boys.

[lines omitted]

19. T: Girls you didn't say anything, do you agree with them? Ann, do you? Veronica? [short silence] No opinion? Say something, say something! Do you know women who are interested in cars?

[lines omitted]

20. FS1: But my mum must know everything about car because my dad don't have a driving licence.

21. T: Doesn't have a driving licence, and your mum does, yes your mum has a driving licence and she drives the car?

22. FS1: Yes

23. T: See? [rising intonation] It's not always so obvious, aha, and she has to take care of the car, yes? And how does she do that, can she manage?

24. FS1: Yes she can.

Line 19 exemplifies perseverance on the part of the teacher in the face of the boys' dominance of the floor. In the following turn a girl introduces a new perspective: her mother is the only driver in her family. Furthermore, the mother is construed as capable of handling any issues arising with regard to care of the car. Had not it been for the teacher's drive to activate the female voice within the classroom, the male-decentred perspective may not have been heard and the gender-stereotypical examples thus legitimised.

The following interactions come from a class which was a continuation of a previous discussion of gender stereotyping and which revolved around an extract[64] from the now infamous (in the sociolinguistic milieu)[65] *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* by John Gray (1992).[66] This text is premised on (essentialised) gender differences and promotes a simplified gender-difference model of communication and practices. The interactions below took place after pairwork preparations. The students were asked to look at a list of everyday activities (shopping for shoes, talking to a spouse, talking to their mother on the phone, cleaning the house, hanging out or spending free time with a friend of the same gender, reading maps and navigating, and playing sports) and to say how, according to stereotypes and their personal experiences, women and men in their culture differed with respect to these activities. The students participated in the pairwork discussions preceding the in-class discussion in a very lively way.

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[64] The name of the textbook has not been provided deliberately, to protect the identity of the Project participants, as only a handful of schools in Poland use it.

[65] For a comprehensive critique see, for instance, Cameron (2007).

[66] This is John Gray who authored *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*. John Gray (2013a, 2013b) is a researcher affiliated with the Institute of Education at the University of London, and a very different person. We draw on the research of the second John Gray, especially when discussing heteronormativity (see Section 5.2).

(9) Mars and Venus revisited

1. T: Let's share um your thoughts with the group um – shopping for shoes stereotype...

2. FS: Girls usually try lots of pairs of shoes while boys just sit and complain that we spend too much time

3. Sue: [mocking boys' moaning] 'aww can we go away now?'

4. T: Mhm, OK

5. FS: But when...

6. T: Your experience? Is it the same?

7. FS: Yes

8. MS1: Yes

9. Sue: I hate shopping. I don't shop.

10. T: OK Sue?

11. Sue: I hate shopping.

12. T: You hate shopping.

13. Sue: Unless I'm in a mood to go shopping and to try on numerous shoes, dresses, whatever, I really hate shopping.

14. T: Mm, OK [falling intonation], gentlemen... [falling intonation]

    [laughter]

15. T: Do you like shopping for shoes?

16. MS (many): no [laughter]

17. T: So you fit the stereotype, Adam.

18. Ad: No.

19. T: Because you were like not sure?

    [laughter]

    T: Mm, it depends on what? Denis?

20. Den: I hate looking for the shoes like boots for winter.

21. T: Mhm

22. Den: I hate it.

23. T: You hate it?

24. Den: When it comes to normal shoes it's a rather quick decision, it's not something difficult.

25. T: But can you say you like it, you don't mind?

26. Den: I don't mind, it's...

27. Sue: It's a duty.

28. T: It's a duty not a pleasure.

    [laughter]

29. Den: Not a pleasure, yeah.

The teacher elicits students' responses and actively seeks different opinions. This encouraged a spectrum of different stereotypes and, following this, juxtaposition of the stereotypes with students' own experiences. These tend to go either hand in hand with stereotypes (ll. 7–8) or contrary to them (ll.11–20). Importantly, these voices are acknowledged and appreciated but not evaluated (neither by the teacher nor other students). Such a conducive environment makes students more willing to participate and results in in-depth introspection and recollection (ll. 19–26).

30. T: Right, talking to his or her mother on the phone stereotype...

    [omission of irrelevant utterances]

31. T: Gentlemen

32. MS3: I think that in our example ... like when Monika calls her mother they talk basically about everything...

    [laughter]

33. T: OK

34. MS3: From things what they did and etcetera – and when I call my mother I usually I don't know change information or when I want something particular not just because I want to call.

    [lines omitted]

Comparison and contrast of gender-related differences is also welcome and not questioned by anyone. Students seem at ease to express their own views and provide exemplification. Here, lines 30–34 reproduce the 'talkative women' stereotype.

The next extract concerns household labour and is reproduced for the sake of comparison with the preceding extracts:

35. T: Hm, OK, others, what's your experience in that case – boys do you participate in cleaning?

36. Ss: Yes

37. T: Who does the main job?

38. MS4: Me and my brother.

    [sounds of surprise]

39. T: You and your brother, OK, good, well done. OK, so it does not fit the stereotype, yes, OK?

    [lines omitted]

In contrast to the teacher from Extract 1, this teacher does not express her amazement at the fact that household chores are the job of two men in a family but acknowledges it critically and makes sure that this voice is heard by means of repetition and acknowledgement devices such as 'OK' and 'well done' (l. 39). The dialogue continues:

40. T: OK, reading maps and navigating stereotype…

[omission]

41. FS1: … that women are terrible navigators.

42. T: OK, and what's the reality?

43. FS1: In my case it's totally opposite, yeah, definitely, cos my…

44. T: So your mum does the navigating?

45. FS1: yeah yeah yeah

46. T: Is she good at it?

47. FS1: Yeah definitely, my father don't care about the navigator navigating he only drives the car and…

Progressive views are also expressed when the class discusses the myth of 'poor women navigators'. In line 41, the female student critically identifies the stereotype and proceeds to elaborate, casting her father's navigating abilities in doubt ('he only drives the car', l. 48). The class then moves on to stereotypes surrounding cooking abilities:

48. T: What about cooking, what's the stereotype?

49. Ss: Women cook.

50. T: Women cook where?

51. Ss: At home.

52. T: At home, hm. What about restaurants, what's the stereotype?

53. FS2: To be honest it's divided, but I think that there are more men in the kitchen.

54. Ss: Yeah

55. T: Top chefs are usually men, right, and what's the reality, what's your experience in that case?

56. MS3: In my case it's totally different – my father is a better cooker.

57. T: Cook

58. MS3: Cook

[laughter]

59. T: It's OK.

Generally, in this interaction the teacher positions herself as a moderator rather than an evaluative authority. She achieves this by constructing herself as an active listener through the use of such interactional devices such as 'OK', 'yes', 'mhm', which encourage the students to speak (during this observation, it was noticeable that the students felt comfortable in the company of the teacher). She also ensures a safe space for the expression of opinions and non-judgemental reception through numerous repetitions (acknowledgements) of students' answers (e.g. l. 23), and – at the same time – treating the various voices on a par with one another. For instance, she acknowledges both progressive and non-progressive roles that the students share with the class without further evaluation. This tactic is poles apart from the tactics exhibited by other teachers (in interactions 1, 2, 3, and 6), whose contributions to the dialogues seemed to act in the name of normativity (be it a heterosocial division of labour or construing some sports as more masculine than others).

This teacher orients to gender in a twofold manner. First, she uses the word *gentlemen* twice (ll. 14, 31) – a direct translation of *panowie* which is a formal Polish term of address for adult men, sometimes employed also in a less formal or jocular manner. She does so first to encourage the boys' participation when the topic is 'shopping' (l. 14), but orienting to gender in this somewhat ironic way can also be seen as acknowledging the gendered discourses in this discussion. Secondly, she orients to the students' (gendered) experiences outside the classroom by asking them to draw on their personal experiences and critically reflect on the textbook content. Thus, she does not teach only language *per se*, but also actively constructs an environment conducive to developing critical thinking skills.

Having established that *Men are from Mars…* utilises stereotypes and that the students accept this, the teacher then informs the students of the huge success of the publication and asks for the reason:

60. T: Why do you think it's so popular such a popular self-help book?

61. FS1: Maybe because people are interested in understanding the other gender…

62. T: Hm…

63. FS1: But it's based on stereotypes…

64. T: Why is it so popular then?

65. FS1: Because people believe in stereotypes and…

66. T: Do we like stereotypes? Why do people like stereotypes especially gender stereotypes?

67. FS1: Because for example for men it's comfortable to think the woman is a better cook so she should cook every time.

68. T: OK

FS1 critically reflects on the popularity of *Men are from Mars…* Importantly this comes from the student herself, aided by the teacher only in her role of creating a safe space for expressing opinions. Following this, the teacher informed the students of the controversial nature of the publication and added that it received a lot of criticism (research-informed knowledge transmission). In a later one-to-one conversation with one of the researchers, she said the next class would be based on a recording of a lecture criticising Gray's book. This interaction exemplifies a teacher who facilitates and supports active and critical engagement with teaching materials (see Nelson, 2006).

6.4.2 'Gender emerging points' (GEPs)[67]

So far we have discussed 'gender critical points' and 'gender triggered points'. Now we wish to introduce the concept of the 'gender emerging point' (GEP). A crucial feature of the GEP is that no text is required for it to be employed and it is (usually) initiated by the most powerful participant in the class, i.e. the teacher. GEPs can take the form of dividing the class into same-sex groups or directing one type of questions to males and another to females, perhaps with the intention of facilitating the process of language learning (and teaching). Below we exemplify use of the GEP with empirical data.[68]

During one of the primary school classes, the students were practising the grammatical structure the second conditional (e.g. 'If it rained, I'd …'). In their textbook *(Starland 3)* one exercise asks students to complete sentences starting with the prompts: 'If I were an animal, I'd be…; If I were a flower, I'd be…; If I were a colour, I'd be…; If I were a food item, I'd be…' The teacher's book advises the teacher to explain the task, allow time for its completion and then ask students to compare their answers. The exercise was, however, refocused by the teacher who put two sentences on the board with the clear instruction that one was to be completed by girls ('If I were a flower…') and the other by boys ('If I were a car…'). The teacher drew on the category of gender to (potentially) facilitate the process of teaching and learning these conditional structures. Yet she did so in a way which also had the potential to suggest to the young EFL learners a sense of a world based binarily on gender (cf. discourse as socially constitutive (Fairclough, 1992)).

In the second exercise (also using *Starland 3*), the same students were asked by the teacher which television programmes they enjoyed watching. The aim was to practise the names of various television productions. The task was based on a textbook exercise that offered a list of ten programmes ranging from the news to soap operas. The teacher's book instructs the teacher to elicit which types of programmes students enjoy by asking questions. This teacher, however, again refocused the exercise by asking girls and boys different sets of questions: the boys about sports programmes, quiz shows, documentaries and the news; the girls about soap operas, sitcoms, comedy shows and cartoons. The teacher then asked the students to ask one another similar questions; interestingly, though worryingly, the pattern set up by the teacher was followed by the students: boys were asked about the news and sports, girls about sitcoms and soap operas. Again an originally non-gendered lexical task was turned into a gendered activity by the teacher. Regrettably, by using only some of the vocabulary items, the students did not get to practise all the items that the exercise aimed at. What they indeed practised, though, was seeing the activity of watching television as a gendered practice where boys and girls are expected to watch different programmes.

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[67] Sunderland et al. (2002: 260) talk about 'gendered talk around non-gendered texts', giving the example of a teacher dealing with a text about wine-making, written in the passive, if the teacher refers, say, to managers as 'he', and talks about gender-differential tendencies of women and men to get drunk.

[68] The two examples to follow are also discussed in Pawelczyk and Pakuła (2015).

We also collected various examples of teachers pointing to either girls or boys as best 'qualified' to tackle a specific task. These point to an overarching 'discourse of gender difference' (Sunderland, 2004) that characterises the structuring of many classroom tasks in these EFL classes (and, of course, beyond).

In a middle school *(gimnazjum)* class, the students were practising the use of comparative adjectives and were asked to construct sentences to illustrate these. In describing the task, the teacher addressed the boys with:

T: *możecie porównać samochody, samoloty*

T: [you can compare cars and planes]

These examples illustrate the everyday nature of teachers' reliance on gendered expectations and gender ideologies in their classroom discourse, through which they position boys and girls as competent at different tasks and potential future experts in different fields. The teachers we observed did not seem aware of making such gendered comments in their lessons.

The last example comes from a high school lesson during which the issue of whether it is better to take a loan and buy one's own apartment or to rent one was discussed. In a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of loans, the teacher asked mainly boys questions about finance in general. The girls were not encouraged to join in. This clearly positions female students as either uninterested in finance, unable to understand it, or as not needing it in their future lives. But this (presumed) view did not go uncontested. In explaining the intricacies of loans and rents, part of an utterance produced by the teacher was:

T: You buy a flat not a big one just for you and your wife or your girlfriend.

Ss   [to other Ss]: Or your boyfriend … [whispered]

These male and female students were thus attempting to challenge their teacher's 'here-and-now' manifestation of heteronormativity. The teacher's utterance 'or your girlfriend' was potentially received as a heteronormative one, as for some homosexual students a relevant partner would be a boyfriend. We can also read this as heterosexual female students wanting to be positioned as loan takers as well (for themselves and their boyfriends/husbands).

6.4.3 Educational chit-chat

Another manifestation of creating gender relevance in the context of EFL classrooms concerns various gender(ed) ideologies that often accompany classroom activities, in the form of 'educational chit-chat'. Here, we observed the emergence of 'traces' (Talbot, 1998) of gender(ed) ideologies in student–student interactions (mostly in the form of overt comments concerning the content of other students' utterances) and in teachers' discourse relating to giving instructions, explaining issues of language use, or as general/casual comments related to the topics discussed.

During initial non-audio-recorded observations (see Chapter 4), in one *gimnazjum* we encountered some rather untypical but 'telling' ideologically imbued chit-chat. During his lessons, the (male) teacher often resorted to Polish in order to present the students with facts about anglophone countries (e.g. about Mount Kosciuszko). While in itself a good practice, we were rather sceptical about the ratio of actual foreign language learning practice to these 'mini lectures' in Polish.

On this occasion, the input in Polish concerned a personal experience. The teacher recalled a memory of travelling back to his hotel on a bus, during his summer holidays abroad, when he suddenly noticed that his wallet had disappeared and might have been stolen. Back at the hotel, he immediately phoned the bank helpline and blocked his debit card; during this conversation he was informed that there had been two attempts at withdrawing money from his account. This was followed by his comment: 'well, I ain't no stupid old lady who puts the PIN number on the back of her debit card' *(nie jestem jakąś głupią starą babą, która pisze PIN na swojej karcie płatniczej)*. While the teacher's utterance can be seen as crude stereotyping, or worse, i.e. as drawing on discourses of sexism and ageism, two 'vectors of oppression' (Cameron and Kulick, 2003: xv), the students in their turn laughed and did not question the story or its telling. So, in part because they were in a position of relative powerlessness, they became complicit in the telling, these discourses went uncontested and indeed remained a resource for potential (uncritical) future reference.

Elizabeth Morrish (2002) asserts that teachers of all curricular subjects can and do, through simple casual remarks, promote an unthinking heteronormativity (see also Pawelczyk et al., 2014). Dominant gender ideologies can be seen as carrying a built-in *naturalisation*, i.e. 'common-sense' knowledge about how men or women are, understood as fixed and unchangeable (Pawelczyk, submitted). In the classroom, dominant gender ideologies take on special significance and a regulatory function when voiced by the teacher – the voice of authority. The same can also be said of fellow students, due to potential peer pressure (see Jones, 2006). Dominant gender(ed) ideologies can of course be discursively resisted and challenged, including in the discursive space of the classroom (Pawelczyk et al., 2014), but such transgression is not usually met with impunity.

In one primary class, devoted to issues of technology, the teacher asked for Polish equivalents of certain technology-related lexical items, and asked a boy a question immediately followed by a very gendered comment:

T: Co to jest 'hard drive'? To jest za łatwe dla chłopców.

T: [What is a 'hard drive'? This is too easy for boys.]

The comment ('This is too easy for boys') was not the result of only boys' willingness to answer this question, but can also be seen as ideological in its sequential nature, i.e. immediately following the particular question, 'What is a 'hard drive'?'

In another primary class, the teacher was trying to explain the meaning of the word 'goal', and voiced the comment: 'The boys should know this one.'

Of course, educational chit-chat is also the province of student–student talk. In the primary school class where the students were answering questions about what television programmes they watched (see above), the following exchange was recorded:

FS1: I never watch soap operas=

FS2: =*naprawdę? Nigdy nie oglądasz* M jak miłość?'

