

Representations of men and women in English language textbooks. A critical discourse analysis of *Open Road 1-7*

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1. Introduction

There is a long history of portraying men and women in a stereotypical manner in children's and youth's school textbooks (see, e.g. Bazzul & Sykes, 2010; Macleod & Norrby, 2002; Ullah & Haque, 2016; Leo & Cartagena, 1999). According to Blumberg (2009), studies exposing gender bias in school textbooks emerged at the same time as the Second Women's Movement in the 1960's. The studies had similar findings, such as, the following (Blumberg, 2009, p. 347): females were underrepresented whether measured in lines of text, proportion of named characters (human or animal), mentions in titles, and so forth. Also, men and women were shown in highly gender-stereotyped ways in the household and in the occupational division of labour, and in the actions, attitudes and traits portrayed. For example, women were accommodating, nurturing drudges at home, girls were passive conformists, while boys and men did almost all the impressive, noble, exciting things but none of the nurturing "feminine" things. This theme of gender bias and sexism carries out through various school subjects and the current paper takes a deeper look into English language subject in Finnish high schools.

The research materials in this study are seven *Open Road* textbooks which are designed for high school students aged 15 to 18. Especially women are subject to sexism in school textbooks, for instance, in the form of stereotypical gender roles (women are portrayed as housewives or nurses) or they are portrayed as the weaker gender. However, sexism and gender bias do not exclude men. Although gender bias and sexism have been studied quite a lot over the years (see, e.g. Yasin, Hamid, Keong, Othman and Jaludin, 2012) the current paper has its place in the field. This thesis includes men's treatment in textbooks as well, something that most studies neglect. Also, it is still crucial to conduct these studies as it seems that some people believe that, for example, discrimination against women has declined and that men cannot be sexually victimized. For example, Kehn and Ruthig (2013) report that "a 2005 Gallup poll reported that 53% of U.S. citizens believed that women are no longer being subjected to gender discrimination in the work force, having achieved equal employment opportunities - -" (p. 289). There has to be a change in the opinion of people regarding gender bias, sexism and gender discrimination in all fields including school books, work, employment opportunities, and the overall treatment of people despite their gender. Gender bias in school textbooks might lead to students having problems accepting themselves if they are influenced by the close-minded images found in the books. Matters are worse when the contents of the books are not dealt with by the teacher and discussed in class. Parham (2013, p. 1676) argues that "adults' sexist discourse can be the consequence of their being presented, in their childhood, with a sexist version of reality and the present day children, if not

exposed to bias-free materials, may show equal bias when grown up". Blumberg (2009) argues that it is still important to investigate gender bias in textbooks (later to be called GBIT) since textbooks occupy 80% of classroom time and GBIT has been found worldwide to varying degrees. GBIT involves nearly identical patterns of under-representation of females, it is decreasing slowly and it remains obscured by the "hidden-in-plain-sight" system of gender stratification and roles. Blumberg (2009) continues by saying that some case studies from Sweden and Latin America describe government initiatives to reduce gender bias in textbooks. Completely revising textbooks and curricula to eliminate this bias is unlikely, however. Some high schools in Finland have taken the new *Insights* textbook series to use and replaced the *Open Road* textbooks. Future research should investigate if the new series show a positive change toward an equal and fair gender representation in textbooks.

This thesis aims to investigate possible gender bias in *Open Road 1-7* and reveal possible stereotypical and traditional representations of men and women. Five themes emerged in the analysis. The themes were overrepresentation of men, social gender roles, activities, sexualization and objectification, and language. These themes are introduced and discussed further in section 4. This thesis also aims to raise particularly teachers' awareness of gender fairness and urges them to take action in the classroom to create equal education for both boys and girls. The study is organized as follows. First, the research material in question is introduced in section 2. Section 3 will explain earlier research about gender bias in children's textbooks. It also introduces important theories and terms that are essential to the current paper. Section 4 explains the analysis and its results in depth made from the research materials. Finally, the results are discussed in section 5. Let us begin with the description of the research materials, the *Open Road* textbooks.

2. Research materials and method

This section will firstly introduce to the reader the research materials that were used in this study and later, explain the method with which the analysis was conducted, Discourse analysis and Critical Discourse analysis.

2.1 Research materials – *Open Road*

The research materials used in this study is an English textbook series called *Open Road* (Karapalo, Mcwhirr, Mäki, Päckilä, Riite, Silk, 2010) that consists of seven textbooks. The book series is currently used in Finnish high schools in the teaching of English as a foreign language to students aged from 15 to 18. I have conducted a book analysis previously as a part of my master's seminar paper as I analyzed *Spotlight 8 – Sights and sounds* (Haapala, 2014). The study revealed the book to contain stereotyped images of both boys and girls as well as an over representation of male figures. This furthered an interest to continue to study other textbooks that are used in Finnish schools. If many of these books contain gender bias and sexism, it is possible that there is a problem in the way school books are produced. Each of the seven *Open Road* books consist of nine chapters and usually each chapter has a text which is the main focus in class. Most often the texts are extracts from novels or articles. A grammar issue is dealt with in each chapter and exercises are provided. Most of the illustrations appear with the texts and exercises. The *Open Road* series also contains listening materials, such as audio tapes for the main texts and other listening comprehension exercises throughout the chapters. Tape scripts of the exercises are provided for the teacher in a “teacher’s file” in <https://opepalvelu.otava.fi/> where the teacher can log in.

