

The importance of having gender-neutral English language teaching in Hong Kong classrooms

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Declaration

I declare that this honors project entitled “The importance of gender-neutral language teaching in Hong Kong classrooms” is my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made. This work has not been submitted previously for examination to any tertiary institution.

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Date: 22nd May, 2016

Abstract

The issue of gender equality has gained increasing worldwide attention throughout the recent decades. Yet, the pace of gender issues' improvement in academic field seems fails to catch up with the world's development trend. It is still not hard to find sexist-language and gender-biased content in different textbooks nowadays. Lee (2007) pointed out that education field has had a significant effect on young learners that everything they see and listen will have huge impact on students' cognitive growth. Foreign researches also showed that gendered materials have non-negligible influence on children's gender socialization. With regard to this, this small-scale research reviews the gender representations in a local textbook series "Primary Longman Elect" through content and visual analysis (Research question 1). This research also aims at collecting first-hand data from the educational field for investigating teachers' awareness on gendered teaching materials and their perceptions towards gender-neutral language teaching (Research questions 2 and 3). The results of textbooks analysis reflect that the frequencies of occurrence of male characters are generally higher than that of female characters. It is also found that some occupations and social roles are gender-stereotyped. Also, male characters usually engage in sports activities while musical activities are female dominant. Though local textbooks are found gendered in certain ways, local English teachers, however, generally do not put much attention on them. On one hand, they underestimate the influence of gendered materials on children. On the other hand, they treat gender issues and language teaching as two independent things. Therefore, gender-neutral language teaching is yet an immature issue in Hong Kong.

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Introduction

Throughout the four years' teacher training in the Hong Kong Institute of Education, I have been a tutor for a number of school's after-school English enhancement courses and tutorial classes. Once when I was teaching a class of Primary 3 students on the topic of occupations, I chose a male character for demonstrating an example of home care taker. However, most of my students laughed and claimed that they had never seen a "male housewife", which they mean "house husband" or "stay-at-home dad" as the correct expressions, in their textbooks. Most of the students also expressed that they have their mothers as the home care takers and fathers as the bread winners in their families. This phenomenon is actually supported by a famous traditional Chinese saying 「男主外，女主內」 (A husband should be in charge of external matters while his wife should take care of domestic matters.) Taken the social and cultural contexts of the Hong Kong community into consideration, it is understandable that students may find it unusual to see house husbands as this violates the Chinese social norm.

This incident aroused my attention in sexism related issues existing in education. Living in the world of the 21st century, where the issue of gender equality has gained increasing world-wide attention, students nowadays should be more open-minded instead of limiting their thinking by some traditional social norms. However, I am not claiming that students should be the ones to be blamed on the situation. The problems is that the pace of improvement of gender equality in academic field seems fail to catch up with the global trend. I believe there are some loopholes existing in the current Hong Kong education, which enhanced the gender-biased phenomenon. The first loophole concerns the design of teaching materials that it is not difficult to spot sexist language and gender stereotyping content in different textbooks, which are widely used in Hong Kong primary schools.

When reviewing the Basic Education Curriculum Guide written by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC), a number of generic skills, values and attitudes are incorporated into the key learning areas of the Hong Kong School Curriculum. Those generic skills, values and attitudes are regarded as the "unseen curriculum" that relies heavily on educators to instill into students through daily teaching. Inside the

unseen curriculum, “equality” and “open-minded” are two of the core values (social) and attitudes (CDC, 2002), which are essential for students to get rid of sexism. The awareness of educators when coming across gendered teaching materials is crucial for providing students with sexism free education. Therefore, the second loophole concerns the teachers’ inadequate awareness towards gendered teaching materials and perceptions on gender neutral teaching.

In an effort to dig into the two loopholes identified above, here are the three major research questions:

1. How is gender represented in English textbooks using in Hong Kong primary schools?
2. Are English teachers in Hong Kong aware of gendered teaching materials?
3. What are English teachers’ perceptions towards sexism-free language teaching?

Definition of terms

To begin with, there are several major terms that have to be defined.

1. Gender and sex

Most people consider gender and sex as synonyms which can be used interchangeably. Nevertheless, this is a common misconception that the two words actually have conceptual differences. “Sex” concerns with humans’ biological differences based on sex organs and genes (Talbot, 1998). Meanwhile, “gender” concerns with masculinity and femininity. Litosseliti (2006) suggested that “gender” is a term which distinguishes men and women by “cultural or social construct” and “traits assigned to a sex” (p. 10-11).

2. Sexism

Sexism is discrimination or prejudice on the basis of gender. Privileges, benefits or other advantages are given to a person based on their sex regardless of their individual preferences and abilities (Stones, 1983).

3. Gender bias

Gender bias concern with attitudes and beliefs of people, may be unintentional, which relegate boys or girls to a more or less important status than their

counterparts (Carolyn, 2000). This may include girls are considered as the “better” students but boys are naughty students in schools.

4. Stereotyping

Stereotyping is a practice of assigning traditional and rigid roles or attributes to a group. Stereotyped expressions and expectations ignore individual differences and may limit the full development of male and female students. These expressions or expectations are reinforced by stereotyped models or illustrations, which children receive messages of appropriate role behavior, skills development and careers that they should follow so as to fit into norms of society (Sadker & Sadker, 1979, 1994).

Literature review

Overview

The issue of gender equality and sexism in education sector has long been arousing attention in western countries. There were a number of previous researches done in the western context concerning the practice opportunities of male and female students in classroom, learning diversity and differences among the gender, the gender equality concerning teacher’s language of instruction and design of classroom learning activity, etc. To provide a good foundation for this research project, this literature review aims at answering the following two fundamental questions:

1. To what extent does gendered education affect children’s perception towards gender?
2. In what ways do gendered content is presented in children’s books?

It is not hard to imagine the quantity of time children spent in schools during their childhood. Therefore, schools serve a prominent role in shaping students’ mindset. Gee & Gee (2005) concluded that classroom material is one of the major aspects of school environment, which serves significant influence on children’s perceptions on gender. Therefore, it is important to review the impacts of gendered classroom materials and how the gendered classroom materials are presented.

Impacts of gendered classroom materials

Classroom materials here concern not only textbooks or story books but also any other materials that can be reached by students in classroom. From Lee's study in 2008, he found that a poster which consists of all male presidents makes a group of female students think that they cannot be the President of the United States in the future. Another study done by Chick, Heilman-Houser, & Hunter in 2002 even revealed the impacts of some gender-typed toys in classrooms on children. They found that the kitchen sets of toy which is in pink color were rarely played by boys that they considered the pink toys as for female only. Therefore, classroom materials have non-negligible influence not only on social expectations, but also the way they act and view themselves.