    [really? You never watch *L for Love*?]

Female student 1's assertion that she never watches soap operas was immediately oriented to by another girl's aligning comment (note the latch (=), i.e. 'no gap, no overlap' between the utterances, a symbol borrowed from conversation analysis) challenging this. Interestingly the challenge opens with the question 'really?' and then an example of one of the most popular Polish television series is offered. This second student's aligning response 'demands' a 'repair' (another CA concept) of what the first student has claimed and can be read as a trace of the ideology that girls are expected to watch soap operas. What is also interesting is that the second student's comment is in Polish although the exercise was being conducted in English. This use of the native language points to a high level of emotionality in the exchange.

6.5 Dealing with grammatical gender in Polish

We now identify a rather different phenomenon where gender becomes relevant. The Polish language heavily relies on the category of grammatical gender, for nouns, verbs and adjectives (for details, see Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak and Pawelczyk, 2014). This is relevant to classroom translation exercises from English into Polish, as English, unlike Polish, has natural rather than grammatical gender. Thus while in English a particular adjective, for instance, retains the same form for both female and male referents, in Polish, a choice needs to be made whether the adjective is to describe a female or a male.

In a *gimnazjum* class of girls, the students were practising use of adjectives in a sentence completion exercise. The (female) teacher was translating English sentences into Polish, drawing on the generic masculine form. Thus the English gender-neutral 'I', as in:

I was six. My mum was upset because I was very naughty.

became grammatically gendered as 'I' was given the masculine grammatical form in Polish. It seems that 'naughty' was symbolically associated by the teacher with masculinity.

Some teachers however in translation exercises provided the students with both masculine and feminine forms in the process of translation. One primary school teacher when eliciting the English translation used the following Polish sentences:

T: *Właśnie zrobi**łem**/zrobi**łam** zadanie domowe*
      [I have just done (m.)/done (f.) my homework]

T: *Nigdy nie by**łem**/by**łam** w Warszawie*
      [I have never been (m.)/been (f.) to Warsaw]

This teacher thus produced both masculine *and* feminine Polish verb forms.

All in all, however, we observed that masculine grammatical gender tended to function as the default form in translation exercises, linguistically reinforcing the predominance and normalisation of masculinity and symbolic masculinity ('male as norm'). Still, some teachers' provision of *choices* of Polish equivalents when administering a translation is encouraging and might be construed as a reflection of change-in-progress in the Polish language (see Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak and Pawelczyk, 2014 on feminist language reform).

6.6 Conclusion

We hope that in this chapter we have shown the importance of classroom talk in the social construction of gender. This is in contrast to the study of textbooks, which, however interesting and important, tends to assume, inter alia, that sexist representations will influence student thinking, and that teachers will teach the representations uncritically, as they appear on the pages on the textbook. Neither may be true. The analysis reported here is also in contrast to the many quantitative studies of the 1970s and 1980s, which looked at differential teacher treatment by gender (for example, praise, blame and question types), and different interactional behaviour of female and male students in mixed-sex classes (see Chapter 2). In this chapter, we rather looked *qualitatively* at gendered discourse in the EFL classroom, and at what is said both in relation to the textbook and otherwise. It is clear that traditional, heteronormative thinking about gender is alive, well and frequently articulated, sometimes almost unconsciously, but it is also clear that some students, and some teachers, are more than capable of articulating resistant voices.

In the following chapter we continue with our qualitative approach and look at what EFL teachers, students and Ministry of Education EFL textbook reviewers have to say on the topics of gender and sexuality in language education, given the opportunity to reflect on these issues and explore them with their peers.

7

Exploring the perspectives of students, teachers and textbook reviewers

7.1 Introduction

We now present and critically discuss the views and insights concerning gender and sexuality in EFL contexts in Poland put forward by the students and teachers in the focus groups and the reviewers in the interviews. In this chapter we thus address Research Question (RQ) 3: How do three groups of language education stakeholders, i.e. students, teachers and Ministry of Education textbook reviewers, respond to examples of gender and sexuality portrayals in textbooks? How do students and teachers respond to cases of classroom interaction related to gender and/or sexuality? As indicated in Chapter 4, the data here is all elicited, and therefore provides speakers' accounts and understandings rather than details of their actual practices.

7.2 Insights from students

The student focus group was conducted with high school students (11 second and third grade high school students) at the school they attend. Five male and six female students and the two researchers in the role of facilitators took part. The third researcher was sat at the back of the room and her role was to take detailed notes. One of the teachers of these students was present during the whole meeting. She took a seat at the back of the room and in no way participated in the interaction. The meeting started with the introduction by the researchers: the aim of the meeting was explained and the format of interaction detailed. Informed consent was provided by all participants, who were assured about our anonymising of the data to be collected and later presented in scholarly publications. In the data discussed below we use English name pseudonyms to protect the identity of our participants.

The students had not taken part in a focus group interview before and were thus introduced to the interactional format of focus groups by discussing a current social topic, i.e. 'whether e-books will replace the paper books'. The actual focus group interview started with a general question about students' opinion(s) concerning the portrayal of women and men in EFL materials. Then students were provided with some actual examples of stereotypical/conservative gender portrayals used in grammar and lexical exercises as a stimulus and asked to comment on them. We used prompts from two primary school textbooks (*Starland 3, New Zone 3*) that feature both verbal and visual texts. We were interested in students' interpretation of the division of labour and the discourse roles textually assigned to male and female characters in the dialogues. We also used prompts from a high achool textbook (*New Matura Solutions)* where we focused on students' perceptions of the images that accompanied the written texts. At the end of the meeting the researchers made sure – by an explicit question – that everybody had voiced their opinions (see Appendix B).

For the data analysis we adapted Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase model framework of thematic analysis but instead of *themes* identified *discourses* as these better capture our interviewees' often ideological views on gender and sexuality in the broadly defined EFL context. (For further details of data collection and analysis, see Chapter 4.)

Analysis of this data allowed us to identify four main discourses, which we provisionally call:

1. Gender difference
2. Your 'normal' is not my 'normal'
3. EFL textbooks rely on stereotypes
4. The pictures are there for a reason.

1. Gender difference

'Gender difference', prevalent in this focus group, can be seen as an 'overarching discourse' (see Sunderland, 2004; Mullany, 2007). 'Traces' of this discourse (Talbot, 1998) were introduced into the discussion by boys and challenged/contested by girls. We illustrate this in three extracts. In Extract 1, we can see how Sam introduces the theme of gender difference into the discussion:

Extract 1

Sam:

In a society women and men are predisposed to do certain things; for example, the mother will get along better with the daughter – this is a reality in these textbooks and not stereotypes.

W społeczeństwie kobiety i mężczyźni wykazują się lepiej w pewnych specjalizacjach, na przykład mama lepiej dogada się z córką – to jest rzeczywistość w tych podręcznikach, a nie jakieś stereotypy.

Amanda:

But this is a generalisation, it's not like that everywhere, sometimes there is a role reversal and they will not show it.

Ale to jest generalizowanie, nie wszędzie jest tak, czasami na odwrót, a tego nie pokażą.

Sam claims that textbooks reflect a reality in which women and men do different things. He does not rely on any mitigation devices ('this is a reality … and not stereotypes'). This interpretation of reality where women and men are better at doing different things is used to justify the common portrayal of women in EFL textbooks as caring, protective and other-centred individuals (see Lazar, 2002). Sam's view is, however, challenged by Amanda, who notes that in 'reality' one can encounter situations in which women do stereotypically masculine jobs ('sometimes there is a role reversal'). She discursively distances herself from the dominant representation of women and men in EFL textbooks by *othering* those responsible for producing the stereotypical portrayals and not more progressive images ('they will not show it').

In Extract 2 a different male student also attempts to validate the stereotypical portrayal of women and men in EFL textbooks:

Extract 2

Mark:

We can't refute that women and men are not the same because this follows from biology and I can't imagine a woman carrying bricks but I can imagine a man making dinner; it seems to me that stereotypes are detrimental but there are also situations where women and men are better predisposed to certain tasks.

Nie możemy negować tego, że kobiety i mężczyźni nie są równi, bo to wynika z biologii i nie wyobrażam sobie, żeby kobieta nosiła cegły na budowie, ale mogę wyobrazić sobie mężczyznę który robi obiad; wydaje mi się, że stereotypy są krzywdzące, ale są też takie sytuacje, gdzie mężczyźni i kobiety mają lepsze predyspozycje do czegoś.

Mark invokes biology (see Cameron, 2007) to account for women's (hypothetical) inability to do physical work ('carrying bricks') yet concurrently he 'can imagine a man making dinner' as far as the portrayal of women and men in EFL textbooks is concerned. This suggests that Mark sees the achievement of more progressive roles for both sexes as a *gradual* process. One part of the process has been completed, i.e. men can function in more symbolically feminine roles. He thus appears to acknowledge some reconceptualisation of social roles for women and men. At the same time, one reading of his words is that he is 'protecting' traditional masculine domains, while trying to perform being a 'new man' through his 'making dinner' comments.

Extract 2 also reflects dominant media discourses on gender which mix evolutionary biological explanations with more cultural reasoning (Cameron, 2007, 2013) and presuppose a binary division of human population and homogeneity within each gender category. In sum, Mark views women and men as excelling at different tasks and gives consent to such binary images in EFL materials even though they might sometimes be detrimental.

Extract 3 features another male student's summary of different representations of women and men in EFL materials:

Extract 3

Peter:

It's not that we are worse or better,
we are just different and this is simply good.

To nie jest tak, że jesteśmy gorsi czy lepsi, tylko po prostu jesteśmy inni i to jest akurat dobre.

This view heavily draws on a (problematic) 'equal but different' essentialist view which Peter seems to take for granted.

These three extracts illustrate how the 'discourse of gender difference' may be drawn to justify a conservative depiction of women and men in EFL textbooks, and a scarcity of progressive portrayals of women. These boys tend to construct women and men through traditional, conservative, binary and bounded categories, which position women and men as predisposed to pursue different goals and tasks in life. Importantly, however, resistant voices are also projected, for example Amanda recognises that the 'reality' they live in does not always follow traditional, dominant conventions and observes that more progressive gender and sexual identity roles rarely emerge in EFL textbooks.

2. Your 'normal' is not my 'normal'

What we call a discourse of normality: 'Your 'normal' is not my 'normal'' was articulated to justify both conservative and progressive gender depiction and to account for gender relations in general. We illustrate this in Extracts 4 and 5. In Extract 4, the stimulus is a picture that accompanies a grammatical/lexical exercise. It features a woman busy in the kitchen baking a cake.

Extract 4

Sam:

These pictures show the reality that is the most normal for the child/student and honestly speaking, I have never met a man who was able to bake a really good cake.

Te obrazki są tak stworzone, żeby to dla dziecka/ucznia było jak najbardziej normalne i powiem szczerze, że ja nigdy nie spotkałem się z mężczyzną, który upiekł naprawdę dobre ciasto.

Carol:

But the fact that dad makes a cake is normal too!

Ale to, że tata piecze, to też jest normalne!

Sam:

It happens but it is not a social norm that a guy comes back home thinking 'I will make a cake'.

To zdarza się, ale to nie jest normą społeczną, że facet wraca do domu i myśli 'upiekę sobie ciasto'.

Amanda:

Why is it a social norm that a woman can make a good cake, sometimes men bake cakes and this is not a problem for me.

Dlaczego normą społeczną jest to, że kobieta potrafi upiec dobre ciasto, czasami mężczyzna upiecze ciasto i nie jest to dla mnie problemem.

The boy and the two girls involved in this exchange express different views on how men and women should be represented in textbooks. At the same time, they all structure their reasoning around the theme of 'normality'. In Sam's view, students are able to relate to images depicting women (rather than men) baking cakes. He uses personal experience to augment his argument: 'I have never met a man who was able to bake a really good cake'. Carol's response also relies on the notion of 'normal': 'But the fact that dad makes a cake is normal too!', stressing that this should not be regarded as anything sensational. Sam strengthens his argument by evoking the concept of 'social norm' to underline that men may bake cakes but in fact rarely do so. The validity of the 'social norm' argument is, however, contested by Amanda underlining that men are able to bake cakes as well.

The exchange in Extract 5 follows the facilitator's question of whether a more progressive depiction of women and men in the pictures accompanying grammatical and lexical exercises would somehow interfere in the process of learning the associated grammatical structures and/or lexical items.

Extract 5

Sam:
Despite everything textbooks should depict something that will not surprise the student, he should just do his homework, right?

Podręczniki mimo wszystko mają pokazywać coś, żeby nie dziwiło tego ucznia tylko żeby on zrobił to zadanie, tak?

Peter:
What is shown in the textbooks should be a 'natural environment' for the student, an everyday phenomenon; the activities should accustom the students to using the language in the most normal life situations.

To, co jest pokazywane w podręcznikach, ma być naturalnym środowiskiem dla ucznia, codzienne zjawisko; czynność ma przyzwyczaić ucznia do użycia języka w najbardziej normalnych sytuacjach życiowych.

Amanda:
But Dad baking a cake is normal too! Unfortunately, it is normal for us that mums bake cakes.

Ale że tata piecze, to też jest normalne! Niestety to jest dla nas normalne, że mama piecze.

Extract 5, a continuation of the exchange in Extract 4, also contains references to 'normal' and 'natural'. Here, however, Sam's argument is extended by his assertion that textbook depictions should include only (social) content that is very familiar to students. In other words, any progressive portrayal of gender relations, for instance, may potentially hinder the process of learning ('he should just do his homework, right?'). The discourse of normality is strengthened by Peter's reference to a 'natural environment' that should be reflected in textbooks, which, in the wider socio-political context of the current discussion (see Chapter 3), can be read as 'conservative gender relations'. Peter also uses the phrase 'most normal life situations', referring to the social scenarios that should be presented in teaching materials in general. This view is again challenged by Amanda, who again brings in the lexical item 'normal' to make the point that more progressive gender portrayal (e.g. 'dads baking cakes') *does* constitute the 'norm' for other students. She also critically assesses the fact that for the majority of students ('us'), the normative expectation is for mums (and not dads) to bake cakes.

It is interesting how often these strong references to what is considered 'normality' and 'normal' were used by the students in defending their different stances, signifying how salient for many the categories of *female* and *male*, along with the associated characteristics of masculinity and femininity, actually are.

3. EFL textbooks rely on stereotypes

In Extract 6 the girls are voicing their opinion of textbooks in general:

Extract 6

Carol:
You are browsing through the book and you are constantly coming across the stereotype of a cleaning woman. I'd like it not to be strange that a dad bakes a cake, it's not about discriminating against men too but to make the roles equal.

Przerzucasz te strony książki i cały czas jest ten stereotyp kobiety sprzątającej, ja bym oczekiwała, żeby to przestało być dziwne, że tata piecze ciasto. Nie chodzi o to, żeby mężczyzn też dyskryminować, ale żeby te role wyrównywać.

Amanda:
Here the mother is doing the homework with the girl while the father has some fun with the son – this pattern gets repeated!

Tutaj mama z dziewczynką odrabiają lekcje, a tata z synem robią cos fajnego – to się powtarza!

Carol observes that EFL textbooks constantly promote the stereotype of a 'cleaning woman' (she means a woman cleaning her own house). This stereotype points to an overarching discourse of conservative gender relations, showing women as subordinate, economically powerless, and not using their brains, something that tends to characterise EFL materials. Carol also visualises what the situation could be ('to make the roles equal'). Amanda also points out the unfair portrayal of girls in EFL materials who tend to (need to) work at their schoolwork while boys are portrayed as having fun and thus potentially rely on luck and being ultimately clever. If Amanda is right, the 'repeated pattern' is also one of homosociality.

The interaction in Extract 7 focuses on social change and the interesting question of its starting point:

Extract 7
Mark:
First we need to change the world and then the books.

Najpierw trzeba byłoby zmieniać świat, a później książki.

Amanda:
Why can't we start with the books?

Co stoi na przeszkodzie, żeby zacząć od podręczników?

Carol:
We have to attend school, we have to use textbooks so they are important.

Musimy chodzić do szkoły, musimy używać podręczników, więc podręczniki są ważne.

Amanda:
We have to give it some thought whether it's fair that we typically treat a woman as somebody who cleans up.

Trzeba się zastanowić, czy to jest fair, że traktujemy zazwyczaj kobietę jako kogoś, kto sprząta.

Carol:
The world is changing and they are constantly showing these stereotypes in these pictures.

Świat się zmienia, a oni cały czas pokazują na tych obrazkach te stereotypy.

Amanda:
Textbooks are the best way to change the stereotypes because textbooks are used at schools.

Podręczniki to najlepszy sposób, żeby zmieniać stereotypy, bo podręczniki są używane.