The first book of the *Open Road* series is what students have in their use when they continue learning English after upper secondary school. The book revolves around stories about young adults as they go through life and learn as they go much like the students reading the book. At this point, the texts within the book are still quite simple. Grammar issues introduced are simple as well, for instance, the different verb tenses are presented. The second book deals with the themes of activities and hobbies, sports and traveling. Again, youngsters take the spotlight in the texts. Grammar issues in the book are still quite basic, such as word order and personal pronouns. The themes of the third book are education in different countries, job interviews and the future. The book introduces more real-life people and their line of occupation such as actor Rupert Everett. The books start to shift away from stories to themes of the "real world". The grammar gets more challenging as well, for example, modal verbs and relative pronouns are dealt with. The focus of the fourth book is society.

The book takes the students around the world and approach suchs issues as religion, government and marriage. These themes present a lot of food for thought for the students and some themes might be difficult. Grammar takes a closer focus on verbs with the infinitive form and ing-form. Also, nationalities are presented. The fifth book deals with culture. Four themes are looked at more closely: music, literature, cinema and visual arts. Multiple famous artists are introduced, for instance, Jean Sibelius. Nouns and articles are the focus points of grammar. The sixth book takes the students around the world again. Human technology, the wonders of the natrual world and the modern mass media are discussed. The larger grammar themes are dealt with, therefore, the book looks into smaller themes such as indefinite pronouns and expressions of quantity. The seventh and final book explores the environment and the future. Questions of sustainability, for instance, are discussed. These questions are investigated from four perspectives; the environment, society, economy and culture. The book is designed to help the students to prepare for their matriculation examination, therefore, the grammar proportion covers all final details such as auxiliary verbs.

2.2 Method

In the following section, I will present the method behind this study, mainly the theory of discources. I will be mainly combining Norman Fairclough's views on discourses and the analyses of them.

2.2.1 Discourse analysis

"Discourse" can be used to refer to samples of spoken language in contrast with written language, but in this case, "discourse" refers to something larger. Along spoken language, texts and images are discources. Fairclough (1992) describes discources as different ways of structuring areas of knowledge and social practice. He continues to say "discourses do not just reflect or represent social entities and relations, they construct or constitute them" (Fairclough 1992, p. 3). Discourses are something we all create and uphold by talking, creating text and images, by interacting. In his newer work, Fairclough (2003) adds that discourse figures also particular ways of being, particular social or personal identities, alongside bodily behaviour.

Fairclough draws together language analysis and social theory to create his three-dimensional discourse analysis. "Any discursive 'event' - - is seen as being simultaniously a piece of text, an instance of discursive practice, and an instance of social practice" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 4). Texts are in this context written or spoken products. As I mentioned earlier, also images can be discources, for example, advertisements. Fairclough's (1992) approach enables assessing the relationships between discursive and social change. In other words, the learning materials used in

schools may have a remarkable impact on the behaviour and identity of the pupils. Therefore, it is crucial to use learning materials in schools that do not represent an unrealistic picture of the world or of a society. Especially younger children are open to influences.

2.2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

In this study, I will also present the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis, later to be referred to as CDA. Critical approaches not only describe discursive practices, but also show how "discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief -" (Fairclough 1992, p. 12).

According to Le and Short (2009), CDA's main mission is to examine social injustice and to take a stance against social abuse and discrimination against marginalised people with less power.

Therefore, CDA is an ideal tool to work with when studying how boys and girls are portrayed in school textbooks. CDA aims at understanding how societies work and it can help to end or mitigate detrimental effects (Fairclough, 2003, as cited in Le & Short, 2009). According to Locke (2004),

CDA has the potential to reveal the way power is diffused through the prevalence of various discourses throughout an education system. Certain groups in a society are always privileged.

Whether it be the rich, the educated or the white. The fact that books with high importance that are read by students of many colour are written by a certain privileged group presents a problem. In

Fairclough's (2010, p. 3) view CDA has three properties: CDA is relational, dialectical and transdisciplinary. Relational because the research's primary focus is not on entities or individuals, but on social relations. According to him, discourses are multilayered relations, for example, between people who communicate and write. The relations are, in Fairclough's view, dialectical.

CDA is then analysis of dialectical relations between discourse and other objects, elements or moments. Since analysis of such relations combines many disciplines, CDA is an interdisciplinary form of analysis (Fairclough, 2010, p. 4).