Relating closer to the interest of this research project, the influence of gendered teaching and learning materials, textbooks and reading materials in particular, on children's perception on gender is worth reviewing. Stones (1983) claimed that children's books play an important role in the process of "sex role socialization" (p.8). Such kind of socialization describes the way how children acquire gender identity and view themselves as their corresponding gender. The phenomenon is due to the fact that books have enormous influence on children (Narahara, 1998). Stones and Narahara both agreed that books set the definitions and provide role models of masculinity and femininity. As active and direct readers, children see books and their content including illustrations, language used as cultural and social norms that have to be followed (Jackson, 2007).

Back to 1970s, there was an action research done by McArthur and Eisen to study the influence of both sexist and non-sexist story on pre-school children. After presenting a story of a male character with awarding behaviors, male children were found to perform better in learning activities later on. When another similar story depicting a female character's achievement related behaviors was presented, most of the female students had shown improvements in their performance in the post tasks. McArthur and Eisen (1976) concluded that the representation of male and female in children's books provides children with the exposure to role models of gender and thus, has non negligible impact on children's behaviors.

Mechanism of sexism in children's books

There are generally four types of mechanisms of providing unfavorable image to either gender in children's books, which are **omission, neglect, stereotype and distortion** (Macdonald, 1980; Walker & Barton, 1983).

Omission: By Macdonald (1980), omission is also “symbolic annihilation”, which some roles, occupations and activities are represented by only male or female characters. For example, nowadays there are female police officers and firefighters. Yet, textbooks only include illustrations of “policeman” and “fireman”, which are all male characters. This is an omission of female in occupations.

Neglect: Unlike omission, both female and male are mentioned but either one of the genders has always been under-mentioned (Sutherland, 1981). In other words, one gender is depicted as subordinate group to the other or given minor roles with little focus.

Stereotype: Both genders are included but with strong discriminatory portrayal of any possible aspects of one's life (Hsu, 1992). The Chinese notion mentioned in the very beginning 「男主外，女主內」, for instance, is one of the prominent examples of stereotype. Through the use of stereotyped illustrations, textbooks further signify and exaggerate the “expected” roles of gender in society.

Distortion: This concerns incorrect descriptions and depictions on a gender, in which one is inherently more capable than the other. Such mechanism provides the image of “a distorted version of society” (Walker & Barton, 1983), making one gender looks under-privileged.

Analysis of children's books

According to Yang (2014), there are four major approaches in the analysis of children's book, which are **content analysis, linguistic analysis, discourse analysis and visual analysis**.

Content analysis: This is a quantitative method which counts the frequencies of occurrence of male and female characters, their occupational and domestic roles and

personality traits. According to Sunderland (2011), content analysis and visual analysis, which will be introduced shortly, are always done together.

Linguistic analysis: This includes the analysis of linguistic features in children's books. For examples, the use of nouns and pronouns as male and female referents, adjectives describing the characters and sexist language, including generic masculine pronouns and man-compounds.

Discourse analysis: Discourse approach focus on the language contents expressed. Concerning gender representation at discourse level, the analysis may look into dialogues and count the number of utterances made by the two genders. In addition, features like length of utterances, speech acts, turn taking and position in theme or rheme can also be within the interest of discourse analysis.

Visual analysis: As can be interpreted from its name, visual representations, appeared in children's books are the scopes of visual analysis. Researchers focus on the frequency of occurrence, roles, activities, occupations, etc. presented in the illustrations inside children's reading materials.

Project design

Despite the fact that gender equality in education has raised increasing attention in western countries, gender issues are yet to be a new topic among Hong Kong education sectors. There is a scarce amount of researches in gender related topics done in the context of schools in Hong Kong or even in Asian district. As proven from previous researches that there are considerable effects of gendered teaching on students' perspective towards gender, this research project acts as an extension of foreign researches in the context of Hong Kong and serves two core aims:

1. To investigate gender representations in Hong Kong English textbooks
2. To examine teachers' awareness of gendered teaching materials and perceptions on gender neutral teaching

In response to the first aim, this research project tries to do analysis on gender

presentations in a series of English textbooks entitled “Primary Longman Elect”, which are widely used in primary schools in Hong Kong. Content and visual analyses are the two major approaches adopted in the analysis of the textbooks so as to answer the first research question: How is gender represented in English textbooks used in Hong Kong primary schools?

For content analysis, it involves the counting of occurrence of male and female characters in text, as well as their corresponding social, occupational roles and personal traits. While for visual analysis, frequency counts on visualized characters and the activities they are involved in are the primary foci.

To achieve the second aim of this research project, semi-structured interviews with in-service English subject teachers are conducted to examine their awareness of gendered teaching materials and collect their views on gender neutral language teaching (**See the interview questions in Appendix II**). All English teachers in the school, where I had my field experience semester in 2015, were invited face to face to participate in this research. There were totally nine teachers who had been invited. The interviews were taken in either the computer room or function room, where there were no other people in the venue of interview. Through semi-structured interviews, interviewees were expected to provide in-depth views on the issue as they are all frontline teachers, who know the practical situations best.

All interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees for later transcription and analysis. There are three stages of handling the qualitative data: thick description, deep analysis and in-depth interpretation. Thick description is done after a general review and organization of the interview data. Feedbacks from the interviewees will first be reported and then followed by inductive analysis in an effort to get possible relationships, patterns, causes and consequences related to the interview questions and other areas of interest. Finally, interpretations are to be drawn from interviewees’ responses such that they can be categorized and commented based on a conceptual or theoretical framework.

Ethical considerations

This is an action research which involves the collection of data from local teachers and thus, their rights and benefits have to be protected that they should not be, in any ways, harmed or identified due to the participation in any phase of the research. The three major principles governing the ethical considerations of this research are: autonomy, beneficence and non-maleficence.

Teachers' consent to involvement is considered as the basic autonomy of the participants. All participants were given the consent form and information sheet before their participation that their rights and the purpose and details of this research were explained clearly. They were also reserved the right to withdraw from the research at any time for any reasons in an effort to protect their beneficence. Last but not least, measures were taken to ensure the participation in this research is non-maleficence that no risk or harm will be brought to any participant. Confidentiality is one way to protect the privacy of the participants that no real name or personal information would be recorded or reported to any other parties.

Limitations of the study

This research chooses only one of the popular series of English textbooks in Hong Kong, which is "Primary Longman Elect" for analysis. Therefore, the situation of gender representations in textbooks found in this research only applies to this series of textbooks. Yet, according to my personal experience in teaching ten different local primary schools in Hong Kong, eight of them are using "Primary Longman Elect" while the remaining two are using "Primary Longman Express", which is also published by Longman. Therefore, Primary Longman Elect textbooks were chosen for analysis as they should be the mainstream textbooks used in many local primary schools in Hong Kong. From Primary one to six, each level consists of two textbooks so that there are totally twelve in the whole series. Yet, due to availability in the HKIED library, I could only get one textbook from each level for analysis and they are: 1A, 2B, 3A, 4B, 5B and 6A. However, they should be enough for representing the general situation of gender representation in Primary Longman Elect textbooks.