Mark argues first that change in the content of textbooks (which implies that he thinks the portrayal of gender in textbooks is problematic) can only *follow* social change. However, various social changes which have already taken place are overwhelmingly absent in the EFL materials (as Carol said: 'the world is changing and they are constantly showing these stereotypes in these pictures'). Amanda echoes the point made earlier by Carol ('We have to attend school, we have to use textbooks so they are important') that the changes should be reflected in textbooks since they are commonly used by students and thus this is the best way to eradicate stereotypes. Overall, the girls underline that EFL textbooks heavily rely on stereotypes that depict women and men in normative social roles and view them critically as a source of conservative gender portrayal and gender relations.

4. The pictures are there for a reason
Last, the participants were concerned about the role of textbook images in transmitting content, and there was some disagreement here. For example:

Extract 8
Sara:
It's important to focus on details and how the images subconsciously transmit messages.

Ważne jest skupienie się na szczegółach, na podświadomym przekazywaniu treści przez obrazki.

Sam:
We learn from the book, images are just decoration, attention needs to be focused on the actual messages, not the images.

Do nauki jest książka, obrazki to tylko ozdoby, uwagę trzeba skupić na rzeczywistych treściach, a nie obrazkach.

Carol:
But picture description is a component of the final exam and the picture subconsciously influences us; the pictures are there for a reason!

Ale przecież opis obrazka to jest element matury i podświadomie na nas wpływa; przecież po coś są te obrazki!

Similar to the extracts discussed above, in Extract 8 we can distinguish two competing voices concerning – this time – the role of images in meaning making. Sara considers that images tend to affect our subconscious and thus attention should be paid to what they depict. The importance of images is also stressed by Carol, who observes that picture description constitutes an integral part of the high school final exam. This comment, however, follows Sam's claim that images are an unimportant addition to the actual written text ('decoration') and thus attention should be paid to the written text rather than the accompanying images.

The four discourses identified in the focus group data evidence students' awareness of the presence of gender (and gendered discourses) in the context of teaching and learning a foreign language with reference to materials. Both the male and the female students got very involved in this discussion of gender portrayal in EFL materials and, as we have shown, various dominant and resistant discourses emerged. Resistant discourses included that the dominant 'reality' of conservative gender relations depicted in EFL textbooks often does not mirror students' authentic experiences.

Traces of dominant, traditional, conservative discourses of gender tended to be articulated by the male students, resistant discourses by the female students. This may point to a greater awareness of gender and gender representation on the part of female students, or resistance to social change on the part of the males – or, of course, both.

These students' general interest in gender portrayals (progressive and conservative) evidenced in their discussion suggests that the topic could be easily used for insightful and lively classroom discussions in Polish high schools more widely (see Nelson, 2006, 2007).

7.3 Insights from teachers

We ran two different focus groups with teachers from two different schools (for details see Chapter 4).

From the subsequent focus group analysis, we identified traces of four discourses from Teachers' focus group 1 and of three from Teachers' focus group 2. Contrary to our expectations, as we had expected to find similar concerns being expressed, the two groups voiced very different concerns. The only discourse they had in common we call 'Danger: we live in Poland'.

7.3.1 Teachers' focus group 1

The first teachers' focus group session took place in a middle school. All ten participants were women who teach at this institution. As with the student focus group, the two facilitators first initiated a different discussion (on the issue of e-books suppressing traditional printed books) to give the participants the idea of what happened in a focus group. We then proceeded according to the pre-designed questions and prompts, in Polish (see Appendix A).

After intensive listening to the recording, we identified four discourses, which we call:

1. Stereotypes as facilitating (grammar) learning (and a sub-discourse: 'My reality is your reality')

2. Students incapable of critically reflecting on textbooks

3. Selective tolerance: unable to cross institutional and social boundaries

4. Danger: we live in Poland.

Below we present extracts which best exemplify these discourses. The teachers we quote have been named Susan, Andrea, Virginia, Janet, and Allyson (all pseudonyms).

1. Stereotypes as facilitating (grammar) learning

An overarching discourse surrounding stereotypical depiction of females and males in grammatical and lexical exercises was couched positively in terms of this being a device facilitating grammar learning. According to several of these teachers, when students are confronted with stereotypical gender roles, for instance female nurses vis-à-vis male doctors, these have the potential not to distract students from the main teaching/learning point of a given class, but rather help them to focus on achieving their learning goal. For example:

Extract 9

Susan:

Well, I think that teaching the less proficient classes, I think that these stereotypes help to consolidate in such a way that it is not needed to think about, this about otherness, I don't know, if there were a male nurse here but it is a female nurse, OK I think this is normal, I can associate it with something and I move on, and I draw their [students'] attention to the grammatical point which we are working on at the moment, I think that these stereotypes facilitate associating simple things that I want to concentrate on, and I would not say that this is something negative, we can notice it but…

No, ale ja myślę, znaczy, ucząc właśnie te klasy słabsze, wydaje mi się, że te stereotypy pomagają utrwalić w ten sposób, że nie trzeba się zastanawiać nad tym, nad innością, nie wiem, że tu byłby pielęgniarz, tylko jest pielęgniarka, OK, kojarzę, to jest normalne, a teraz idę i zwracam uwagę na ten temat gramatyczny, który robimy i w tym momencie wydaje mi się, że te stereotypy pomagają w skojarzeniu prostych spraw, na których się chcę skupić i ja bym tutaj ich nie ee nie mówiła, że to jest coś negatywnego, my możemy to wychwycić yyym ale…

Joanna:
Notice it and do something about it, or not?

Wychwycić i jeszcze coś z tym zrobić, czy już nie?

Susan:
I think that they help us to draw attention to the main subject because at this point, if we had a male nurse, I would have comments and we could talk but I have to focus on...

Yy ja myślę, że one nam tutaj pomagają zwrócić uwagę na główny temat, bo w tym momencie, jakby było pielęgniarz, to miałabym komentarze i moglibyśmy rozmawiać, ale ja muszę się skupić na tym, jakby co...

Allyson:
On grammar

na gramatyce

Susan:
On what is the point of the class, I have to accomplish my aim.

Na tym, co jest danym tematem, zrealizować mój cel.

Joanna:
mhm

mm

Susan:
So I would not question that this stereotype works in the wrong way, it helps me to focus on what I want to do with grammar...

Tak że ja bym tutaj nie kwestionowała, że ten stereotyp tutaj źle działa, on mi pomaga zwrócić uwagę na to, co chcę zrobić z gramatyką...

Łukasz:
mhm

mm

Susan:
It helps me to associate, if I have the picture the visualisers will find it helpful, and I wouldn't question that we constantly have to confound...

Pomaga skojarzyć, skoro jest obrazek, to dla wzrokowców będzie pomocny i ja bym nie zawsze podważała, że musimy ciągle mieszać...

Łukasz:
mhm

mm

Janet:
But we are not broadening their horizons but...

Ale nie poszerzamy ich horyzontów w tym momencie, tylko...

Susan:
Yes but now gender crops up and I think it is an exaggeration.

No tak, ale to już gender wchodzi i to już zaczyna już być przesada przepraszam.

In this exchange there appears to be strong resistance towards taking up gender equality themes during classes whose primary goal is seen as explaining and drilling English grammar. Susan contends that stereotypes act to the benefit of students by not distracting them from the grammatical point of a class but rather are a resource she can draw on in order to make grammar intelligible. When this use of stereotypes is contested by Janet, Susan draws on the familiar 'discourse of exaggeration' when gender crops up (possibly influenced by the 'ideology of gender'; see Chapter 3) and closes down the possibility of negotiation of the benefits of non-stereotypical depictions. An opposing opinion, not quoted here, was that talking about gender stereotypes might be a good starting point to try to avoid socialising children into certain gendered professional roles because it may cement reality and prevent social change, but this was not taken up by the other participants.

During this session, the teachers were shown an extract from *New English Zone 3* (*gimnazjum*, p. 45), a text on a nuclear family in the UK consisting of a mother (teaching assistant), a father (computer company employee), Phil (main character in the book) and Phil's sister. The teachers find many aspects of the family correspond to their own experience and at first do not arrive at any critical evaluations. One teacher objected to such evaluations altogether:

Extract 10

Andrea: Well, we can pick holes here, because I cannot imagine a situation that the mother worked in this computer company and the father was a classroom assistant, because this would be artificial, this is what I think because this is our reality, whether we want it or not, most often than not the father works in a computer company and the mother is a classroom assistant.

To znaczy, możemy szukać dziury w całym, bo nie wyobrażam sobie, że mama byłaby, pracowałaby w tym computer company, a tata byłby classroom assistant aaa, bo to byłoby sztuczne wtedy, tak mi się wydaje, bo nasza rzeczywistość, czy to chcemy, czy nie chcemy tego, no ona jest taka, że to najczęściej tata pracuje w computer company, a mama jest classroom assistant aaa.

This narrative both naturalises unequal gender representation in the Polish job market and also constructs such division as more intelligible for students, hence as entirely proper, and not needing any intervention on the part of the publisher or the teacher. This teacher bases her argument on grounds of the text being situated in the reality she (and her students) are supposedly living, which makes it possible for the students to relate to it. For her, the point is not equal professional visibility of women and men but rather acquisition of vocabulary and factual knowledge about anglophone culture. However, this account was contested by another teacher who said that the woman occupies a markedly lower socio-economic status than her husband and – moreover – is merely an assistant and not an autonomous teacher. Other participants, however, objected to her critical reflection, and the theme was not taken up by other teachers.

At this point one of the facilitators asked whether teachers could ask their classes about other family models in a general sense and their personal experiences pertaining to this issue. One response was:

Extract 11

Virginia:
This is a difficult decision because not everyone wants to talk about their families, they virtually all have complete families...

To jest trudna decyzja, dlatego że nie wszyscy chcą mówić o tych swoich rodzinach, oni te rodziny mają praktycznie pełne...

Łukasz:
right

no właśnie

Virginia:
erm and I also think it's a slippery issue because some of them can simply feel...

ee i wydaje mi się, że to jest śliski temat na lekcję, bo niektórzy mogą się czuć najzwyczajniej w świecie...

Andrea:
worse in a way

gorzej jakoś tam

Virginia:
worse and won't want to say tell others because there are a lot of children who have a single parent or live in patchwork families yes erm and I think that talking in public about this in the classroom can be uncomfortable at least at present here.

gorzej i nie będą chciały o tym opowiedzieć, bo jest dużo dzieciaków, którzy mają tylko jednego rodzica albo, no, mają tą sytuację rodzinną taką patchworkową, tak, yyy i wydaje mi się, że mówienie o tym publicznie w klasie może być niekomfortowe, przynajmniej na razie, u nas.

Susan:
At this age

Na tym poziomie wiekowym

Virginia:
Our society is at the stage that I think the children aren't eager to talk about this.

Nasze społeczeństwo jest na takim etapie, że wydaje mi się, że niechętnie o tym mówią.

[lines omitted]

Susan:
As Virginia said we can't drag this out of children at this stage who…

Tak tylko tak jak mówiła Virginia, przy takich etapach nie możemy wyciągać na siłę, jak pracujemy z dzieciakami…

Łukasz:
sure jasne

Andrea:
We have to be very careful and tactful.

Musimy być bardzo ostrożni i taktowni.

Susan:
Are from orphanages and last year they rebelled against participating in family life education classes because they don't want to hear about other children's family situations because they don't have these families and in this case I'll have crowds of children who have cool families and will want to talk about this, but I'll also have children who are quiet not because they cannot talk about it but because they don't. Several female characters are depicted as successful and well-off.

Z domu dziecka i one na przykład buntowały się w zeszłym roku, że nie chcą chodzić na WDŻty, ponieważ nie chcą słyszeć, jak u kogoś jest w domu, bo one nie mają tego domu i w tym momencie, owszem, będę miała tłum dzieci które mają fajne rodzinki i będą chciały o tym opowiedzieć [lines omitted], ale będę miała dzieciaki, które są cicho nie dlatego, że nie potrafią opowiedzieć, tylko dlatego że nie chcą opowiedzieć.

[lines omitted]

Łukasz:
Would anything change if the text was about a single mother or a single father?

A czy coś by się zmieniło, gdyby tekst był o samotnej matce albo o samotnym ojcu?

Susan:
It depends on how this single mother or single father was depicted – if in a good light as something that is a normal situation now and it wasn't anything bizarre maybe some children would admit or at least they would feel that it is normal too.

Zależy, jak by ta samotna matka czy samotny ojciec byli pokazani, jeśli w pozytywnym świetle, jako coś, co jest sytuacją w tej chwili normalną, nie byłoby udziwnień różnego rodzaju eee, to myślę, że można by było o tym, być może niektóre dzieci by się w jakiś sposób przyznały lub poczułyby, że to też jest normalne.

This exchange constructs the subject of non-normative families as a sensitive issue that teachers are not willing to bring up during their classes. Children are, then, not encouraged to take up subjects that fall beyond the scope of their textbooks even though some of the teachers had previously underlined the importance of their students being able to relate to the broader discursive content of their classes. At the same time, some conceded that textbooks featuring non-normative families would open safe spaces for discussions for those students who might not otherwise feel encouraged to make their voices heard. Susan draws attention to FLE (see Chapter 3) classes which are meant to address such issues but fail to do so, evidenced by the fact that students have objected to participating. This contestation and negotiation of the ability to relate to the textbook and the broader discursive content of classes seems to be unresolved.

Of paramount and concerning importance is the fact that teachers tend to construe their *own* realities as model and universal realities, and assume that students also live them. Several remarked that students need to be able to relate to the broad content of EFL classes in order to develop their linguistic knowledge, but are unwilling to contextualise the learning experience and that content for those students who find themselves in a reality different from theirs.

2. Students incapable of critically reflecting on textbooks

When asked whether students pay attention to gender representation in their textbooks, another discourse drawn on by these teachers which downplayed the importance of talk around the text about gender representation was that students are generally uninterested in the texts, simply sometimes complaining that they lack relevance to their own personal experiences or are boring.

Extract 12

Joanna:
Do the students sometimes comment [on gendered-aspects of texts] during classes?

A czy na przykład uczniowie komentują czasami na zajęciach?

Andrea:
No, for them the text is either boring or not...

Nie, nie, dla nich tekst jest nudny albo nie...

Virginia:
Yes, yes or outdated

Tak, tak, albo stary

Andrea:
or outdated but the question of female–male balance is completely outside their interest and I'd say this issue is a bit taken out of the air...

albo stary, natomiast podejście ee równowagi damsko-męskiej w ogóle ich nie obchodzi, to jest temat, powiedziałabym, troszeczkę wyssany z ee palca, mówiąc brzydko...

This exchange constructs students as uninterested and incapable of critical reflection on the texts they interact with. These teachers did not indicate that they were willing to alter this situation, presenting it as if set in stone. Virginia adds:

Extract 13

Virginia:
They'll sooner notice that a girl is beautiful.

Prędzej zauważą to, że dziewczyna na obrazku jest ładna.

Such remarks presuppose active and most probably heterosexual male students whose voices are being heard. No comments related to female students engaging in the 'heterosexual marketplace' (Eckert, 1996) were heard.

3. Selective tolerance: unable to cross institutional and social boundaries

The third discourse concerns certain socio-political issues which are constructed as inaccessible and/or irrelevant to classroom practice. While the teachers appear to pay attention to racially motivated comments made by their students and take measures with the aim of eradicating them, lesbian and gay themes are conspicuously absent. One of the teachers made it clear that she does not allow racist slogans, and combats such behaviour with either elaborate explanations or subversive techniques (e.g. if a student uses the word *nigger* with reference to a black person, she labels them *white trash*). Such comments were not voiced when talking about the word *gay* used in a pejorative way.

Extract 14

Susan:
Well I've laid my hands on a textbook about controversial issues and I used it during one-to-one private classes and there was an article on the rights of gay couples...

Znaczy, ja dorwałam ostatnio taki podręcznik o kontrowersyjnych tematach, na indywidualnych zajęciach użyłam, tam był artykuł o prawach erm par gejowskich...

Joanna:
mhm

mm

Susan:
But, I think, that I knew who I'm doing it with, and that these are risky issues also for us, because we cannot impose our worldview and with these risky issues, in a way, our worldview is linked to them, and apart from this, this book is entitled *Taboos and difficult topics,*[69] or something like this, so the title itself suggested that I need to be careful and, if I did it one-on-one with an intelligent person who I knew, then we could erm boost more advanced vocabulary, and this was an excuse for me, because I knew that the girl liked talking about such issues, however, when I ask about Gershwin or Beethoven in my class, they don't know what I'm talking about [lines omitted], because one needs to be at a certain level, and these issues, well, we need to stick to less complicated ones, more universal ones, because there is this risk.

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[69] See Section 5.3 for a short discussion of this publication.

Ale wydaje mi się, że wiedziałam, z kim to robię y i że to tematy też dla nas ryzykowne, bo nie możemy narzucać swojego światopoglądu, a z tymi tematami ryzykownymi jakby też nasz światopogląd się tutaj erm wiąże i to są, zresztą sama książka, z której korzystałam, była właśnie *Taboos and difficult topics,* czy coś w tym stylu, więc sama sugerowała, że muszę być ostrożna, jeżeli robiłam jeden na jeden z osobą inteligentną, którą znałam to mogłam, mogłyśmy yyy podciągnąć właśnie słownictwo bardziej zaawansowane i to był dla mnie pretekst, bo wiedziałam, że dziewczyna lubi rozmawiać na takie tematy, natomiast w klasie, kiedy pytam o Gershwina i Beethovena i nie wiedzą, o czym mówię [lines omitted], bo to trzeba być na pewnym poziomie i i te tematy takie, musimy zostać przy prostszych i bardziej uniwersalnych, bo to jest jednak wiąże się z tym pewne ryzyko.

With this long utterance, the teacher herself introduced the 'gay theme' into the session. She did so after one of the facilitators asked the group whether textbooks lack any content that they deem relevant for their classes (she did not specify what sort). Susan draws on her experience of using gay themes with a private student. The possibility of doing so is, however, constructed as entailing risk, as parents might find this inappropriate, and hence should be reserved for students with a 'high level of intelligence'.

4. Danger: we live in Poland
Susan sees bringing up gay themes as something that will be perceived as a part of one's worldview and finds this uncomfortable. She and Allyson (see below) construe themselves as risk-takers here, and Susan conflates her potential experience of problematising non-normative identity themes with being accused of promoting a specific and presumably unwanted worldview:

Extract 15
Allyson:
Bringing up controversial subjects can very often evoke very negative reactions on the part of the parents and such reactions end up in the principal's office, for example that we promote a gay worldview…

Poruszanie kontrowersyjnych tematów bardzo często może wywołać bardzo negatywną reakcję rodziców i to taką reakcję, która się natychmiast znajdzie u dyrektora, że my na przykład krzewimy światopoglądy gejowskie…

These teachers, then, construe themselves as 'at risk' should they be willing to incorporate these socially relevant and indeed student-oriented issues. The data suggests, however, that they also lack appropriate resources: the textbook Susan mentioned, *Taboos and Issues*, is heavily outdated and, if used uncritically, potentially harmful to the gay community (see Section 5.2). Although Discourse iv. does not stand out sharply in terms of naming any specific geopolitical location, these teachers hint at the (hindering) reality they continually experience. This is also to be seen in the previous exchanges when talking about FLE classes and when embarking on 'risky topics', such as gay themes. We decided to direct readers' attention to this issue as this seems to be the only discourse in common between the two teacher groups (see below) – but as such is an important one.

7.3.2 Teachers' focus group 2
The second focus group session took place in a high school. There were five female participants and one male; all taught EFL at this institution (see Chapter 4 for details).

These teachers made it clear that they are aware of gender bias in representations of women and men in textbooks and that their students are similarly aware. As this school offers two EFL programmes, a traditional programme and an international one, the teachers also tended to draw comparisons between them, reaching the conclusion that the latter group tends to be more aware of social issues due to the extensive readings in their textbook.[70] After intensive listening to the recording, analysis of this second teachers' group discussion suggested three discourses, which we named:

1. Language as reflective and constitutive

2. Opening up diverse avenues of interpretation

3. Danger: we live in Poland.

The teachers we quote we call Deborah, Jennifer, Louise, Sally and Tony (the man).

1. Language as reflective and constitutive
Right at the very outset of the session, when prompted to reflect on the representations of men and women in textbooks, the teachers embarked on a series of critical observations. Several said that textbooks contain large numbers of stereotypes. *Grammarway 4*, a textbook for drilling grammar, was identified as a prototype for stereotypically depicting both women and men, and teachers' attention in class was often directed towards students' linguistic behaviour as regards gender when working on structural and grammatical exercises.

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[70] This textbook is used only in a few schools in Poland and its name has been omitted to preserve the anonymity of our participants.

Extract 16
Sally:
And do you also encounter situations where you ask them to provide examples and girls often give examples…

A macie też tak, na przykład, że jak prosicie, żeby podali jakiś przykład, to dziewczyny często podają przykład w…

Deborah:
yes

tak

Sally:
In the masculine?

Męskiej formie?

Deborah:
yes

tak

Sally:
It happens in my classes too.

Też tak mam.

[lines omitted]

Deborah:
I've noticed that, when translating [sentences] from *Solutions upper-intermediate,* when revising from Polish to English, and from English to Polish, and when there is a word that we don't really know whether it's a male or a female, I for example noticed that one girl from class [name of class] read this sentence and translated it into Polish, and translated it: I went [masculine], something like that, and anyway I said and it couldn't be assumed from the text, and I thought it was a bit bizarre and I asked why and she said: well I don't know she explained to me that when, and this is probably the crux of the matter, that when she uses the masculine inflection, she means everyone, both females and males, and when she uses the female one she's referring only to them. And I said that I understand that it has been assumed to be so, that teachers [masculine] means all teachers and how am I supposed to feel a part of the group? And I use both forms [referencing both males and females] deliberately [lines omitted], and we are brought up with this, and then we think that students [masculine] means girls and boys, and students [feminine] means girls only.

Ja zauważyłam przy tłumaczeniach w *Solutions upper-intermediate*, na powtórkach, są tłumaczenia z polskiego na angielski, z angielskiego na polski i jest forma taka, że nie do końca, na przykład, jest jakieś imię, które może być traktowane jako męskie i żeńskie i, na przykład, zauważyłam to ostatnio, dziewczynka, właśnie w klasie [name of the class], czytała to zdanie i tłumaczyła na polski, i przetłumaczyła *ja poszedłem*, coś takiego, w każdym razie powiedziałam, a nie wynikało to ze zdania, a to dziewczyna i mówiła z męską końcówką, więc mi się to wydawało dziwne i zapytałam po czym ona mówi: no nie wiem, ona mi to wytłumaczyła w ten sposób, że jak, i to jest chyba clue całego całego problemu, że jak się mówi z męską końcówką, to obejmuje płeć męską i żeńska, a jak żeńską, to nie, a ja mówię że rozumiem, że tak się przyjęło, nauczyciele, się mówi i ja mam się poczuć również w tej grupie, natomiast z premedytacją nauczyciele, nauczycielki, uczennice, uczniowie [lines omitted], no my w tym rośniemy i potem tak uważamy, że uczniowie to znaczy dziewczyny i chłopcy, a uczennice to tylko dziewczyny.

This exchange was very emotive (Sally had not finished her sentence when other teachers started agreeing) and most teachers seemed to be able to relate to the experience that Deborah spoke at length about. It is clear from Deborah's anecdotal experience and commentary that linguistic awareness, equality-driven language use and in particular masculine generics are on her agenda. She also contended (later) that language shapes our thinking and needs to be attended to during her classes so that students of all identities (gender-wise) are welcome.

In general, these teachers complained that textbooks tend not to mirror reality and present outdated social relations:

Extract 17
Deborah:
Textbooks have not caught up with reality because, I remember that

in the present [name of the class], last year, a lot of people told me that it was the father that cooks or bakes, and their mother comes back home at 7pm, because she is a bank manager…

Książki kursowe nie nadążają za rzeczywistością, bo pamiętam w obecnej [class name], w zeszłym roku, tam dużo osób mówiło, że ale u mnie tata gotuje albo tata świetnie piecze, a moja mama wraca codziennie o 19, bo jest dyrektorką banku…

When asked whether gender-based representations require action on the part of the teacher, the following exchange took place:

Extract 18

Deborah:
We don't have the time, but I try to do so, I'm personally interested and I'm not happy with how things are…

Czasu nie mamy, ale ja staram się zwracać, mnie to osobiście interesuje i boli, że to tak właśnie wygląda…

Tony:
Personally I don't pay attention to such things, well maybe in order to draw attention, as I said, when we work on argumentative essays on *he/she*…

Ja osobiście nie zwracam uwagi na takie rzeczy, no chyba żeby zwrócić, jak tu właśnie powiedziałem, jak jest ta rozprawka na *he/she*…

While Deborah attempts to address what she sees as harmful representations, Tony appears to prefer to concentrate on language forms. However, Tony also draws actively and progressively on stereotypes in order to draw students' attention to particular grammatical structures:

Extract 19

Tony:
When I sometimes ask [students] to translate sentences in the past continuous, where there is the example that mother was reading a newspaper, when the mother was reading a newspaper, at the same time, the father was washing up and at this point they [students] pay attention to it, and at this point everybody raises [their head] and says 'but how come? Mother was reading the newspaper?' It is they who notice that there are such clichés in textbooks.

Jak daję czasami do tłumaczenia zdania na podstawie Past Continuous, gdzie jest, na przykład, mama czytała gazetę, gdy mama czytała gazetę, to tata zmywał naczynia, to w tym momencie każdy podnosi, bo każdy mówi 'ale jak? mama czytała gazetę?', to oni zwracają na to uwagę, a w książce są takie komunały.

Deborah:
clichés?

sztampa?

Tony:
That the father is sitting down and the mother is beavering away washing up…

Że tata siedzi, a mamcia leci z garami…

In this exchange, Tony constructs himself as highly aware of gender stereotypes and able to encourage critical thinking in his students by coming up with creative variants of the exercises encountered in

textbooks. In his emotionally loaded message in the last line, Tony expresses a critical attitude and his disapproval.

Unlike the first group of teachers, these participants seem to use 'gender subversion' in order to trigger interest in the grammar point they are addressing in their students. (This might be a strategy for dealing with 'boring texts' that the group 1 teachers complained about.)

Stereotypes are not seen by these group 2 teachers as potential inhibitors in the learning process but rather as potentially harmful generalisations, which may become imprinted into students' linguistic, and extralinguistic, behaviour:

Extract 20

Deborah:
If we don't draw their [students'] attention to it…

Jak się nie zwraca im na to uwagi…

Sally:
They use [informal] stereotypes.

Jadą stereotypami.

Deborah:
If we don't talk to them about it, from time to time, or we don't ask them about their opinions, they operate with such clichés and this presumably has some influence on learning a language; that is, we describe the world with a language so if we know the language in such a way as we think, and we express our thoughts, then we perceive this world in such a way…

Jak się co jakiś czas, jeśli nie porozmawia z nimi o tym albo nie zapyta o to, co myślą, to potem takimi kalkami gdzieś tam operują, nie wiem, pewnie ma to jakiś wpływ na na na naukę języka; znaczy, opowiadamy świat językiem, więc to jak znamy język, w jaki sposób myślimy i wyrażamy swoje myślenie, to potem w ten sposób postrzegamy świat…

Deborah seems to feel responsible for the way her students will use language to express their thoughts and ultimately how they will perceive the world. Instead of persuading her students to accept her worldview she 'talks to them' and 'asks questions' and via this means creates the possibility for the students to develop critical thinking skills themselves.

In response to Joanna's prompt, it was also proposed that reversing traditional gender roles in grammar exercises would actually make the sentences stand out and make them more memorable, and would help the students focus on content as well as form:

Extract 21
Joanna: And do you think that in the process of learning a foreign language, it'd be a big distractor to reverse the gender roles? Say, it's not mum cooking or baking the cake but the dad, dad does it [lines omitted]. Would this be problematic?

A czy myślicie Państwo, że w procesie właśnie uczenia się języka obcego dużą taką dystrakcją byłoby zamienie tutaj tych ról? Tak, czyli właśnie nie mama gotuje czy przygotowuje to ciasto, tylko tato yy tato to robi [lines omitted]; czy to by było problematyczne?

Sally:
I think on the contrary, it would stick.

Ja myślę, że wręcz preciwnie, bo to by utkwiło.

Penny:
It'd attract the students' attention more.

Bardziej przykłuwałoby uwagę ucznia.

[lines omitted]

Jennifer:
Paradoxically, it could broaden their horizons in a subliminal way but also [trigger] more attention to thinking, and not only mechanical filling in sentences.

Paradoksalnie to mogłoby szerzej te horyzonty otwierać, gdzieś tam coś podprogowo przekazywać, ale też gdzieś jakiś większy udział w myśleniu, nie tylko takie mechaniczne uzupełnianie zdań.

Sally, Penny and Jennifer express the opinion that subverting the already existent gender roles, where relevant, in grammar exercises can work to the benefit of their students (in terms of their 'thinking', and 'sticking' in their minds). This is partly so because grammar drills can be mechanical, and introducing creative variations has the potential to create a departure from this. Here, then, non-stereotypical use of language is viewed in a very different way from in the first focus group. These teachers also seem to have experience of utilising such means of activating learners' thinking while developing their language skills.

Jennifer also raises an important point about the central role of the teacher in stimulating students' learning:

Extract 22
Jennifer:
When they see that we pay attention to something they try to be ahead of us and fish out some situations.

Jak oni widzą, że my na coś zwracamy uwagę, to sami próbują nas wyprzedzić i mają jakąś sytuację, że wyłapują.

She highlighted that students are more than eager to take up certain issues once they are made aware of them.

2. Opening up diverse avenues of interpretation
One of the tasks during these two focus groups was for the teachers to reflect on a particular multimodal representation of families from *New English Zone 3*, p. 45 *(gimnazjum)*, where the mother is depicted as fulfilling family roles (e.g. cooking, calling the family in for lunch), while the father is playing football with Jack (his son) and Matthew (Jack's friend).

Extract 23
Deborah:
The context here is pushy, along with the dialogue, it's not just a single sentence in a grammatical exercise that can be ignored if there's not time for that, and that's not significant because there is no context. If students don't see it themselves then some things can be ignored, because we won't read things into every class and every exercise, there's simply no need for that, but in this case, there's a certain context here, and it cements certain stereotypes and some households can be like that…

Nachalny tu jest kontekst, tu jest dialog, to nie jest jakieś tam jedno zdanie w ćwiczeniu gramatycznym, które można sobie odpuścić, jak nie ma czasu i nie jest to istotne, bo nie ma kontekstu, rzeczywiście póki uczniowie tego nie wyłapią, to pewne rzeczy można przemilczeć, bo nie będziemy na każdej lekcji i w każdym ćwiczeniu czegoś się doszukiwać, nie ma na to najzwyczajniej w świecie potrzeby, natomiast tu jest jakiś kontekst i to utrwala stereotypy, pewnie w niektórych domach tak jest…

Jennifer:
I was just about to say that this cannot be treated as a somehow negative situation.

Chciałam właśnie mówić, że nie można tego traktować jako jakiejś sytuacji negatywnej

Deborah:
This is not science fiction, but in certain households it is the other way round, but we fail to see this mirrored in textbooks, it's stereotyped, it's perpetuated and I think I wouldn't be able to make this point before my students who would open the book and say Jesus... [last word spoken sarcastically]

To nie jest science fiction, ale w niektórych domach jest odwrotnie, natomiast nie znajdziemy odzwierciedlenia odwrotnych sytuacji w podręcznikach, jest to stereotypowe, jest to utrwalone, ja myślę pewnie bym nie zdążyła, bo pewni moi uczniowie by otwarli, moi przynajmniej, i powiedzieli o Jezu [ostatnie słowo wypowiedziane sarkastycznie]...

Sally:
Well I think this is a textbook aimed at middle school students.

Znaczy, ja domyślam się, że to jest książka na poziomie gimnazjum.

Łukasz:
You're right, this is middle school early middle school so...

Właśnie, to jest gimnazjum, wczesne gimnazjum, tak więc...

Sally:
I also teach at *gimnazjum*, and I think that I have the tendency to, erm, I try to make the lesson, naturally apart from the things that we need to cover, I try to engage them, encourage and relax the atmosphere, so we would first read the dialogue, listen to it, and then I'd ask them: listen and how are things in your household? is it that only boys play football? what's it like? I'd say because I, for example, like playing football what do you think about this [lines omitted]? it's good to depart from the lesson a bit, so that it doesn't become clichéd and...

Ja też uczę w gimnazjum i, ja myślę, ja mam taką tendencję, że yyy ja staram się, żeby ta lekcja, oczywiście oprócz tego, że jest to, co musimy zrobić i przekazać i tak dalej, to ich tak zaangażować, wciągnąć, rozluźnić atmosferę, że na początek, tak jakbyśmy ten dialog przeczytali, posłuchali, a potem bym zapytała: słuchajcie, a jak to jest u was w domu? to tylko chłopcy grają w piłkę? to jak to wygląda? mówię, bo ja na przykład lubię grać w piłkę i co myślicie o tym? [lines omitted] Fajnie jest odejść od tej lekcji trochę, żeby nie było tak sztampowo...