The second limitation of this research is the small number of interviewees. All

interviewees are from the same school and the school is actually a small scale one. Therefore, there are fewer English teachers compared to other local primary schools. Fortunately, all of the nine English teachers agreed to participate in this research. Therefore, the interview data collected shall be representable for this particular school. Yet, the sample size is still too small for representing the general situation in Hong Kong. In other words, the data collected in this research could only reflect a small group of teachers' view and situation.

Findings

Results of visual and content analysis of the textbooks

After counting the frequency of occurrence of visual male and female characters in the six Primary Longman Elect textbooks, it is found that five of them have visual male characters more than that of the females. Only Book 5B has more visual female characters than the males'. Referring to table 1 (**see Appendix I**), the result significantly shows that Primary Longman Elect textbooks generally use more male characters in their pictures and illustrations.

In addition to the counting of frequency of occurrence of visual male and female characters, content analysis also looks into their occupations, social roles, activities they are doing as well as their personal traits presented in the textbooks.

Table 2 (**see Appendix I**) shows a list of occupations and social roles that male and female characters are represented in both text and illustrations. It is found that some of the occupations are one-sided in terms of gender. Teacher, for instance, is an occupation with totally 80 times appeared as female characters and only 7 times appeared as males in the six textbooks. Some "undesirable" roles like criminals and prisoners are all illustrated by male characters. The situation of unbalanced gender representations also applies to some professional occupations, like astronauts and doctors, which male characters have dominated the appearance in these privileged jobs. Despite the fact that there are some imbalanced situations between two genders in some privileged and professional jobs, however, it is true that both males and females are involved in a wide spectrum of occupations and roles.

In addition to the occupations, the content analysis has also looked into different types of activities involved by both males and females. As can be seen in table 3 (**see Appendix I**), males are involved in a greater variety of activities than females. Among the activities in the list, it is found that females are rarely involved in sports activities. Meanwhile, females are frequently found involving in playing musical instruments, including piano, guitar and violin. Yet, male characters only appear once in playing the piano in book 2B. Again, there is an imbalanced situation in the gender representation in activities portrayed.

Concerning personal traits (**see Appendix I**), male characters are portrayed with greater variety of personalities. Among the limited personalities depicted in female characters, only three of them are positive and desirable, like good-looking, caring and good at music. For male characters, there is better inclusion of both good and bad traits.

Results of interviews with English language teachers

There were totally nine English teachers who had participated in this research. The interviews lasted from four to nine minutes depending on participants' knowledge in the topic of this research. One of them chose to provide his/her responses by writing them on the interview question sheet due to time constraints. Among the nine teachers, two of them have around ten years of teaching experience while the others have taught English language for over twenty years. Generally, all of the interviewees are experienced in teaching.

There were three interviewees who expressed that they have heard of gender-biased language in English language teaching. Although the other six interviewees doubted that they have not come across such issue, all the nine participants were able to nominate some examples of gender-biased items found in English textbooks. The most frequent examples quoted are occupation related, including "fireman", "doctor" and "nurse". The result shows that teachers find the illustrations and pictures in textbooks the most prominent source of gender-biased items.

When asked about the influence of those gender-biased items on children's

perspectives towards the two genders, seven out of the nine participants believed that the influence or “effects” does exist. Yet, two of them added that it depends on the grade level of the students. They believed that children of junior primary level, i.e. primary one to three may not have the concept on gender issues. While some said the situation depends on the grade level of students, two interviewees believed that “children are not interested in it (gendered items)” / “care about it”.

Given that most of the participants agreed that there are certain influences of gender-biased items on children’s perspectives towards the two genders, yet, most of them expressed that they would not avoid those items in English language teaching. The rationale is three-folded:

1. Gender is not the focus of language teaching
2. Some gendered terms are real English using in English speaking countries
3. Assessment concerns

Most of the participants did not think that those gendered items in textbooks should be avoided given that fact that those are genuine and practical language, which students have to learn.

Yet, almost all the interviewees agreed that there are measures that can be taken by them to provide more gender-balanced education for children. Generally, they respect students’ personal choices, regardless to the social norms. When designing teaching materials like PowerPoint slides and worksheets, they would try to include both male and female character in pictures and content as they believed that children should be exposed to more balanced gender representations.

Discussion

How is gender represented in English textbooks using in Hong Kong primary schools?

Regarding to the imbalanced frequency of occurrence of male and female visual characters, such situation actually mismatches with the real population in Hong Kong. There are actually more females (3,938,000) than males (3,367,000) according to the latest statistic figures published by the Census and Statistics Department in 2015. The inclusion of the genders is yet to be improved.

It is true that both male and female characters have been included in a great variety of occupations. It is also worth mentioning that some traditionally male dominant occupations like police officers and fire fighters have also female characters included in the textbooks. Yet, this situation applies only in the vocabulary sessions of each unit that female characters in these occupations are only for introductory purpose (see Figure 1). When looking into the other sessions, like the reading passage, of the units, it is clear that only males are used for demonstrating policemen who are chasing robbers and firemen who are rescuing people (see Figure 2). Females are frequently engaged in occupations, which are stereotypical for their gender group. The most prominent ones are teachers and home care takers. For some privileged, well paid and professional occupations, like astronauts, pilots and doctors (Kobia, 2009), the gender representation is still male dominant.



Figure 1



Figure 2

In addition to the stereotypes in social roles and occupations, males are always depicted as sporty and active that they are portrayed engaging in different sports and outdoor activities. Female characters are frequently found in doing static and domestic activities that signifies femininity, including playing musical instruments, tidying the house and washing dishes. (See Figure 3)



Figure 3

Regarding personal traits, there are generally more descriptions, both positive and negative, on males. This makes the “visibility” of male characters more outstanding than females. In coherent with the gender representations in activities portrayed, most positive traits found in female characters are the ones that can strengthen femininity, like good-looking, beautiful and caring.

Are English teachers in Hong Kong aware of gendered teaching materials?

Although most interviewees expressed that they have never heard of gender-biased language in English language teaching, most of them can provide some concrete examples of gender-biased items appeared in textbooks. Most of them could immediately think of the illustrations in the textbooks that occupations and social roles are often gendered and stereotypical. This shows that there is actually adequate awareness among teachers on gendered teaching materials. Yet, it seems that gender issue in education remains an unfamiliar topic among teachers, including the English panel chair. Therefore, gendered teaching materials receive not much attention among teachers though they are aware of them.

What are English teachers’ perceptions towards sexism-free language teaching?