There seems to be agreement that the multimodal construal of this family is problematic. It is experienced as such not merely due to the teachers' ideological stances, but also because of their personal experiences (e.g. Sally likes playing football) and experience of teaching English to a diverse spectrum of students (Deborah). At the same time, triggered by Jennifer's remark that there is nothing negative in the depiction itself, the other teachers contend that the crux of the matter is not a one-off mention of a certain type of social arrangement, but rather its forceful imposition on the learners (and possibly the teachers as well) and the unquestioning nature of the accompanying instructions. Sally constructs herself as an active agent in the classroom by saying that she would create safe spaces for questioning the text, juxtaposing this with her students' personal experiences, thus motivating them to challenge this textbook representation of the family.

The following exchange further specifies what measures could be taken in order to bring students' own experiences into the classroom by appreciating and valuing them – in effect, deliberately using the notion of 'talk around the text' (see Chapter 3):

Extract 24
Joanna:
Such an infelicitous text can be changed, it can be worked on – am I correct?

Taki niefajny tekst można zmienić, można z nim popracować, czy dobrze usłyszałam?

Deborah:
We could ask them to write a similar dialogue, but substituting things and writing what things are in their households, for example.

Można by było z nimi zrobić ćwiczenie, żeby napisali podobny dialog, tylko trochę tam wymienili i napisali, jak u nich w domu jest, na przykład.

Deborah, then, welcomes personal narratives and allows a controlled departure from the textbook text. These techniques also allow the teachers to allow non-heteronormative interpretations of sexuality-ambiguous texts, as reflected in the next exchange:

Extract 25

Jennifer:
We turn it into a joke, and randomly, when somebody reads dialogues, when one sometimes realises that, for example, 'meet your boyfriend', and so on, and it happens to be a boy reading...

Obracamy to w żart, na wyrywki, jak ktoś czyta po jednym zdaniu [dialogi], jak czasami się zdąży zorientować, że na przykład 'meet your boyfriend' i tak dalej, i trafi na chłopaka...

Sally:
But this is great!

Ale to jest fajne!

Jennifer:
Or when we work on other projects, note that I always say: we shouldn't taboo it, this obviously can be a normal situation for a boy to say it...

Albo jakieś tam prace robimy, tym bardziej że też mówię: nie róbmy z tego tabu, to może być oczywiście całkiem normalne zdanie tak dla chłopaka powiedzieć...

Deborah:
And it is for many.

I jest dla wielu.

Jennifer:
But of course it is.

No, że jest, oczywiście, że jest.

Penny:
Even the students admit that this can be so.

Sami uczniowie przyznają, że przecież tak może być.

Jennifer:
But I always check what the atmosphere in a given class is, and erm, if somebody who has to read it, doesn't feel uncomfortable...

Też zawsze tylko sprawdzam, jaki jest klimat w klasie i yyy czy ktoś na na kogo trafi, i czy ktoś tam właśnie nie będzie się czuł niekomfortowo...

Jennifer orients to the fact that her class memberships can be characterised by sexual diversity and ensures that all possible voices can be heard by either allowing a male student to read a grammar-drill exercise featuring 'his boyfriend' or reading a dialogue and assuming a female character. Thus, Jennifer allows multiple reconfigurations of an originally heteronormative text. Such tactics are validated by the other participants. However, Jennifer also stresses the fact that the 'climate' in a given class needs to be conducive in order to open up avenues for potentially difficult discussions (see Discourse 3).

The extract from *New English Zone 3* (p. 45) which prompted the above discussion does shed some light on the changing characteristics of families within the British context (e.g. more single-parent families, mentions of separation and divorces), including statistics, but then moves on to present a typical nuclear family consisting of mother (classroom assistant), father (computer company employee), son and daughter.[71] The teachers welcomed the statistical presentation as reflecting present-day society but were sceptical of the way in which the text developed:

Extract 26

Jennifer:
Such a promising introduction, while the rest of the text...

Taki obiecujący wstęp, a potem reszta tekstu całkowicie...

Sally:
yes precisely

no właśnie

Jennifer:
It's so stereotypical, that it's plainly imposing.

Też tak stereotypowa, też, tak nachalnie wręcz.

Deborah:
But because of the first sentence, I assumed that atypical families would be discussed...

Natomiast przez to pierwsze zdanie nastawiłam się, że będzie mowa o nietypowych rodzinach...

Jennifer:
That it'll be about different family models...

Że o różnych modelach rodzin...

---

[71] We have subjected this textbook to in-depth analysis elsewhere (Pawelczyk and Pakuła 2015).

Deborah:
or about both but it's just the first sentence.

albo i jednym, i drugim, tak skończyło się na jednym zdaniu.

Łukasz:
And it is important to talk about atypical family models?

A czy ważne jest to, żeby mówić o nietypowych modelach rodzin?

Deborah:
yes

tak

Sally:
Many students come from such families.

Wiele uczniów pochodzi z takich rodzin.

Deborah:
Yes, because I recently talked about such a subject in [class name], and I didn't trigger this, but they asked a certain question, and this triggered a discussion between themselves and, they said: hey but let's look at ourselves and the families we live in, and it turned out that so-called traditional or traditional families were in the minority, because these were either patchwork families or these were families where the mother has a second husband, or a family where the mother herself is bringing up [the child], or a single father and out of 12 people the ratio was seven to five in favour of the so-called atypical families, and I also was included, so this was a majority that is 30 per cent but maybe it was just an accident, but texts don't take such changes into consideration.

Tak, bo ja właśnie ostatnio, jak rozmawiałam o takim właśnie temacie w klasie [class name], to zupełnie nie wynikło ode mnie, tylko oni sami, jakieś pytanie ich sprowokowało i zaczęli ze sobą dyskutować, i mówią: ej, ale popatrzmy na siebie, w jakich my rodzinach żyjemy, to się okazało, że w mniejszości były tak zwane typowe czy tradycyjne rodziny, bo albo to były rodziny patchworkowe, albo to były rodziny, że jest drugi mąż mamy, albo mama sama wychowuje, albo tato sam wychowuje, na 12 osób było 7 do 5 na korzyść tych tak zwanych nietypowych i jeszcze ja się dołożyłam, więc to w ogóle była większość, to jest 30%, ale może wyjątkowo tak się ułożyło, ale teksty nie uwzględniają tych zmian.

As the exchanges illustrate, these teachers found the introduction to the text promising but were dissatisfied with the latter part, which draws heavily on gender stereotypes. When prompted by Łukasz to elaborate on the importance (or lack thereof) of introducing topics regarding non-normative familial arrangements, there seemed to be unanimous agreement about the importance of this. These teachers see the need for the students to relate to the broad content of their classes. This was evident when Deborah shared this situation from her own class, when her students spontaneously questioned the text about traditional families and found that most lived in other, non-traditional family models. (As Deborah herself does too, she is likely to be particularly sensitive to such issues.)

3. Danger: we live in Poland
This third discourse is the only one in common across the two teacher focus groups (see Discourse iv, Section 7.2.1). The teachers drew attention to the socio-political and institutional limitations that constitute obstacles to introducing non-normative subjects during their classes:

Extract 27
Tony:
Remember that the book is written for the national education system, and we're in Poland, and remember what state this is [lines omitted]. It simply cannot be changed because it'll be said that we cultivate this…

Pamiętaj, że książka jest pisana pod system edukacji narodowej, a jesteśmy w Polsce i pamiętaj, jakie mamy państwo [lines omitted]. Po prostu tego się nie zmieni, bo będzie tak, że się kultywuje to…

Deborah:
OK, OK I don't have any issues with what families are like [lines omitted], but, for example, I'm aware that if I was ten or 12 in a primary school or *gimnazjum*, and I didn't come from a school where I'm brought up only by a mother…

OK, OK, ja nie mam problemu, żeby opowiadać, jak jest w rodzinie [lines omitted], tylko na przykład, bo ja sobie zdaję sprawę, że jakbym miała 10–12 lat będąc w podstawówce czy gimnazjum, i teraz nie wiem, pochodzę z rodziny, gdzie, nie wiem, tylko mama mnie wychowuje…

Sally:
incomplete

niepełnej

Deborah:
Or, I don't know, my parents were divorced and both had new partners, and I was constantly faced with such texts I'd start thinking I was some kind of a freak.

Albo, nie wiem, rodzice są po rozwodzie i obydwoje mają nowych partnerów, a ciągle spotykam się z takimi tekstami, to zaczynam myśleć, że jestem jakimś freakiem.

Sally:
I wanted to say the same thing.

To samo chciałam powiedzieć.

Jennifer:
Pathology, isn't it?

Patologia, nie?

Deborah:
Precisely, that I'm pathological and well...

Że jestem patologią, dokładnie, no i...

[lines omitted]

Deborah:
Yes, I understand it in the same way, and surely at high school they have a completely different attitude towards it, but at primary and *gimnazjum* levels children read about it in a textbook during Polish language classes, EFL, and somewhere else and hear about it during religion classes, and then they think they come from dysfunctional families, and moreover the peer pressure, that is, contact with their peers who can ridicule: you don't have a father you don't have a mother ... [lines omitted] It's important to identify because later it's easier for us to learn a language if we feel a part [of it].

Tak, i ja to rozumiem, pewnie w liceum już mają na to zupełnie inny pogląd, ale podstawówka, gimnazjum, dzieci przeczytają na języku polskim w podręczniku, na języku angielskim i jeszcze gdzieś tam, na religii usłyszą i potem myślą, że są z jakiejś dysfunkcyjnej rodziny, a plus jeszcze jakies peer pressure, czyli kontakt z rówieśnikami, którzy mogą się wyśmiewać: ty nie masz taty, ty nie masz mamy ... [lines omitted] To ważne, żeby się identyfikować, bo później łatwiej nam przychodzi uczenie się języka, jeśli czujemy się częścią.

[lines omitted]

Jennifer:
Such a text can even be more interesting.

Nawet taki tekst bardziej zaciekawi.

Deborah:
Surely it will be but if there was a text about a patchwork family, we could introduce relevant vocabulary.

No pewnie, że tak. Ale jakby był tekst o rodzinie patchworkowej, to można by było wprowadzić takie słownictwo.

This interaction we propose also suggests two sub-discourses. One is a 'discourse of limited possibilities'. Similar to the fears voiced by the group 1 teachers, Tony contends that there are certain socio-political and institutional barriers curtailing the possibilities of more diversity-inclusive materials and practices. The second, a counter-discourse, is 'need for construction of marginalised identities in classroom experiences', i.e. through particular narratives in learning materials and in the teaching of certain school subjects, because of students' need to be able to relate to the content of textbooks and classroom practices. Deborah's point is that across different communities of practice, similar discourses might arise, leading to the alienation of students who are left unable to find any overlap between their identity and the identities evoked during certain classroom (and other) practices, and this somehow needs to be challenged, despite the fact that 'We live in Poland'.

During the following exchanges the teachers expressed their concern with bringing up issues which might cause parental unrest:

Extract 28
Łukasz:
In the UK, same-sex marriage has already been introduced – is it worth talking about it? Or would it constitute a distractor during classes which would move us away from the main focus?

W Zjednoczonym Królestwie mamy już małżeństwa jednopłciowe, czy to w ogóle jest warte, aby się tym zajmować? Czy to będzie takim dystraktorem na zajęciach, który w ogóle odwiedzie nas od tematu?

Sally:
Well, I think that in *gimnazjum* we need to be very careful, because we live in Poland, and I have the feeling that I could have parents visiting me in no time...

Znaczy, ja myślę, że w gimnazjum musimy bardzo uważać bo żyjemy w Polsce i ja mam wrażenie że mogłabym mieć za chwilę rodziców...

Deborah:
even in high school

nawet w liceum

Sally:
With complaints…

Z pretensjami…

Deborah:
that we're indoctrinating…

że indoktrynujemy…

Sally:
that I spread confusion. I think that we can allow ourselves more in high school.

że zamęt sieję, myślę. że w liceum to możemy sobie na więcej pozwolić.

Louise:
But it also depends on the group.

Ale to też zależy od grupy.

Deborah:
not always

nie zawsze

Sally:
It is the students who are to express their opinions – after all, I don't have to express mine but give them the opportunity to express [theirs].

To uczniowie mają wyrażać opinie, przecież ja nie muszę swojej, tylko dać im okazję, żeby oni wyrazili.

Deborah:
yes, yes, yes…

tak, tak, tak…

Overlapping with the concerns voiced by the first teachers' focus group, it seems that irrespective of the educational institution and the general attitude to evoking non-normative themes during classes, the socio-political reality (see Chapter 3) exerts significant influence over what teachers find possible. These teachers, like those in the previous group, underline the agency of the many parents who are likely to oppose teachers discussing 'progressive' views during their classes. Given this potential hesitancy on the part of the teacher and the presumed lack of 'safe spaces' in the case of a class being led by an 'unprogressive' teacher, sadly, 'the message of erasure may well be taken by students as meaning that what is erased is off limits, literally

unmentionable in class' (Gray, 2013b: 50). And while Sally observes that her role during in-class discussions is more of a moderator, rather than attitude-transmitter, which resonates with Nelson's (2007) claim that the teacher should be a facilitator when discussing 'dangerous' contents, even being a 'moderator' when it comes to discussion of the non-heteronormative may be seen as transgressive.

Another important observation is the correlation between introducing diversity-inclusive non-normative themes and the level of schooling, i.e. the more advanced the level, the more open the teacher can be, for reasons of student maturity and sophistication in EFL. Teachers from both sessions highlighted the central role of maturity of their students as an important factor determining what can be brought into the classroom. One negative offshoot of this, however, is that some young students may need to wait a long time until their identities are recognised and appreciated within their educational setting.

More optimistically, the final extract from the Teachers' focus group 2 points to the relatively conducive nature of EFL classes for introducing 'risky' social issues:

Extract 29
Sally:
Well, to be honest, I think that I'd sooner bring up such issues [same-sex marriage] during my EFL classes rather than during a general educational class[72] [lines omitted]. During EFL classes I'm more open because I treat it as a part of culture [lines omitted], I'm braver.

To znaczy, powiem wam szczerze, że prędzej poruszyłabym taki temat na angielskim niż na godzinie wychowawczej [lines omitted]. Na angielskim ja jestem bardziej otwarta, bo uważam to za część kultury [lines omitted] tam jestem odważniejsza.

Sally constructs her EFL classes as a sort of springboard to introducing subjects which she might find difficult to address during a 'general educational class'. This is because she can package these topics as transmitting part of a foreign culture and explore it accordingly; this constitutes a kind of an 'alibi' for her on the one hand and a resource on another. Therefore, we witness the model of an EFL teacher as a potential mediator of markedly different anglophone socio-politics which can be beneficial for the students who may feel marginalised during other classes (see Chapter 3), but which may also indirectly 'other' the students' own cultural setting.

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[72] In the Polish educational system, 'a general educational class' is usually a one-hour-per-week meeting with a class and their tutor when different issues pertaining to school logistics, social issues and a spectrum of other topics can be raised.

7.3.3 The teachers' groups compared

As can be seen from their discussions, the two teachers' focus groups differed to a great extent. While the first group downplayed their students' abilities to critically interact with lesson contents, the second actively encouraged their learners to take a stance on issues they consider significant. This may be due to the fact that the second group seems more aware of the importance of language in constructing social relations and identities in particular. Furthermore, while the first group was reluctant to raise diversity issues due to student 'immaturity', participants of the second group constructed themselves as actively participating in moderating non-normative themes during their classes. What stands out from the second group is how the teachers' progressive (and appealing) treatment of a gendered text may lend itself to a lively classroom discussion (engagement!), during which students are able to explore a variety of progressive and non-progressive roles (including non-heteronormative ones; see Nelson, 2007) as well as practise their English.

It seems to us that the ethos of the school, along with the teachers who form a kind of a community of practice, constitute an important factor in creating 'safe spaces' during EFL classes, as teachers within a school seem to espouse similar values and maintain similar attitudes towards social issues in their professional practice. Our impression was also that the level of English among students in the school with which the first group is affiliated was significantly lower than that of the second school. This subjective judgement might be developed into a working hypothesis for future research about the interrelatedness of language attainment and social inclusivity in the EFL classroom.

7.4 Institutional power: reviewers' perspectives

One of the tasks of Ministry of Education textbook reviewers is to complete particular forms about the textbooks they review (see Appendix D). Below we present the main points put forward by the two EFL textbook reviewers in their interviews (for information about the reviewers themselves, see Chapter 4).

Reviewer 1

Reviewer 1 provided a widely defined notion of 'culture' in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language: 'it motivates the students and shows what values are respected'. In her view, publishers are currently including more variation

than hitherto in how 'people' in general are presented. In other words, culture used to be presented in a very stereotypical manner where dominant cultural concepts (archetypes) were mainly drawn on.

This reviewer made an interesting distinction between global publishers (e.g. Oxford University Press), local publishers co-operating with a foreign publisher (Egis co-operating with Express Publishing), and local publishers (e.g. Nowa Era) in terms of reliance on stereotypes. The first group, in the reviewer's view, still utilises general, widely recognised stereotypes. The second group tends to be more progressive while the third mixes stereotypical portrayals with interesting topical, 'local' foci. Foreign (in this case British) publishers, they said, pay more attention to issues of equity when it comes to gender representation.

Reviewer 1 told us that it depends on the (social) sensitivity of an individual reviewer whether they *decide* to address any bias and/or over-reliance on stereotypes in their review report[73] of a given textbook. This is important as reviewers' comments are typically addressed by the publishers. The current position of the textbook reviewer thus echoes current thinking on the position of the teacher who decides how textbook content will be treated in the classroom.

The reviewer also noted changes in how families, men and women are portrayed in textbooks. In her view, nuclear and 'ideal' families prevailed some ten or 15 years ago. Currently, textbooks include families who are experiencing problems as well as family types that depart from the conventional 'working father, stay-at-home mother and two children' pattern. She also pointed to the inclusion of male characters in textbook sections devoted to 'doing chores': 'it [the presence of male characters doing chores] diverges from traditional stereotypes'. However, she also observed that reversing traditional gender roles in grammatical/lexical exercises may lead to problems in the smooth conducting of an exercise. For instance, one matching exercise featured a male nurse. The students were to match the name of the profession 'nurse' with the picture which depicted a male character performing this job. She commented on students likely 'slowness' and problems in finding the match, but did not suggest that these 'discrepancies' might in fact lead to interesting discussion.

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[73] As can be seen in Appendix D, the review forms do not indicate that issues of gender (or sexuality) are of any concern to the reviewer (and hence to the Ministry of Education) when reviewing textbooks.

Reviewer 1 had never encountered any non-heterosexual representations in EFL textbooks to be evaluated: 'never, not even the slightest hint of non-heterosexuality'. She added that she assumed that teachers typically did not pay much attention to stereotypes depicted in EFL materials, and tended to follow the content of textbooks without 'getting into dialogue' (e.g. challenging, contesting) with the texts. She ascribed this to lack of time, in large part as teachers need to prepare students for various exams. In other words, teachers are pressed to cover the required material and thus no time is left to go beyond the textbook. Teachers' reflexivity was seen as a skill that can only be obtained over the years, with experience. In particular, in the reviewer's view, issues of gender and gender portrayals do not actually matter to many prospective and practising English teachers.

Reviewer 2

Reviewer 2 also underlined the importance of culture in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language, and said that foreign publishers' 'unfamiliarity with the Polish reality' could sometimes be a problem.

In her view, a typical tendency found over many years is that there are more male than female protagonists in the EFL textbooks used in Poland (about two-thirds male characters and one-third female characters). She also observed that women are mainly depicted in dominant feminine roles and the fact that many young Polish fathers now actively take care of their children is not typically reflected.

In this reviewer's opinion, there is a problem of 'untypical' families in terms of lack of representation. There is now in Poland a growing number of children who are brought up in single-parent or in 'patchwork'/'reconstituted' families, e.g. siblings from two sets of parents. She considered this very problematic for such students who cannot identify with 'typical' family representations: 'it's a real problem'.

The reviewer also commented on students' potential discomfort when a family model is discussed which does not reflect their own family relationship. She also pointed out that vocabulary related to non-traditional family models is not introduced: the students do not typically learn such lexical items as *step-mother,* for example. She had made suggestions about increasing the number of family types to sections of textbooks dealing with family life, and about introducing a task comparing different family models into textbooks to create space for less dominant family types.

As regards the presence of gay people, Reviewer 2 assumed that overt representation would most probably not be approved by the Ministry and similarly other reviewers could also have an issue with it, although she personally 'would not mind' such representations.

Like Reviewer 1, Reviewer 2 also underlined that most teachers mainly meticulously follow the textbook and do not question or go beyond it. She criticised extensive testing as a major obstacle to making the EFL classroom a social space where various discourses can be articulated and different voices heard. She stressed her view that teachers should critically approach their own classroom practice and develop reflexivity around it.

To sum up, both reviewers underlined the importance of widely defined culture in the process of teaching a foreign language. Although some variation in the depiction of families was mentioned (Reviewer 1), much of Reviewer 2's commentary concerned lack of various types of families. Both underlined that teachers tend to conscientiously follow the content of textbooks and no time is left to further explore important social issues related to gender and sexuality. They also underlined the importance of teachers' reflexivity to critically assess their classroom behaviour. All in all, they would welcome more progressive representations of women and men in the EFL textbooks. Even though they had different experiences of whether their ideas are taken up, as Ministry reviewers they have some influence in – at least – drawing publishers' attention to any imbalanced, discriminatory, inaccurate or outdated portrayals in EFL textbooks.

7.5 Conclusion

In exploring different language education stakeholders' perspectives, Chapter 7 clearly shows that gender and sexuality are issues of (some) importance to (some) teachers, yet ways of addressing these differ to a significant extent. While the teachers tended to differ in the way they elaborated on gender and sexuality in their practice, all displayed a high level of awareness of the relevant socio-political context (see Chapter 3) as inhibiting open discussion on 'taboo' topics. Moreover, despite the fact that the Ministry of Education does not impose a direct requirement that reviewers inspect gender-related issues of representation,[74] both reviewers were able to comment on this. Reviewing would definitely benefit from explicit policies and criteria in the guidelines for reviewers to ensure that all reviewers attend to these issues.

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[74] In this light, it comes as no surprise that sexuality-related issues are silenced as well.

8

Conclusions and recommendations

8.1 Concluding remarks

On hearing that imbalanced gender representation in foreign language textbooks is still an issue, or that girls and women students may be disadvantaged in language classroom interaction, people are sometimes surprised. Haven't these issues been resolved? Don't girls do better than boys at languages anyway? The same questioner is likely to be further perplexed when being told that, no they haven't, and sexuality is also now seen as an issue, related to gender, for the foreign language classroom. But what has sexuality got to do with learning English? the questioner may ask.

This research project has shown that, although there may have been improvements over the decades, gender is still made relevant in the language classroom in ways it should not be, and ignored in ways it should not be. Compared with gender, sexuality is a relative newcomer to the field of language education research, but gender cannot properly be explored without looking at sexuality (see Baker, 2008). In the field of language education, this is in large part because classrooms are often extremely heteronormative spaces, both in the materials students are given to learn with, and in spoken classroom discourse. How many off-the-top-of-the-head examples of a given lexical item or syntactic structure refer to women's husbands and men's wives, girlfriend and boyfriend couples, or heterosexual desire in some shape or form? And how does this constant heteronormativity – including in role plays – make gay students feel? These issues take a particular inflection in 21st century Poland, where 'gender' is in some contexts dismissed as a socially unacceptable and invalid explanation of inequality between women and men, and where gay relationships meet with a far greater level of resistance than much of the rest of 21st century Europe.

From what we identify unashamedly as a progressive perspective, the findings of this study are, predictably, patchy. Gender stereotyping appears to be still alive and (fairly) well. There is progress, but there are also sticking points. This extends to all the findings: those as regards textbook representation (some are better than others), and classroom talk, including classroom 'talk around the textbook text'. Encouragingly, though, gender stereotyping, and traditional, disadvantaging representations of women and girls are sometimes contested by students and teachers, who act as critical moderators of classroom discussions.

To the field of gender, language and education we would now build on Sunderland et al.'s (2002) notion of a 'gender critical point' and, as shown particularly in Chapter 6, add the two theoretical notions of:

- a 'gender triggered point', i.e. teacher or student talk about gender triggered by a textbook text

- a 'gender emerging point', i.e. teacher and/or student talk about the category of gender which may come out of the blue in class, assumed by teachers to facilitate the process of teaching and learning a particular language structure.

As regards sexuality, the issue is not so much misrepresentation as non-representation of anything other than heterosexuality; accordingly, heteronormativity (e.g. representations of husband-and-wife couples) is also alive and well. The more global the textbook, the less likelihood there appears to be of change – although representations of people such as same-sex friends and flatmates would help, to simply allow more readings than the heteronormative. Change may come locally, for example from pressure from students (and/or their friends and family), who may be reflected or not in the books they use in the classroom.

The two theoretical notions above, the 'gender triggered point' and 'gender emerging point', could in principle be extended to sexuality, although the former will remain unlikely until greater sexual diversity achieves recognition in textbooks. To the study of heteronormativity and sexuality in textbooks, however, we propose a third concept, that of:

- 'Multimodal disambiguation', i.e. when a written text which could be read as ambiguous in terms of sexuality (e.g. the sexuality of an individual could equally be gay as straight) is closed down by an associated image (e.g. of that individual holding hands with someone of the opposite sex), or by a written text associated with a visual one.

Multimodal disambiguation could of course also apply to gender representation.

We hope that readers will be concerned by many of our reported findings, but will welcome the more progressive ones, and will join with us in seeking further progressive ways forward for language education (see below). We recognise that some students and some teachers will be discomforted, even threatened by the recommendations that follow, and may think we are making a fuss about nothing. We are sure we are not, but we are concerned that all students, regardless of their gender and sexual identity, feel at home in the language classroom. This is not easy to achieve, not least because the main point of the language classroom, most would argue, is to teach language. Also, textbook representation will always be contested – who should be shown, and how, will remain a matter of debate even for those with the same agendas (see Sunderland, 2015b). Further, sensitive inclusivity is not easy to achieve in classroom discourse: this is not a box-ticking exercise, and if students and teachers do feel compelled to talk in one way rather than another, this would simply be counter-productive. At the same time, if we are to have a star to hitch our wagon to, and sometimes a star is needed, we see it for the foreign language classroom in the following by Aneta Pavlenko:

… the multiple forms of engagement should aim to offer a safe space in which students could learn to recognise and acknowledge existing gender discourses and explore alternative discourses, identities and futures (2004: 63).

The existing gender discourses we have in mind are heteronormative ones, which need to be recognised for what they are, as do alternative, non-heteronormative and progressive ones. For if we cannot explore alternative discourses in the 'safe space' of the language classroom, where in principle anything can be discussed in the interests of communication development, where can we do so?

8.2 Recommendations

We understand that EFL teachers are busy practitioners who are often expected to 'deliver' in terms of getting their students through tests and exams. At the same time, we know that most are caring and thinking professionals, fully capable of critical reflexivity (cf. Ryan, 2005; Lazar, 2014), and are in particular aware of the potentially constitutive power of language and languages in our lived experiences (see Norton and Toohey, 2004). Given support and time, we believe that teachers are willing and able to share this reflexivity and understanding with their students, engaging in what has been called 'critical reflexivity as praxis' (Lazar, 2014).

More particularly, we believe that most teachers would wish to create a diversity-inclusive environment in their classrooms (see Nelson, 2007, 2009, 2012) as part of socially informed language teaching (and learning). However, they cannot do so alone. Hence our recommendations below, which conclude this book, as well as for teachers are for three different professional groups of language education stakeholders: teacher educators, Ministry of Education EFL textbook reviewers, and those involved in textbooks production (writers, illustrators, series editors and publishers).

In drawing up these recommendations – which do not claim to be comprehensive – we have tried to maintain a balance between principle and an appreciation of what can realistically be expected. The maxim 'Think practically and look locally' (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992) is relevant here. However, we live in an increasingly globalised world, and in addition to proposing that EFL practitioners look locally, we suggest that they look – critically, of course – globally as well.

8.2.1 Recommendations for EFL teachers

Where possible and relevant:

a. acknowledge the likely sexual identity diversity of any class of students

b. monitor ongoing language use in students' classroom talk; make homophobic and sexist language as unacceptable as racist language

c. use positive examples of women and non-heterosexual people

d. use supplementary texts and examples in talk that allow multiple readings, e.g. through the use of words such as *partner*

e. challenge textbook sexism, relentless heteronormativity, and otherwise discriminatory representation in an amusing, engaging and creative way

f. consider sharing personal stories of non-traditional family structures

g. incorporate contemporary features of language change into classroom discussion (e.g. *Ms, she or he, singular they*)

h. explore reversing traditional gender roles in grammar exercises to make them more memorable

i. introduce supplementary authentic materials, e.g. newspaper articles featuring people with non-heteronormative identities and going beyond stereotypical gender roles, especially those concerning local narratives (see Section 5.2)

j. make sure that any supplementary textbooks are not outdated nor treat any minority in a patronising, inferior way (this also pertains to ethnic and national minorities) (see Section 5.2)

k. when possible, use textbook texts in which gender and/or sexuality are relevant to different various readings of the texts in relation to the discussed topic.

8.2.2 Recommendations for EFL teacher educators

Where possible and relevant:

a. integrate social diversity into all teacher education programmes and modules

b. ensure critical consideration of the causes and effects of bullying, including homophobic language

c. include modules devoted to social inclusion into teacher education programmes, with a focus on socioeconomic background, gender, sexuality and ethnicity

d. include considerations of social inclusion, in trainee teachers' talk and practices, in observed teaching practice

e. demonstrate, on the basis of high-quality research, how students benefit from diversity-inclusive themes in the classroom (see Section 2.4)

f. ensure that points a.–e. are founded on up-to-date research conducted in the local context.

8.2.3 Recommendations for Ministry of Education EFL textbook reviewers

After proper consultation:

a. ensure the textbook review form incorporates criteria related to full and equal representation as regards gender and sexual diversity

b. ensure that a sufficient number of texts, including multimodal texts, allow a range of readings in terms of social diversity

c. ensure that teacher's guides support teachers in teaching about social diversity in a positive and sensitive way, especially in relation to particular units or exercises

d. meet regularly as a group to discuss controversial issues in both the content of textbooks and textbook implementation

e. continually monitor textbook review forms for social relevance and change

f. incorporate research findings concerning discrimination into reviewing practices and texts in the form of relevant guidelines.

8.2.4 Recommendations for EFL materials publishers, writers, illustrators and series editors

a. ensure quantitatively and quantitatively balanced representation of men and women, girls and boys

b. ensure that women and men are represented in as broad a spectrum of occupations and activities as possible, and girls and boys in an equally broad spectrum of activities

c. include multimodal texts which allow a range of readings, including of the characters who populate them

d. avoid gender stereotyping in images including clothing, activities, and the relative size of characters

e. include a range of non-heteronormative written and multimodal representations, e.g. same-sex friends and flatmates; mixed-sex groups which do not include couples

f. include authentic texts featuring non-heterosexual people, famous and otherwise

g. ensure that textbook writers and illustrators meet to discuss the content of multimodal texts so that positive representations of social diversity in one mode are not undermined by the other mode

h. regularly update textbooks to include some important social changes related to gender and sexuality (e.g. the recent same-sex marriage referendum in Ireland) as this is integral to teaching about cultures of target-language countries

i. when localising a given textbook, include issues of diversity, tolerance and criticism of discrimination against different social groups present in that textbook (see Section 3.3).

9

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Appendix A: Focus group questions/prompts (with teachers)

Cel: chcielibyśmy się dowiedzieć, jak Państwo oceniacie wizerunek kobiet i mężczyzn w podręcznikach do nauki języka angielskiego oraz odniesienia do nich podczas zajęć z języka angielskiego.