Some of the English teachers think that gender issues and English language teaching are two separate things. They generally think that gender issues should not be the focus of language teaching as their job is “not to teach genders”. From the perspective of English teachers, they would rather put their focus of teaching on the vocabulary items than other “language-unrelated” issues. Gender issues should be left to be discussed in General Studies lessons. This argument brings another pedagogical concern from the teachers that they have to teach those gendered terms for the sake of assessments, including dictation, writing tasks and exams. Teachers think that it is their responsibility to teach students different vocabulary, as long as the words are “genuine English”. In other words, whether the content is gendered does not concern language teachers.

In addition to pedagogical concerns, most of the teachers have underestimated the influence of gendered teaching materials on children. Some even thought that “students are not interested in it” and primary students are too young to be stressed

on the topic of gender. They thought that it is traditional culture, which affects children's perception towards genders. Textbooks only take "a small part of the influence". Therefore, they would not change much of the content appeared in textbooks. Even though most of the participants claimed that they would balance the gender representations when designing teaching materials and worksheets, the situation is believed not to change much as most teachers adopt teaching materials and worksheets pre-prepared by the publishers of textbooks due to heavy job duties and time limitation.

Conclusion

Suggestions for educators and publishers

As discussed in the first section of *Literature review*, gendered teaching materials have considerable effect of children's perceptions towards gender. Therefore, it is the responsibility of teachers to take gender issues in language teaching more seriously. "Gender issues" and "language teaching" are never separated as gendered language can last for a long period of time in children's memory since the first acquisition (Maehara, 2010). Therefore, it is worth discussing gender issues deliberately and explicitly during English lessons with students.

In addition to pedagogical implications, teachers are the key in providing gender-neutral education. Educators should be aware of gendered items and sexist language existed in teaching materials. One way to achieve this is to provide adequate teachers' training and workshops for in-service teachers on the topic of gender-issues in language teaching. Hong Kong Institute of Education, for instance, has provided an elective course entitled "Language and gender" for all student teachers for discussing different types of gender bias happening in language as well as in the field of language teaching. It is believed that similar course could also be provided for in-service teachers with inspirations on gender-neutral language teaching.

Besides from teachers, publishers are the ones who take an important role in providing gender-neutral teaching materials for teachers and children. Though there are improvements in today's textbooks that some gender-neutral terms are also

included, there are still ways to make the textbooks more gender-neutral. The first way is to balance the frequency of occurrence of the two genders. Another way is to improve the gender representations of different occupational roles in all sections of the textbooks. Gender-neutral terms are not just for introductory purpose in the section of vocabulary items, but also they should be widely used in reading passages and language focus of the unit chapters. The exposure of male and female characters should be better balanced.

Implications for further studies

For further studies on the issue of gender-neutral language teaching in the context of Hong Kong or even other Asian countries, the influence of gendered materials and language items on Asian primary school children's perception on gender is believed to be useful. As many teachers have underestimated the effects of gender issues in language education, significant and reliable evidence collected in local context may help convince them. Action research, including lesson observation, pre- and post-tests, can be carried on both students and teachers for a longer duration of time, which may take years, for measuring the effects of gender-neutral language teaching on primary school children's perception towards gender.

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Appendix I – Results of textbooks analysis

	Male	Female
1A	198	185
2B	146	120
3A	103	65
4B	77	71
5B	84	128
6A	121	104

Table 1 - Frequency of occurrence of visual characters

	Male		Female	
1A	Teacher	6	Teacher	43
	Bad people	2	Bad people	1
	King	6	Princess	10
	Monitor	1	Queen	2
2B			Teacher	10
			Witches	3
			Home care taker	8
3A	Waiter	3	Cook	3
	Teacher	1	Teacher	7
4B	Hunter	1	Teacher	8
	Soldier	1	Home care taker	1
	Dentist	2		
	Prince	1		
5B	Competition organiser	1	Teacher	5
	Bank manager	1	Bank teller	1
	Criminal	3	Receptionist	1
	Police officer	7	Victim	1
	Doctor	10	Doctor	2
	Patient	8	Patient	5
	Home care taker	1	Nurse	2
	Prisoner	1	Home care taker	3

6A	Astronaut	5	Astronaut	1
	Fire fighters	5	Fire fighters	1
	Police officers	4	Police officers	1
	Businessman	1	Businesswoman	1
	Fashion designer	2	Reporter	2
	Lawyer	1	Lawyer	1
	Actor	2	Actress	1
	Vet	1	Vet	1
	Flight attendant	1	Flight attendant	2
	Pilot	1	Cook	4
	Model	1	Model	2
	Architect	1	Architect	1
	Photographer	1	Social worker	1
	Dolphin trainer	1	Writer	1
	Doctor	1	Nurse	2
	Football player	1	Ballet dancer	2
	Criminal	4	Teacher	7
	Prisoner	2		

Table 2 - Occupations / social roles of males and females

	Male	Female
2B	Make the bed	Hang up the washing
	Sweep the floor	
	Water the plants	
	Walk the dog	
	Shopping with parents	Tidy own room
	Study every day	Wash the dishes
	Play the piano	Play the piano
	Club Scouts	Brownies
	drawing	tutor
	Go to the park	Go to the beach
	Go hiking	Eat hotpot
	swimming	Go hiking
	cycling	Tidy the house
	Building a sand castle	
3A	running	
	Playing basketball	

3A	Playing table tennis	Playing table tennis
	Playing chess	Play the piano
	Playing badminton	Play the violin
	Playing football	Play the guitar
4B	Go to bed early	Do more sports
	Tidy bookshelves	Do revision
	Read more books	Do Maths exercises
	Go swimming 4 times a week	Watch less TV
5B	Carrying a very heavy box	Cooking

Table 3 – Activities done by males and females

	Male	Female
2B	tidy	untidy
	Hard-working	
	lazy	
	Polite	
	Rude	
	Honest	
	helpful	
3A	Good at sports and music	Good at music but not sports
	Good at sports but not music	
4B		Beautiful
5B	Enjoy travelling by taxi	Hate standing
	Enjoy looking at the view	Don't like standing up for a long time
6A	Creative	Good-looking
	Brave	Caring
	Clam	Spoilt
	Good-looking	Ugly
	Greedy	
	Naughty	
	Cruel	
	Proud	
	Dishonest	
	Selfish	
	Wicked	

Table 4 – Personal traits of males and females

Appendix II – Interview questions

Interview script

1. Have you ever heard of gender-biased language in English language teaching?
2. Are you aware of some gender-biased items in textbooks? Can you give some examples?
3. Do you think gender-biased teaching materials will have influence on children's perspective towards the two genders?
4. If yes, do you think it is important to avoid gendered items in English language teaching?
5. If no, why?
6. If yes, what measures have you done / will you do to avoid gendered teaching?
7. Given a textbook with some gendered items in it, to what extent would you adopt / change the content in your teaching? Are there any limitations? (for example, school policy, time limitation, etc)
8. (Additional question for the panel chair)
Do you think it is your responsibility to promote sexism-free English language teaching in your school? Or, is this up to individual teachers?