[Aim: We'd like to know how you assess representations of women and men in EFL textbooks and how you refer to them during your classes]

	Question	Prompts
1	Trzy tematy na rozgrzewkę do wyboru w zależności od typu grupy [three warm-up topics depending on the type of group]	■ Czy papierowa książka umarła? Czy e-booki przyczynią się do zaniku druku książek w ogóle? [has the printed book died out already? Do e-books contribute to the disappearance of printed books in general?] ■ Jak często czytacie Państwo książki, książki nauczyciela dołączone do książek ucznia? [how often do you read books? Teacher books?]
2	Jakie jest Państwa ogólne zdanie na temat wizerunku kobiet i mężczyzn w podręcznikach? [what's your opinion on the representation of women and men in textbooks?]	■ Równe ilości? [equal numbers?] ■ Czy Państwu to się podoba? [do you like it?] ■ Czy zwracacie na to uwagę podczas zajęć? [do you orient to it during classes?] ■ Czy uczniowie zwracają na to uwagę? [do students pay attention to this?] ■ Czy dziewczynki są lepsze w uczeniu się języków obcych? [are girls better at languages?]
3	Czy uważacie Państwo, że w ćwiczeniach gramatycznych wykorzystywane są stereotypowe wizerunki kobiet i mężczyzn? [do you think that stereotypical images of women and men are used in grammar exercises]	■ Rozdajemy str. 7 ze Starland 3 i prośba o komentarz: „Odnosząc się do wcześniejszego pytania, jak oceniacie Państwo te ćwiczenia?" [we give out our prompt and refer back to the previous question: how do you assess these exercises?]
4	Uczenie zdań warunkowych (2) za pomocą genderu. [teaching conditional sentences via gender] If I were an animal. I'd be…; If I were a flower, I'd be…; If I were a colour, I'd be…; If I were a food item, I'd be… Girls only (If I were a flower, I'd be…) and the other one by boys only (If I were a car, I'd be…). Czy uważacie Państwo, że jest to spontaniczne, czy służy to celom nauczania? [do you think it's spontaneous or does it serve teaching purposes?]	■ 10/str. 61 (Starland 3) „Czy uważacie Państwo, że ta strategia jest skuteczna w nauczaniu?" [do you think that this strategy is effective in teaching?] ■ i również w podobnym ćwiczeniu – 81 (Starland 3) [and also in this exercise]

5	Czy nauczyciel języka angielskiego powinien przykładać uwagę do reprezentacji kobiet i mężczyzn zarówno w dialogach, jak i na obrazkach? [does an EFL teacher have to focus on representations of women and men both in dialogues and pictures?]	■ NEZ3 str. 10; str. 18 ■ Czy rolą nauczyciela języka angielskiego jest zwracanie uwagi na reprezentacje kobiet i mężczyzn w takich sytuacjach? [is it a teacher's role to focus on such representations in textbooks?] ■ Czy uczniowie sami komentują to co zastają w podręczniku? [do students sometimes comment on such representations on their own?] ■ Co Państwo sądzicie o takiej strategii ćwiczenia dialogów? POKAZAĆ WYCINEK Z TB [what do you think about this strategy of practising dialogues? SHOW AN EXTRACT FROM TB]
6	Co Państwo myślicie o tym tekście? [what do you think about this text?]	■ NEZ3 str. 45 ■ Jak ważne jest nauczanie szeroko pojętej kultury anglo saskiej na lekcjach języka angielskiego? [how important is teaching of the broadly conceived anglophone culture?] ■ Czy takie teksty, Państwa zdaniem, odzwierciedlają rzeczywistość? [do such texts mirror the reality, in your opinion?]
7	Czy obrazki towarzyszące temu ćwiczeniu są dla Państwa problematyczne? [are the accompanying pictures problematic to you?]	■ NMS UI str. 160 ■ Czy na Państwa zajęciach mają miejsce podobne sytuacje? [do similar situations occur during your classes?] ■ Czy uczniowie sami zauważają nierówne reprezentacje kobiet i mężczyzn w podręcznikach? [do students sometimes notice imbalances in the representation of women and men on their own?]

Appendix B: Focus group questions/prompts (with students)

Cel: chcielibyśmy się dowiedzieć jak oceniacie wizerunek kobiet i mężczyzn w podręcznikach do nauki języka angielskiego oraz odniesienia do nich podczas zajęć z języka angielskiego.

[Aim: We'd like to know how you assess representations of women and men in EFL textbooks and how you refer to them during your classes]

	Question	Prompts
1	Tematy na rozgrzewkę [warm-up topics]	■ Czy papierowa książka umarła? Czy e-booki przyczynią się do zaniku druku książek w ogóle? [has the printed book died out already? Do e-books contribute to the disappearance of printed books in general?] ■ Jak często czytacie Państwo książki, książki nauczyciela dołączone do książek ucznia? [how often do you read books? Teacher books?]
2	Jakie jest wasze ogólne zdanie na temat wizerunku kobiet i mężczyzn w podręcznikach? [what's your opinion on the representation of women and men in textbooks?]	■ Równe ilości? [equal numbers?] ■ Czy Państwu to się podoba? [do you like it?] ■ Czy zwracacie na to uwagę podczas zajęć? [do you orient to it during classes?] ■ Czy uczniowie zwracają na to uwagę? [do students pay attention to this?] ■ Czy dziewczynki są lepsze w uczeniu się języków obcych? [are girls better at languages?]
3	Czy uważacie Państwo, że w ćwiczeniach gramatycznych wykorzystywane są stereotypowe wizerunki kobiet i mężczyzn? [do you think that stereotypical images of women and men are used in grammar exercises]	■ Rozdajemy str. 7 ze Starland 3 i prośba o komentarz: „Odnosząc się do wcześniejszego pytania, jak oceniacie Państwo te ćwiczenia?" [we give out our prompt and refer back to the previous question: how do you assess these exercises?]
4	Co Państwo myślicie o tym tekście? [what do you think about this text?]	■ NEZ3 str. 45 ■ Jak ważne jest nauczanie szeroko pojętej kultury anglo saskiej na lekcjach języka angielskiego? [how important is teaching of the broadly conceived anglophone culture?] ■ Czy takie teksty, Państwa zdaniem, odzwierciedlają rzeczywistość? [do such texts mirror the reality, in your opinion?]
5	Czy obrazki towarzyszące temu ćwiczeniu są dla Państwa problematyczne? [are the accompanying pictures problematic to you?]	■ NMS UI str. 160 ■ Czy na Państwa zajęciach mają miejsce podobne sytuacje? [do similar situations occur during your classes?] ■ Czy uczniowie sami zauważają nierówne reprezentacje kobiet i mężczyzn w podręcznikach? [do students sometimes notice imbalances in representation of women and men on their own?]

Appendix C: Questions and prompts for Ministry of Education reviewers

RECENZENT 1 [reviewer 1]

1. Jak ważne jest przedstawianie treści kulturowych w podręcznikach?
    [How important is it to present cultural knowledge in textbooks?]

2. Czy mogłaby Pani przedstawić ramy czasowe zmian społecznych pokazanych w podręcznikach?
    [Could you provide us with a timeframe of social changes as reflected in textbooks?]

3. Ilu recenzentów ocenia podręcznik?
    [How many reviewers review one textbook?]

4. Czy jest Pani szczególnie wyczulona jako recenzentka na pewien rodzaj stereotypów w podręcznikach do nauki języka angielskiego?
    [Are you personally sensitive to a certain type of stereotype in EFL textbooks?]

5. Czy kryterium 'stereotypy' znajduje się w arkuszu recenzji?
    [Does the criterion of 'stereotypes' figure in Ministry of Education reviewer forms?]

6. Czy istnieją ogólne rekomendacje ministerialne dotyczące równego wizerunku kobiet i mężczyzn w podręcznikach do nauki języka angielskiego?
    [Are there any recommendations issued by the Ministry of Education regarding representations of women and men in textbooks?]

7. Czy spotkała się Pani z jakimikolwiek tożsamościami, które byłyby nie-heteroseksualne w podręcznikach?
    [Have you ever come across identities which could be non-heterosexual in textbooks?]

8. Czy zauważa Pani postęp w sposobie, w jaki przedstawiane są kobiety i mężczyźni w podręcznikach do nauki języka angielskiego?
    [Have you noticed any improvement with regard to the ways in which women and men are represented in EFL textbooks?]

9. Co myśli Pani o tym dialogu? (wykorzystany dialog z grup fokusowych; *New English Zone 3*)?
    [What do you think about this dialogue? (dialogue from *New English Zone 3* – also used during focus groups]

10. Czy jako recenzentka zwraca Pani uwagę na stereotypy zawarte w ćwiczeniach leksykalno-gramatycznych?
    [Do you, as a reviewer, pay attention to stereotypes in lexico-grammar exercises?]

11. Czy w programach nauczania przyszłych nauczycieli języka angielskiego mówi się coś o *gender bias,* o normatywności?
    [Do teacher training courses say anything about *gender bias,* normativity?]

12. Czy nauczycielom brakuje świadomości dotyczącej wizerunku kobiet i mężczyzn w podręcznikach do nauki języka angielskiego?
    [Do teachers lack awareness regarding representations of women and men in EFL textbooks?]

13. Czy istnieje *room for improvement* w edukacji przyszłych nauczycieli języka angielskiego, jeżeli chodzi o ich zachowanie w podczas zajęć?
    [Is there any *room for improvement* when it comes to their behaviour during teaching?]

14. Czy może Pani zarekomendować podręcznik, który jest progresywny, jeżeli chodzi o wizerunek kobiet i mężczyzn?
    [Could you recommend a textbook which is progressive with respect to representations of women and men?]

RECENZENT 2 [reviewer 2]

15. Jak Pani widzi kwestie przedstawiania kultury w książkach do nauczania języka angielskiego; czy w procesie recenzowania jest to ważny aspekt, na który zwraca się uwagę?
[What is your opinion on introducing culture in EFL textbooks? Is it an important aspect when reviewing textbooks?]

16. Czy ocena aspektów kultury znajduje się w formularzach do recenzji?
[Do reviewer forms ask you to evaluate cultural aspects?]

17. Czy metody ilościowe pokazują, że jest jednak więcej mężczyzn reprezentowanych w podręcznikach niż kobiet? Czy to jest problematyczne przedstawianie ról płci?
[Do quantitative methods show that there are more men represented in textbooks? Is it a problematic representation of gender roles?]

18. Czy w procesie recenzowania podręcznika zwraca się też uwagę na to, jak role kobiet i mężczyzn są przedstawiane?
[In the course of reviewing a textbook, do you pay attention to how gender roles are depicted?]

19. Czy role kobiet i mężczyzn przedstawiane są inaczej w podręcznikach tzw. lokalnych i globalnych?
[Are gender roles represented in a different way in the so-called local and global textbooks?]

20. Czyli podręcznik nie jest tylko wykorzystywany do nauki języka *per se,* ale uczymy się też czegoś o sobie, o świecie nas otaczającym?
[So the textbook is not used only to teach language *per se* but we also learn something about ourselves? About the surrounding world?]

21. Co myśli Pani o tym dialogu? (wykorzystany dialog z grup fokusowych; *New English Zone 3*)?
[What do you think about this dialogue? (a dialogue from *New English Zone 3* also used during focus groups)]

22. Czy na przestrzeni lat zauważyła Pani, że coś się zmienia, jeżeli chodzi o przedstawianie kobiet i mężczyzn?
[Has anything changed with regard to the representation of women and men within the span of some time?]

23. Czy pod wpływem uwag recenzentów podręcznik jest modyfikowany?
[Are textbooks modified due to reviewer comments?]

24. Czy coś powinno się zmienić, jeżeli chodzi o przedstawianie rodzin w podręcznikach?
[Should anything change with regard to the representation of families in EFL textbooks?]

25. Wydaje się, że jeżeli uczeń nie ma wsparcia w podręczniku czy też w nauczycielu, jeżeli chodzi o jego/jej rodzinę, to czuje się zniechęcony do nauki?
[It seems that a student who does not see support in the textbook or the teacher, when it comes to their family, they feel discouraged?]

26. Czy w Pani opinii powinny być przedstawiane różne typy rodzin?
[In your opinion, should different types of families be depicted?]

27. Czy przygotowuje Pani przyszłych anglistów do pracy?
[Do you teach on teacher education courses?]

28. Czy jest miejsce w szkoleniu nauczycieli na podnoszenie ich świadomości, jeżeli chodzi o kwestie społeczne?
[Is there any room for raising teacher awareness of social issues during such courses?]

29. Dlaczego tak się dzieje, że interkulturowość, chociaż jest tak ważna, nie zwraca się na nią uwagi podczas zajęć z języka angielskiego?
[Why does it happen that despite interculturalism being so important, little attention is paid to it during EFL classes?]

Appendix D: Ministry of Education reviewer forms[75]

Published: 28 August 2014

Opinia merytoryczno-dydaktyczna[76]					
pozytywna	☐	negatywna	☐	warunkowa	☐

Dane rzeczoznawcy	
Imię i nazwisko rzeczoznawcy	
Adres do korespondencji	
Telefon, email	
Data otrzymania podręcznika do opinii	

Dane dotyczące opiniowanego podręcznika					
Tytuł podręcznika					
Autor/autorzy					
Wydawca					
Tytuł serii					
Numer części podręcznika/Liczba wszystkich części podręcznika					
Liczba stron					
Postać podręcznika	tradycyjna	☐	e-book	☐	podręcznik multimedialny ☐

Przeznaczenie podręcznika:								

Rodzaj zajęć edukacyjnych/przedmiot								

Etap edukacyjny	I ☐	II ☐	III ☐	IV ☐

Typ szkoły	Szkoła podstawowa ☐	Gimnazjum ☐
	Liceum ogólnokształcące, liceum profilowane, technikum ☐	Zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa ☐

Zakres kształcenia	Podstawowy ☐	Rozszerzony ☐	Nie dotyczy ☐

Podręcznik przeznaczony do określonego w podstawie programowej kształcenia ogólnego poziomu zaawansowania umiejętności językowych	Klasy I-III SP	Klasy IV-VI SP	Gimnazjum		Szkoły ponadgimnazjalne				
			I	II	III.0	III.1	IV.0	IV.1P	IV.1R	IV.2

W skali ESOKJ podręcznik odpowiada poziomowi	Poziom podstawowy A1 A2	Poziom samodzielności B1 B2	Poziom biegłości C1 C2

(dotyczy podręcznika do języka obcego nowożytnego i podręcznika do języka mniejszości narodowej, etnicznej i języka regionalnego) Czy do podręcznika dołączone są nagrania dźwiękowe na elektronicznym nośniku danych, rozwijające sprawność rozumienia ze słuchu, stanowiące integralną część podręcznika?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

I. Ocena koncepcji opracowania podręcznika wydawanego w częściach, w szczególności rozkładu i uwzględnienia treści nauczania w pozostałych częściach podręcznika

Czy koncepcja podręcznika wydawanego w częściach obejmuje wszystkie treści nauczania określone w podstawie programowej kształcenia ogólnego dla odpowiednich zajęć edukacyjnych w danym etapie edukacyjnym?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

II. Ocena zgodności treści podręcznika z podstawą programową kształcenia ogólnego

1.	Czy podręcznik jest zgodny z podstawą programową kształcenia ogólnego określoną w rozporządzeniu Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 27 sierpnia 2012 r. w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół (Dz. U. z 2012 r., poz. 977 z późn. zm.)	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
2.	Czy podręcznik umożliwia realizację celów kształcenia określonych w podstawie programowej?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
3.	Czy podręcznik umożliwia realizację wymagań szczegółowych określonych w podstawie programowej?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
4.	Czy podręcznik zawiera usystematyzowaną prezentację treści nauczania ustalonych w podstawie programowej?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

III.	Czy podręcznik zawiera pytania, polecenia, zadania i ćwiczenia wymagające uzupełniania w podręczniku? – w przypadku podręcznika w postaci papierowej	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

IV.	Czy podręcznik zawiera odwołania i polecenia wymagające korzystania z opracowanych przez określonego wydawcę dodatkowych materiałów dydaktycznych przeznaczonych dla ucznia?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

V.	Czy podręcznik zawiera materiały i treści o charakterze reklamowym?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

VI. Ocena postaci elektronicznej podręcznika

1.	Czy podręcznik zawiera opis sposobu uruchomienia albo opis sposobu instalacji i uruchomienia?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
2.	Czy podręcznik zawiera system pomocy zawierający opis użytkowania podręcznika?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
3.	Czy podręcznik zawiera mechanizmy nawigacji i wyszukiwania, w tym w szczególności spis treści i skorowidz w postaci hiperłączy?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
4.	Czy podręcznik zawiera opcję drukowania treści podręcznika, z wyłączeniem dynamicznych elementów multimedialnych, których wydrukowanie nie jest możliwe?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

VII. Szczegółowa ocena poprawności pod względem merytorycznym i szczegółowa ocena przydatności dydaktycznej

1.	Czy podręcznik jest poprawny pod względem merytorycznym, dydaktycznym i wychowawczym? W szczególności:		
a.	Czy uwzględnia aktualny stan wiedzy naukowej, w tym metodycznej?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
b.	Czy jest przystosowany do danego poziomu kształcenia pod względem stopnia trudności, formy przekazu, właściwego doboru pojęć, nazw, terminów i sposobu ich wyjaśniania?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
c.	Czy zawiera materiał rzeczowy i materiał ilustracyjny odpowiedni do przedstawianych treści nauczania?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
d.	Czy ma logiczną konstrukcję?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:		

2. Czy podręcznik zawiera zakres materiału rzeczowego i materiału ilustracyjnego odpowiedni do liczby godzin przewidzianych w ramowym planie nauczania?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		

3. Czy zawiera propozycje działań edukacyjnych aktywizujących i motywujących uczniów?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		

4. Czy umożliwia uczniom ze zróżnicowanymi możliwościami nabycie umiejętności określonych w podstawie programowej kształcenia ogólnego?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		

5. Czy zawiera treści zgodne z przepisami prawa, w tym ratyfikowanymi umowami międzynarodowymi?[77]	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
(jeśli NIE, proszę podać, jakie treści są niezgodne) Uzasadnienie oceny:		

6. Czy ma przejrzystą szatę graficzną?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		

7. Czy zawiera opis sprawdzianu i egzaminów, o których mowa w art. 9 ust. 1 pkt 1, 2 i 3 lit. b i c ustawy z dnia 7 września 1991 r. o systemie oświaty oraz zadań egzaminacyjnych wykorzystanych w arkuszach egzaminacyjnych sprawdzianu i egzaminów?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		

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[77] Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Powszechna Deklaracja Praw Człowieka, Międzynarodowy Pakt Praw Obywatelskich i Politycznych, Konwencja o Prawach Dziecka oraz inne umowy i konwencje, których postanowienia dotyczą zakresu treści nauczania dla poszczególnych przedmiotów.

8. Czy w przypadku pytań, poleceń, zadań i ćwiczeń zawartych w podręczniku w postaci papierowej, wymagających udzielenia przez ucznia pisemnej odpowiedzi:	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

– podręcznik zawiera informację, że odpowiedzi tej nie należy umieszczać w podręczniku;

– miejsca w zadaniach i ćwiczeniach, które powinny być wypełnione przez ucznia, są zaciemnione i przedstawione w sposób uniemożliwiający uczniowi wpisanie odpowiedzi w tym miejscu?

Uzasadnienie oceny:

(w przypadku podręczników do historii i geografii)	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
9. Czy zawiera treści zgodne z zaleceniami dwustronnych komisji podręcznikowych oraz innych komisji i zespołów do spraw podręczników, działających na podstawie międzypaństwowych umów dotyczących współpracy w zakresie edukacji lub porozumień komitetów narodowych UNESCO?		

(jeśli NIE, proszę podać, jakie treści są niezgodne)

Uzasadnienie oceny:

Ogólna opinia o podręczniku

Wady	
Zalety	

Konkluzja kwalifikacyjna

Podręcznik może być dopuszczony do użytku szkolnego przez ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania do kształcenia ogólnego	pozytywna	☐
Podręcznik nie może być dopuszczony do użytku szkolnego przez ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania do kształcenia ogólnego	negatywna	☐

Uzasadnienie:

Podręcznik może być dopuszczony do użytku szkolnego przez ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania do kształcenia ogólnego, pod warunkiem dokonania wskazanych w opinii poprawek[78]	warunkowa	☐

Wykaz błędów znajdujących się w podręczniku oraz koniecznych do wprowadzenia poprawek (należy wymienić wszystkie błędy z numerami stron, na których się znajdują)

…………………………………..

Data i podpis

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[78] Uwaga: Rzeczoznawca jest zobowiązany do wskazania wszystkich usterek opiniowanego podręcznika oraz do oceny ostatecznej wersji tekstu i ilustracji, po końcowym opracowaniu.

Published: 18 July 2012

Opinia merytoryczno-dydaktyczna[79]					
pozytywna	☐	negatywna	☐	warunkowa	☐

Dane rzeczoznawcy	
Imię i nazwisko rzeczoznawcy	
Adres do korespondencji	
Telefon, email	
Data otrzymania podręcznika do opinii	

Dane dotyczące opiniowanego podręcznika					
Tytuł podręcznika					
Autor/autorzy					
Wydawca					
Tytuł serii					
Pozycja w serii/ Liczba podręczników serii					
Liczba stron					
Forma podręcznika	tradycyjna	☐	e-book	☐	podręcznik multimedialny ☐

Przeznaczenie podręcznika:							
Rodzaj zajęć edukacyjnych/przedmiot							
Etap edukacyjny	I ☐	II ☐		III ☐	IV ☐		
Typ szkoły	Szkoła podstawowa ☐			Gimnazjum ☐			
	Liceum ogólnokształcące, liceum profilowane, technikum ☐			Zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa ☐			
Zakres kształcenia	Podstawowy ☐		Rozszerzony ☐		Nie dotyczy ☐		

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[79] Zgodnie z rozporządzeniem Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 21 czerwca 2012 r. w sprawie dopuszczania do użytku w szkole programów wychowania przedszkolnego i programów nauczania oraz dopuszczania do użytku szkolnego podręczników (Poz. 752).

Podręcznik zgodny z podstawą programową kształcenia ogólnego określoną w:	rozporządzeniu Ministra Edukacji Narodowej i Sportu z dnia 26 lutego 2002 r. w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół (Dz. U. Nr 51, poz. 458, z późn. zm.) ☐		rozporządzeniu Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 27 sierpnia 2012 r. w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół (Poz. 977) ☐					
Podręcznik przeznaczony do określonego w podstawie programowej kształcenia ogólnego poziomu zaawansowania umiejętności językowych	Klasy I-III SP	Klasy IV-VI SP	Gimnazjum		Szkoły ponadgimnazjalne			
	I	II	III.0	III.1	IV.0	IV.1P	IV.1R	IV.2
W skali ESOKJ podręcznik odpowiada poziomowi	Poziom podstawowy A1 A2		Poziom samodzielności B1 B2		Poziom biegłości C1 C2			

I. Ocena koncepcji serii

Czy seria/koncepcja serii obejmuje wszystkie treści nauczania określone w podstawie programowej kształcenia ogólnego dla odpowiednich zajęć edukacyjnych w danym etapie edukacyjnym?[80]	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

II. Ocena formy elektronicznej podręcznika[81]

1. Czy podręcznik zawiera opis sposobu uruchomienia albo opis sposobu instalacji i uruchomienia?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
2. Czy podręcznik posiada system pomocy zawierający opis użytkowania podręcznika?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
3. Czy podręcznik zawiera mechanizmy nawigacji i wyszukiwania, w tym w szczególności spis treści i skorowidz w postaci hiperłączy?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
4. Czy podręcznik zawiera opcję drukowania treści podręcznika, z wyłączeniem dynamicznych elementów multimedialnych, których wydrukowanie nie jest możliwe?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

III. Ocena zgodności treści podręcznika z podstawą programową kształcenia ogólnego

1. Czy podręcznik umożliwia realizację celów kształcenia określonych w podstawie programowej?	TAK	☐	NIE	☐	
2. Czy podręcznik umożliwia realizację wymagań szczegółowych określonych w podstawie programowej?	TAK	☐	NIE	☐	
3. Czy podręcznik przedstawia wybrane dla tej części serii wymagania szczegółowe w sposób usystematyzowany?	TAK	☐	NIE	☐	NIE DOTYCZY ☐

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[80] Zgodnie z § 6 ust. 1 rozporządzenia Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 21 czerwca 2012 r. w sprawie dopuszczania do użytku w szkole programów wychowania przedszkolnego i programów nauczania oraz dopuszczania do użytku szkolnego podręczników (poz. 752).

[81] Zgodnie z § 9 ww. rozporządzenia.

Uzasadnienie oceny:

IV. Szczegółowa ocena poprawności pod względem merytorycznym i szczegółowa ocena przydatności dydaktycznej [82]		
1. Czy podręcznik jest poprawny pod względem merytorycznym, dydaktycznym i wychowawczym? W szczególności:		
a. Czy uwzględnia aktualny stan wiedzy naukowej, w tym metodycznej?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
b. Czy jest przystosowany do danego poziomu kształcenia pod względem stopnia trudności, formy przekazu, właściwego doboru pojęć, nazw, terminów i sposobu ich wyjaśniania?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
c. Czy zawiera materiał rzeczowy i materiał ilustracyjny odpowiedni do przedstawianych treści nauczania?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
d. Czy ma logiczną konstrukcję?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		
2. Czy zawiera zakres materiału rzeczowego i materiału ilustracyjnego odpowiedni do liczby godzin przewidzianych w ramowym planie nauczania?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		
3. Czy zawiera propozycje działań edukacyjnych aktywizujących i motywujących uczniów?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		
4. Czy umożliwia uczniom ze zróżnicowanymi możliwościami nabycie umiejętności określonych w podstawie programowej kształcenia ogólnego?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		
5. Czy ma przejrzystą szatę graficzną i jest poprawny pod względem edytorskim?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐
Uzasadnienie oceny:		

[82] Zgodnie z § 6 ust. 8 i 9 ww. rozporządzenia.

6. Czy zawiera materiał reklamowy inny niż informacje o publikacjach edukacyjnych?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

Uzasadnienie oceny:

7. Czy zawiera treści zgodne z przepisami prawa, w tym ratyfikowanymi umowami międzynarodowymi?[83]	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

(jeśli NIE, proszę podać, jakie treści są niezgodne)
Uzasadnienie oceny:

(w przypadku podręczników do historii i geografii) **8.** Czy zawiera treści zgodne z zaleceniami dwustronnych komisji podręcznikowych oraz innych komisji i zespołów do spraw podręczników, działających na podstawie międzypaństwowych umów dotyczących współpracy w zakresie edukacji lub porozumień komitetów narodowych UNESCO?	TAK ☐	NIE ☐

(jeśli NIE, proszę podać, jakie treści są niezgodne)
Uzasadnienie oceny:

Ogólna opinia o podręczniku

Wady	
Zalety	

Konkluzja kwalifikacyjna

Podręcznik może być dopuszczony do użytku szkolnego przez ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania do kształcenia ogólnego	pozytywna ☐
Podręcznik nie może być dopuszczony do użytku szkolnego przez ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania do kształcenia ogólnego	negatywna ☐

Uzasadnienie:

Podręcznik może być dopuszczony do użytku szkolnego przez ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania do kształcenia ogólnego, pod warunkiem dokonania wskazanych w opinii poprawek[84]	warunkowa ☐

Wykaz błędów znajdujących się w podręczniku oraz koniecznych do wprowadzenia poprawek
(należy wymienić wszystkie błędy z numerami stron, na których się znajdują)

…………………………………..
Data i podpis

[83] Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Powszechna Deklaracja Praw Człowieka, Międzynarodowy Pakt Praw Obywatelskich i Politycznych, Konwencja o Prawach Dziecka oraz inne umowy i konwencje, których postanowienia dotyczą zakresu treści nauczania dla poszczególnych przedmiotów.

[84] Uwaga: Rzeczoznawca jest zobowiązany do wskazania wszystkich usterek opiniowanego podręcznika oraz do oceny ostatecznej wersji tekstu i ilustracji, po końcowym opracowaniu.

Appendix E: Transcription systems

With two exceptions (see below), all extracts from the classroom discourse (Chapter 6), all three focus groups and both interviews (Chapter 7) have been transcribed using broadly orthographic conventions, to aid readability. They have also been lightly edited, so for example most repetitions and hesitations have been removed, as the focus is the *content* of what was said ('what' rather than 'how'), and overlapping speech has not been indicated.

The following abbreviations were used:

S – student

Ss – students

MS – male student

FS – female student

T – teacher

Where students' names were indicated by the teachers, we have used abbreviated, anonymised versions of these, to show continuity of talk.

Utterances in broadly the form of grammatical sentences start with a capital letter and conclude with a full stop. This includes 'truncated' sentences such as 'He did.' (If this means, say, 'He went to Łodz.'). It also includes sentence-utterances during which another classroom participant speaks. In this case the first part of the first speaker's utterance concludes with three dots (…) and starts again after the second speaker's utterance with a lower-case letter.

Incomplete sentences conclude with four dots.

Phrases and 'minimal responses' such as 'mhm' start with a lower-case letter and do not conclude with a full stop. Laughter is shown in lower case, in the form of 'heh heh' or 'ha ha'.

Question marks and exclamation marks have been used to indicate when a question is being asked or an exclamation produced.

Pauses have been indicated with a comma or occasionally a dash.

The exceptions to the above are Extract 1 and an example at the end of Chapter 6 which use two of the transcription symbols commonly applied in conversation analysis (see Jefferson, 2004):

[ ] Square brackets indicate the start and end of the overlapping speech.

= 'Latching', i.e. to show 'no gap, no overlap' between two utterances.

The numbers next to the lines (Extract 1, Chapter 6) do not indicate the turns but are used to facilitate data discussion that follows the Extract.

Polish is in italics throughout except in the forms in the appendices.

Appendix F: Consent form (for parents)

Description of the research project undertaken by Lancaster University (United Kingdom) and the Faculty of English (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) funded by the British Council within the English Language Teaching Research Partnerships scheme.

The project seeks to scrutinize how gender, a salient social construct, is represented in ESL coursebooks, and if and how this representation is addressed and received by students and teachers during ESL classes. This part of the research project consists of two stages. First, ESL materials will be subject to critical scrutiny. Second, the researchers will conduct non-participant observations of at least five teaching sessions, one of which will be audio-recorded. The recording is an integral part of the project; files will be saved in an archive and used *only* for research purposes. For further information on the project, please contact Dr hab. Joanna Pawelczyk, prof. UAM (pasia@wa.amu.edu.pl), Łukasz Pakuła (lukaszp@wa.amu.edu.pl) or Jane Sunderland (j.sunderland@lancs.ac.uk).

The researchers' promise:

- We will not publish any real names or addresses in any Project reports, or give them out to the public;

- We will protect, to the best of our ability, the confidentiality of people we have recorded;

- The materials and tape recordings made as part of the research will be used only for educational/ scholarly purposes (not for profit);

- No copies of these tapes or transcripts will be made, and nothing from them will be published without the consent of the researchers. The tapes will be encrypted. Should you have any doubts, enquiries, please e-mail them using the contact details provided above.

- Participants are allowed to withdraw at any point of the research.

- Parents can opt out within a week since the commencement of the project.

The parent or legal guardian of the person recorded agrees:

- I consent to the researchers publishing transcripts from the recordings made with my child for research purposes – as long as the researchers anonymise my child's names, addresses and any other identifying information.

- I understand that the researchers are not making the recordings for financial benefits, and I do not expect to be paid to allow my child to participate in the recordings either.

- The file containing the recording, and any transcript, is the result of my consent and a voluntary recording of my child's speech on the part of my child.

- If I impose any other restrictions on the use of these recordings I will make them clear. I have the right to request to see the transcript and to be given an agreed-upon period of time (e.g. a week), with the researchers, to have any part of the recording deleted.

- Should I have any complaints about the process, I can contact Prof. Elena Semino, Head of the Department of Linguistics and English Language, Lancaster University (e.semino@lancaster.ac.uk, +44 1524 594176).

Parents'/legal guardians' consent:

- If you consent to your child participating in the recordings, please do not take any action. Should you decide otherwise, please state it clearly and return the consent form to the researchers.

With a focus on Poland, Łukasz Pakuła, Joanna Pawelczyk and Jane Sunderland empirically explore gender and sexuality in relation to classroom interaction and textbooks in the primary and secondary English language classroom. Based on data from a range of classrooms, the book shows how gender stereotyping in textbooks has not disappeared, that heterosexuality is the only sexuality in evidence and that heteronormativity is salient. Importantly, though, through teacher- and student-talk and classroom interaction generally, these representations can be and are negotiated and challenged. The book also offers practical suggestions for teachers, educators and publishers to make the English language classroom a truly inclusive social space.

Łukasz Pakuła is affiliated with the Faculty of English and a lecturer in Gender Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. His research interests include: language, gender, and sexuality; identities in educational settings; critical (meta) lexicography and identity construction in reference works (e.g. dictionaries), as well as Corpus Linguistics working in tandem with Critical Discourse Analysis. He publishes internationally, both in journals and edited collections. He has also co-edited a volume on interdisciplinary linguistics and regularly presents his research at international conferences and congresses.

Joanna Pawelczyk is Associate Professor of Sociolinguistics at the Faculty of English, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. Her primary research interests are in language, gender and sexuality issues, discourses of psychotherapy and discourse analysis. She has published in a range of international journals and edited collections on gender, psychotherapy and identity. She is the author of *Talk as Therapy: Psychotherapy in a Linguistic Perspective* (2011). She is presently a member of the advisory board of the International Gender and Language Association.

Jane Sunderland is an Honorary Reader in Gender and Discourse at Lancaster University, UK. Her main research interests are in the area of language, discourse, gender and sexuality, but she is also interested in academic discourse, doctoral education and the notion of adaptation. Her monographs include *Gendered Discourses* (2004) and *Language, Gender and Children's Fiction* (2011). She is currently co-authoring a book called *Children's Literacy Practices: Harry Potter and Beyond* (provisional title). She is a past President of the International Gender and Language Association (IGALA).

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