Appendix III – Interview transcripts

Interview transcript of interviewee A

Interviewer: I	Interviewee: A
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- I: Have you ever heard of gender biased language in English language teaching?
- A: Yes, but not much.
- I: Okay. But... are you... are you aware of some gender biased items in textbooks?
- A: Er... Not quite because er... **this is not our focus.** Yes.
- I: Er ha... Er... For example if a textbook is introducing the occupations and then in the textbooks er... the publishers may usually use male characters for some professional jobs for example doctors, er... lawyers. But for females they are always the teachers, nurses, and especially nurses. And how do you feel about this design of textbook materials?
- A: I think that's normal because most of the professional, just like doctors, they are... they are male. And then... and nurse um... most of them are female. So I think that is normal.
- I: But nowadays there are more and more male teachers, just like me, and er... for example, male nurse, just like in the TV drama you can see that there are lots of male nurse as well. And do you think that those items, those design of textbooks will have influence on children's perspective towards the two genders?
- A: I don't think so because that is **not the main focus for the English teaching.** Er... But sometimes I will mention this but not the... the main focus and we don't need to discuss this issue with the... with the student and... and... I don't think they have em... **They are not interested in it.**
- I: But em... for example if er... you are going to have a writing with students that you need them to write on er... "what I want to be in the future". And then a boy... you invite a boy to share his views. And then he said, "well, I may want to be a home taker, home care-er and I want to stay at home and look after my children or my parents and my wife will go out and work so that I will be the house husband". And then other students will tease him and laugh at him and... What will you do? What would you do about this situation? When children are laughing at... because of the traditional culture of "a male should not be a house husband"?
- A: I have taught for over er... more than 25 years I've never met... I've never met such questions. Okay. But if, maybe, it's... it has been changed now. So, if, maybe there is er... opportunities appear such a problem. I will accept and then I will not reject their er... their choice. And **I think it's acceptable but I will not**

discuss or... will or... or reject them. I will not er... I don't think the children in primary school will tease them... will tease the child um... if er... they voice out such... such thing. I don't think so.

I: For example, nurse. "I want to be a nurse!"

A: It's okay. It is acceptable now because some er... some males are nurses now. So I think it is acceptable. And I don't think a primary students or primary student will have such perspective er... towards um... um the

I: Two genders?

A: Yes. Yes.

I: Okay um... How about the wordings chosen by the textbooks? For example policeman / policewoman, they clearly divided into male and female. But now we have a term called "police officer". And for fireman / firewoman we have "fire fighters". Will you introduce one more word or will you stick on the vocabulary suggested by the textbooks?

A: Er...

I: Like the textbook just included policeman / policewoman. And... Will you introduce a more general term, that is "police officer" to the student or will you just...

A: I will taught all er... to the children. I think they should know that. But **I'll give them freedom to choose what they like.** If...

I: Well, it depends on whether the children is actually pointing to "I want to describe a male police" and then I use policeman?

A: It's up to them.

I: Well, further on this question. If a textbook with just policeman / policewoman. Will you... To what extend would you adopt or change the content in your teaching.

A: **I don't think I would change much content in my teaching because I am not teaching about genders.** I am teaching English language. All right? I think if I teach general studies, I, maybe, have more or further discussion on that topic. Because that is **very important to them, maybe, in general studies. But in English, I don't think it is a very important issue to them.**

I: Well, take our own worksheet or powerpoint we designed as an example. If you're going to teach students "Occupations". You want to show them some more photos on, for example, nurse. Will you try to include just male er... sorry... female nurse instead of showing them both genders nurses?

A: **Both genders of course!** Because I think it is trend. Because even in fireman, firewoman now, but not many. Okay, but em... policeman / policewoman, nurses, even kindergarten teachers. There are some male kindergarten teachers now.

But I just show them that is occupation. I teach the names of occupation but not the genders. So I think I will introduce even maybe that is in different genders. Yes. Because **I'm teaching the jobs, not the genders.** So I will use um.. the picture for different maybe for two genders.

- I: So if you were the panel chair, and then I know that you'll... When you make your own powerpoint you will include the both genders for the occupations. But, how about for some teachers they just adopt the publishers' materials that of a nurse we just have female one picture. And then will you suggest the teachers to try to include more... the two genders for the same occupations or is it just up to individual teachers?
- A: **Up to that term.** For example, for the nurse as you cannot find the genders in this term. But for policeman, maybe they should know policewoman as well. The word policewoman as well. So, I think they should include male and female. So it depends on the terms. Um... Yes.
- I: So that means you would suggest the teachers to try to state clearer to policeman / policewoman...
- A: Yes because my focus is on teaching. Whether the student should learn that word or not. But not related to the issue of genders.
- I: So that means language teachers should be focus on language.
- A: Yes.
- I: But not...
- A: Rather than...
- I: on others issues.
- A: Genders. Yes.
- I: So maybe for the gender issues that means we have to focus it on general studies' lessons? Is that right?
- A: Maybe. The better. Yes.
- I: Okay. So I think that's all for today's interview. Thank you very much.

Interview transcript of interviewee B

Interviewer: I	Interviewee: B
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- I: Have you ever heard of gender biased language in English language teaching?
- B: Er... **What do you mean by that?**
- I: Er... Gender biased language like um... gender's stereotype... er...
- B: Okay. Like... like you're saying for er... male doctors female nurses?
- I: Yeah.
- B: Yeah. It happens. Yeah.
- I: Are you aware of some more gender biased items in textbooks? Can you give some more examples due to your experiences?
- B: Okay. For er... I don't know so much about textbooks but quite often in English **we use he when we mean either he or she.**
- I: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. The general pronoun.
- B: Yup. Or we will say something like er... **man when we really mean human.** Something like that. But that's changing. Changing in England, changing in America, things like that.
- I: So, do you think these gender biased teaching materials will have influence on children's perspective towards the two genders?
- B: Well, I suppose if you always see doctors are male and nurses are female then that **might make you think that if you are female you should be a nurse or if you are a male you should be a doctor.** So yeah. There is some things like that yes.
- I: So do you think it is important to avoid these items in teaching?
- B: Yeah. It's important but there um... but you also have to be careful that **when we teach English we teach what the real English.** You know what I mean, do you? For example, in America they now say fire fighter, well they're fireman or firewoman. But in England we don't. So in the UK we still say fireman only. Or firewoman maybe. So even though it's good to teach fire fighter as being the gender neutral. The children must know the "fireman" if they got to England. What the meaning of fireman. Cause that's the normal word. So you have to be careful. So **although it's good to try and teach the more gender neutral however you must realize what's, in reality, is happening in English speaking countries.**
- I: So um... Given that a textbook introduce the term, for example, policeman / policewoman. Will you introduce the more general um... gender neutral term that is "police officer" to them or you just use...
- B: In the UK, policeman and policewoman are the... is normal English. We wouldn't normally say police officer, still. So, maybe in the US, USA is police officer. But I

would say in the UK, maybe in the Australia and maybe New Zealand they'll still say policeman / policewoman. So the **children must know the normal terms**. I give you another example. Is um... Here in Hong Kong, for the Chinese from Beijing we say Putonghua. But if you say that in a country that is outside of Hong Kong no one will understand.

I: Mandarin.

B: Yeah we say mandarin. So the reason why we don't. Why they try to change it to Putonghua because maybe some people think that mandarin sounds a little bit racist, just a tiny bit, so maybe Putonghua is more, is a better word to say. But you go to America you go to the UK you go to the Australia and say "yes, I can speak Putonghua." Nobody understand you. If you say "I can speak mandarin" Okay we can understand. So the children. So I will still teach the children in primary 6 "mandarin" even though I'm happy for them saying "Putonghua" that's in Hong Kong. Because they need to know the meaning. So the same way if... even though it's... **ideally it's great to have gender neutral language** for... going back to the example of policeman / policewoman. We still need to know that **the real spoken English in the UK is policeman and policewoman**. So the children needs to aware of that. Look how can we cross a new word is like I'm travelling to the UK. What does this mean? Policewoman? Awww Police Officer. That we must know it.

I: If you are going to make the students do a writing and it's about what you want to be in the future. A boy said that he want to be a nurse or...

B: Yeah...That's no problem.

I: he want to stay in home, at home and take after his family and be the house...

B: House husband.

I: husband. Yeah.

B: House husband. Yeah. My brother is a house husband.

I: Ha. Yeah. Then but some other student think it is quite weird and laugh at him because you know in Chinese traditional culture... What will you do?

B: That's a cultural thing. That's not a language thing. That's changing though

I: Yeah. But what will you do when you encounter such a situation?

B: *Oh*, that's uh... As I've pointed out that my brothers are a house husband or home carer or whatever you want to say a home maker maybe more neutral gender neutral. And for going back to the example the nurse, it used to be common in the UK we say "male nurse" if you are a man who was a nurse. Now we don't say male nurse. Now we just say nurse. But when I was younger, when I was er... 20 years ago, yes, "male nurse" would be the term for a man who is a nurse. But now we don't say it, so **the language is changing**.

- I: So will you emphasize this point to students that we use nurse for both male and female?
- B: Well, yeah. But also I'll give you a maybe point out that nurse is a very important job. *So whereas.. man or woman, it doesn't matter.* It's a important jobs which we needs doing. So maybe **it's not so much a language issue** for that one it more a um... at the moment maybe a cultural thing if you still have a feeling of a nurses are woman and doctors are man. That needs the more a change in the culture maybe.
- I: You mention that general pronoun he, or will you just use man for people so what will you do to...
- B: I guess. Well something like mankind or man you can change easily to human and humankind. That's an easy one. For changing the pronoun there's a couple of ways. **Now in the UK and the USA will change he to they and their making it plural. But that's bad grammar.** So I'll like the alternative one, is that **I'll sometimes use he sometimes use she.** So there are lot of more modern books being written now which will give an example of he and the next example will be she. So, yeah, it's not always he.
- I: Or just she/he.
- B: yeah that sort of thing that it also look untidy in writing. So I'm talking about maybe the book for child reader for adult. So now when they give an example about somebody or a random person, sometimes they will say he sometimes they will say she. So you never always thinking it's a man. You get the both. So I like that. But the differ ways of doing he/she okay maybe good for textbooks or something I don't know but for more for literature doesn't look so good.
- I: Okay. So I think that's almost all of my questions here. And thank you for your participation.
- B: You're welcome. We're good? All good?
- I: Yeah. Thank you.

Interview transcript of interviewee C

Interviewer: I	Interviewee: C
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- I: Have you ever heard of gender biased language in English language teaching?
- C: **Very very rarely.** It is because normally **we don't talk about gender biased in English language teaching.**
- I: But are you aware of some gender terms in textbooks?
- C: Yes. Because I also teach the difference between **Miss, Mrs., and Ms.** The difference between these three terms.
- I: Can you give some more examples on some gender biased items in textbooks?
- C: Er... **Normally all teachers are males and nurses are all female.**
- I: So Do you think gender biased teaching materials will have influence on children's perspective towards the two genders?
- C: Yes I do. Because **when I talk about female... sorry male nurses, many of the students laugh. That's the stereotype they can't accept.**
- I: So do you think it is important to avoid gendered terms or items in English language teaching?
- C: Well, it depends. Well, in **primary school student don't have this concept about gender bias.** But maybe when they go to the secondary schools they are more aware of their genders and what do people's ideas of concept about themselves. Then this's quite different. But the... in the primary schools I don't... they don't care about it.
- I: So given that a textbook with some gendered terms. To what extent will you adopt or change the content in your teaching?
- C: Well, a content of textbook... I can tell them that the... what they have seen may not be true in the real world or in the real situation. Nowadays... many medical students are girls in fact. There are more girl students than boys.
- I: So for example when you design your worksheet or your own powerpoint or teaching materials will you do some changes for example shows some male er... female doctors in your pictures so as to let your student to explore more in the real situation you mentioned?
- C: But er... If I really want to change this situation and if I think that it is quite a serious problem in Hong Kong. But as I said, primary school... er... the primary student don't care about it. So maybe **I can take a little step forward but I don't think it is important.**
- I: So if the student is going to write on "what they want to be in the future", and one student, a boy student tell the class "I want to look after my family and take care of my children, I want to stay at home." That means he wants to be a house husband. And the other student tease him and laugh at him. So, What would

you do?

- C:** I will tell them the fact that in fact there are some house husband in Hong Kong. We have seen programs like this on TV. But still it is only a few numbers of them are there. So **you can expect you may be laughed at if you want to be a house husband**. But the world is changing. That's all.
- I:** Will you introduce more gender neutral terms to students? For example, the textbook just introduce policeman / policewoman, fireman. And will you tell students that there are actually some more terms for police officer, fire fighters. Will you use, explain more or introduce more?
- C:** When I talk about Chairman, chairwoman, I will talk about chairpersons. And I tell them why these terms appears. Then they will become more aware of this situation.
- I:** I think that's all for today's interview. Thank you very much.

Interview transcript of interviewee D

Interviewer: I	Interviewee: D
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- I: Have you ever heard of gender biased language in English language teaching?
- D: Yes I do. **I heard about it when I was in college, in university we took the class about, especially focus on that.** And the professor said, we have to be aware of, as a teacher we have to be aware of the gender. I don't know cause I studied in Hawaii. So according to the **State Law** that we have to be careful of the gender for some occupation if we are teaching. So we cannot say nurse is only for woman, the jobs for woman. We also have to classify, also, gender, it is nothing about the job.
- I: So for Hong Kong textbooks, are you aware of some gender biased items in the textbooks?
- D: I think **recently is much better.** Cause I also read some text for like 10 years ago. They are really have the pictures on the, for example the flight attendant is using the woman's picture and the doctor, the lawyer is or even the designer they are using the male picture. So but right now is much better. But the **wording is... still need to... I think is... it has little bias on it.** Like the policewoman or policeman. But when I was teaching about the occupation I also say that the police officer. I will teach my student the police officer.
- I: So that means you will change the textbook or you will keep on...
- D: I won't change it because when they are doing the **dictation or the test or exam** they still have to write like policeman or policewoman. But I will consider it has an **extra knowledge** for them like they will aware of police officer is general for all the people who are working as police.
- I: You mean this is the limitation for example **dictation requirement by the school** so you need to keep on dictation on the vocabulary list on the textbooks.
- D: Yeah this is like um... also it is the opinion for the teachers to teach. Like in Hong Kong education system, like we are always like chasing the examination format. **So what we are teaching actually is prepared for the student to take the exam.** Well, it sounds sad but it's truly happened. Like... just like what we are doing in class, we do the practice, we do the exam paper, the mock exam paper. Those are for preparation for exam. But I will try to give more chance for student to explore different terms, to let them know that they learn English is not only for the exam, is not only follow the textbook.
- I: So you mentioned that in textbooks some of the occupation like lawyers, doctors they are usually males. Do you think these items or these textbooks materials will affect children's perspective towards two genders?
- D: **Textbook is one of the factors to influence them to think about their future,**

future jobs. Like... because they look at the textbook like... I think about occupation they will learn like from P1 to P6. So in the curriculum actually they every year they learn more about the occupation. So but every year they will just learn about doctor lawyer is the male, is the boys job. But the nurse, the flight attendant is the woman's job. **I think it's kind of affect them.** But I think the most reason to make them think about to have the bias of the occupation is the traditional of the society. **Textbook is only small part of the influence.**

- I:** Chinese culture do have some influence as well.
- D:** Yes. Still. But I think now is much better. Like more people trying to accept that for example the man right now is going to be like more stay at home, house husband. Or they claim that they are doing the home business, so that they can take care of their family. And more woman go out to work. So I think now is more open but still the majority is most of the man will go to should be go to work go out to work.
- I:** So beside on introducing more vocabulary for student for example police officer which is more neutral in gender. What else measure will you do in your class or in your teaching to better the teaching to let student not focus in gender but the words in general. For example the design of teaching materials will you do some changes to that?
- D:** Sure. For example when I make the worksheets or while we are doing the process writing we do the brain storm. **I encourage student to think more about the jobs they really want to be.** Sometimes I will just prompt them like... if there's boy in class he wants to be like the desert cook. So can he be doing that kind of job. And then or the boys wants to be the fashion designer or the model. Is it... to let the student to argue. After they argue **I will try to direct them to respect all the people preference.** And they have to respect people first. They cannot laugh at him or her preference.
- I:** So this is another kind of moral values... the attitude and values. So you need to train your student in class.
- D:** I think it is **more important than they learn the English.** For me I think for most of the time I will teach them the moral thing first and then teach them the knowledge. If they don't know how to respect to people respect to their friends, and actually no matter how good they are, they still cannot be success.
- I:** I think that's all for today's interview. Thank you very much.

Interview script of interviewee E

Interviewer: I	Interviewee: E
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- I: Have you ever heard of gender biased language in English language teaching?
- E: I'm sorry **I've never heard such kind of issue.**
- I: But are you aware of some gendered items in textbooks?
- E: I suppose you mean for example fireman, okay. We would like to have fire fighter rather than fireman or firewoman.
- I: To what extent would you change the textbook content if the textbook content is fireman / firewoman, will you teach student or would you change the vocabulary for student to fire fighter or police officer which is more gender neutral?
- E: Anyway I would not do it. Because **I think fireman is a common noun especially for students in primary school.** We define firewoman because we notice that there are actually we have firewoman in Hong Kong. I just ask the student that no matter boy or girl they can be firewoman or fireman. But we have a term call fire fighter. I suppose this is a new one for upper primary student.
- I: So that means you will add-on one more terms for them, introducing one more terms.
- E: Yeah. I will do so. Because I want them to learn more.
- I: Instead of changing the textbook.
- E: No. No. No.
- I: For you, would you avoid... That means no, you would avoid those gender terms.
- E: Yeah
- I: However, what measures have you also done in your teaching to give some more gender neutral to student?
- E: You mean I need to explain to them?
- I: Yeah. One way. One way is for... Explanation is one way. And what else have you done to...
- E: So just what I told you before, I think in primary level they would like to know the name of the job. In the past, we don't mind if there are more fireman than firewoman or more policeman than policewoman. So for me, I just let them know more vocabulary about the names of the jobs. And... **I don't want to focus on the matters of gender, just focus on the amount of vocabulary.**
- I: Given that you are the panel chair of English such as... Will you tell your fellow teachers to do just the way you tell me, for example introduce one more term to students instead of just give the two terms in textbooks, but we also give some gender neutral terms to students. Will you suggest teachers to do so?

- E: I don't think so.
- I: So it's up to teachers?
- E: Up to teachers. Maybe I... For me I really want to remind the teachers that you can **teach more vocabulary for the students but don't focus on the matter of gender.**
- I: What if... for example in the class you are asking the student to write "What I want to be" and then a male student tell you that or tell the class that "in the future I want to take care of my family and be the house husband" and some of the other student laugh at the boy. And what would you do to deal with this situation?
- E: I think I will explain to them that is the **specific situation of the family.** If... for the family the wife is more able to earn money, to work and earn money for the family and that's okay. If the husband said that my strength is take care of the kids. I think that's okay. I suppose I need to tell the students that it is the basic needs of the family **not the matter of gender.** We need to respect ones decision.
- I: So you will further explain if you see student laughing at each other, teasing them. So you will explain.
- E: Because I think there are some examples in Hong Kong.
- I: So I think that's almost my part for the interview. Thank you very much.
- E: Okay. Thank you. You're welcome. (It is really my thought (in Cantonese))

Interview script of interviewee F

Interviewer: I	Interviewee: F
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- I: Have you ever heard of gender biased language in English language teaching?
- F: Yes but **I did not quite focus on this area**. But **I know what that is**.
- I: Are you aware of some gender biased items in textbooks?
- F: Yes. I think like most of them use male for the lawyers, doctors and then female for being a housewife or nurse.
- I: So do you think gender biased teaching materials will have influences on children perspective towards the two genders?
- F: It **depends on which grade-level** like for the junior level I think it may not because in their mind set they still learn what are they, what are the job names. But for the senior students, especially for P6 students, they grow up and they try to think about their future. Yes sometimes they may laugh at their classmate when they say "I would like to be a nurse when I grow up" or "I would like to stay at home to be a house husband". **But at that time for the teacher may try to explain to them it's acceptable**.
- I: Do you think it is important to avoid using these gendered items in your English teaching?
- F: If you say "avoid" I think it is not necessary. We can tell them for... most of the jobs are both genders are suitable and then tell them why. And give them some evidence from the society like that thing. If you just say avoid **I think that's not a good way to stop using them**.
- I: Given that a textbook, for example using policeman or policewoman, but not police officers that means a more gender neutral terms. So would you... To what extent would you adapt that textbook or will you change...
- F: **I will tell them all**. I can tell them I accept a police. You can call the police or you can call the police officer, policeman, policewoman. I would like to get them **more image for the names of the job duties, not just narrow down to be the basic term** the police officer or just policeman. Get them more insight, so let them think. Which one do they use is okay.
- I: So that means if the book just use policeman or policewoman. You will introduce one more term to them?
- F: Yes. Because sometimes we can use the example from the student's writing. And then show them you can also say the police, just take a look of your classmate writing. So oh yes then they know beside policeman / policewoman they can use the police.
- I: So you mentioned that in the textbook there are many male lawyers, doctors. In your teaching will you prepare some more teaching materials for example

pictures of female doctors, female lawyers so as to broaden students mind set?

- F:** Yes. When I do some Powerpoint for the teaching or some exercises for the worksheet. **I try to use different genders.** Because I do not want them just focus on a boy or a girl or a lady or a man. I try to mix them together. So then they have much more insight. Sometimes this job should be maybe a boy to do. Maybe this is for the girl. Maybe both they can use it.
- I:** I think that's all for today's interview. Thank you very much.
- F:** Okay. You're welcome.

Interview script of interviewee G

Interviewer: I	Interviewee: G
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I: Have you ever heard of gender biased language in English language teaching?

G: **I haven't.**

I: But are you aware of some gender biased items in textbooks?

G: Yes. Some.

I: Can you give me some examples?

G: Just like the **P6 topics about jobs**. Mostly the jobs are about, **man, in the higher ranking jobs**, the examples will be man's pictures.

I: Man's pictures?

G: Yes.

I: So what are the man usually doing?

G: For example, doctors, lawyers, dentist.

I: How about female?

G: Usually only nurses. Saleswoman.

I: So workers level? Lower level?

G: I think lower... yeah.

I: Do you think these items will have influences on children perspectives towards two genders?

G: Maybe the student will think that when boys grow up. The smartest boy will be doctors or lawyers. They may not think that girls can be doctors or lawyers.

I: Do you think it is important to avoid these gendered items in your teaching? Or it is up to... Because I think... Are there any limitations on adapting the textbook materials?

G: Just **provide more pictures**. Teachers may need to provide a more different pictures for the jobs. Maybe the textbooks is providing a man's pictures for doctors then the teachers may need to provide some women pictures.

I: Have you tried this before?

G: No. Maybe when **they look at the internet they can see some different pictures themselves**.

I: For example if the textbook is teaching policeman / policewomen. Will you change it to a more gender neutral items for example police officer?

G: Yeah. Recently I found the **textbooks has this changes**.

I: But given that the textbook keep on using policeman / policewomen. Will you change that in your curriculum or your teaching?

G: No. I mean the textbook... This year we use the new textbook. It is already printed in the textbook, the term "police officers". And the picture provided are policeman and policewoman together. But the doctors... if... doctors and dentist

sometimes the **pictures maybe still man.**

I: So you think there are still rooms for publishers improvement?

G: Yes.

I: So I think that's almost the... all of my questions. Thank you very much.

G: Welcome.

Interview script of interviewee H

Interviewer: I	Interviewee: H
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- I: Have you ever heard of gender biased language in English language teaching?
- H: Yes I do.
- I: Are you aware of some gender biased items in textbooks?
- H: Yes. I think so.
- I: And can you give some examples?
- H: For example usually, say, **doctor showing a gentlemen, a nurse showing a lady, policeman, fireman, always a gentleman.** So I think this is a gender biased items.
- I: So do you think the gender biased teaching materials will have some influence on children perspective towards the two genders?
- H: I believe it will **somehow have some effects.**
- I: Do you think it is important to avoid gendered items in English language teaching?
- H: **I don't think so. Actually I'm quite traditional.** I accept girls should somehow can stay at home be a housewife. The husband usually work outside. **I quite accept the phenomenon in the textbook.**
- I: Given that a textbook with some gendered items in it. To what extent would you adopt or change the content in your teaching?
- H: Er...
- I: Or you just keep on using the suggested vocabulary just like policeman / policewoman in the textbook. You won't teach police officer? You won't change it?
- H: If... For example if I want to make a small role-play, asking the children to demonstrate maybe some occupation. **I let them to choose by themselves.** I don't mind if the boy always choose doctor or girls like to be a housewife, even boys like to be housewife. I don't mind. I don't mind... And **I just tell them they can choose what they do.** Nowadays in Hong Kong a gentlemen or a boy can also stay at home to cook for their children. It doesn't matter. I let them to choose. But showing in the textbook, I won't say it is not right. I accept the way for the textbook. It is the traditional.
- I: That means you are also quite open-minded to student.
- H: Yes. Open-minded. Maybe changed in next generation but in my generation I accept a boy usually be a fireman and policeman. Housewife usually is the mother staying at home. I accept those phenomenon.
- I: So because of the Chinese traditional culture?
- H: But as I said if they like to... the boy like to be the house husband. I will say okay.

That is not a must to be a lady at home.

I: I think that's almost all I want to ask and thank you for your participation.

H: Okay. You are welcome.

I: Thank you.

Responses in written from an interviewee

Interview script

1. Have you ever heard of gender-biased language in English language teaching? *Yes*
2. Are you aware of some gender-biased items in textbooks? Can you give some examples? *✓*
3. Do you think gender-biased teaching materials will have influence on children's perspective towards the two genders? *No*
4. If yes, do you think it is important to avoid gendered items in English language teaching?
5. If no, why? *I think the phenomenon is not serious*
6. If yes, what measures have you done / will you do to avoid gendered teaching?
7. Given a textbook with some gendered items in it, to what extent would you adopt / change the content in your teaching? Are there any limitations? (for example, school policy, time limitation, etc) *Mostly (80%) adopt*
8. (Additional question for the panel chair)
Do you think it is your responsibility to promote sexism-free English language teaching in your school? Or, is this up to individual teachers? *Yes, my responsibility*
-? Eng. Panel Chairperson set the example for other Eng. teachers.