How is then CDA linked to education? Education itself is a key domain of linguistically mediated power. Education equips learners with a critical language awareness and with resource for intervention (Fairclough, 2010, p. 529). Education in itself should make students aware of the teaching materials such as books, more of making them realise that not everything can be taken or believed as it is on the pages of a textbook. According to Fairclough (2010), language has an enhanced role in the exercise of power. Educational institutions affect language in its relation to power. Educational institutions are also involved in educating people about the sociolinguistic order they live in. Therefore, choosing CDA along with DA for this paper is fitting.

CDA has, however, received criticism. There seems to be uncertainty about what the term "discourse analysis" really is. Widdowson (2004, as cited in Le & Short, 2009) describes the problem of uncertainty as follows: "The generally accepted view is that it has something to do with looking at language 'above' or 'beyond' the sentence; this is hardly an exact formulation (p. 1). As I have mentioned above, discourse is more of a social phenomenon and most often it presents itself in the form of texts. Despite the uncertainty, I believe DA and CDA are good tools in the light of my study. Language and discourses are ways of showing power. These are strongly present in the classroom and we should educate children to be aware of this. These theories provide the help needed in this mission. In the words of Fairclough (2010, p. 533), "If problems of language and power are to be seriously tackled, they will be tackled by the people who are subject to linguistic forms of domination and manipulation".

The analysis on the *Open Road* books was conducted first by familiarizing myself with earlier research on sexism and gender bias in children's textbooks. Most often the studies found stereotypical activities and social roles as the results. Therefore, I examined if similar categories appeared in my research materials. Second, I carefully read through every book, and paid attention to the amount of men and women in the illustrations to see if there was an overrepresentation of men. After that I read through the books again and examined what kind of categories would emerge in addition to activities and social roles. Attention was mostly paid to the main texts of each chapter and the different characters appearing in them. Lastly, I categorized all the findings to activities, social gender roles, sexualization and objectification, and language.

3. Earlier research

This section explains earlier research in the field of gender studies and especially how gender bias in children's school textbooks has been studied. I will also explain in depth important terms that come up in the studies. First, the idea of gender is introduced and discussed.

3.1 Gender

As a starting point it is important to understand that gender is not something we are born into, but rather, it is shaped by multiple factors in the child's surroundings. Gender is not something biological, instead, it is our own conception of ourselves. Gender is our identity and the image we have of ourselves. In the field of psychology gender identity has received two meanings. The first is the sense of self which according to Tate (2014), is something more than a person's biological awareness. The other meaning is the sense of self "as endorsing specific traits that are stereotypical of different gender groups" (Tate 2014, p. 1). Tate (2014) argues that gender identity can be seen as a personality process. Gender identity consists of many building blocks which are self-perception, other-perception and biological and social influences. Everyone emanates from a common source but it is not awareness of genitals as ultimate or core identity.

The first time we begin building this idea of our gender is when we are in contact with our mother or a care taker. According to Huopanen (1992), children view their own inner self by interpreting the facial expressions, gestures and tones of voice of the people around them. This process is not necessarily ever complete and it is something people try to understand even in their 20's. There are a lot of expectations which some feel they need to fulfil and might therefore lose their connection with how they feel inside. Society is a strong influencer to how one builds their gender and school is a major part of the surrounding society.

Francis (2000, p. 35) says that many studies have shown "the secondary school to be an environment fostering compulsory heterosexuality and the sexist objectification, surveillance and regulation of girls and their sexuality". Girls are expected to be sexually passive and any assertion is labelled as "sluggish" (Lees 1993, Holland et al. 1998, as cited in Francis 2000). Francis (2000) discovered that in all the three schools she conducted the research in, boys' sexuality was much more evident than the girls' in daily classroom interaction. During her study she did not hear any all-female discussions of sexual exploits. Some boys wanted to draw attention to themselves as sexual beings. In western societies boys' sexuality is largely normalized, boys are allowed to be sexual and express themselves while girls are sexualized in almost everything they do. If a girl

dares to express herself sexually, she easily gets the reputation of being a "slut". In secondary schools, this kind of behaviour is damaging for the young, still growing, individuals. They shape their identities according to what happens in their surroundings and according to their peers. While boys and men "get away" with a lot more, they too can be labelled as "mansluts" and such. On the other hand, there is pressure for men to be sexually active and "conquer" women. Society puts pressure on both men and women when it comes to looks as well. Men are expected to be adonis like, physically in good shape and acquire muscles while women are supposed to be petite.

These days it is also understood that there necessarily are not only two genders. People can identify themselves as something other than male or female. Our understanding of gender is still quite limited. Hartmann-Tews and Pfister (2003) explain that the major problem with theories of gender is the reinforcement of gender duality. Gender should be thought of as construction and combination of various components. Lorber suggests (as cited in Hartmann-Tews & Pfister, 2003) following components of gender as "looking glasses" for identification: *gender statuses* are the socially recognised genders in a society. *Gendered personalities* are the imagined traits and behavior patterns of both sexes according to the existing stereotypes. *Gendered sexual scripts* are the norms governing sexual behavior. Often sexuality is confused with gender. For example, still to this day, some people have trouble understanding transgender people because they are confused by their want to change genders. What the reader should understand from this section is that gender is not the equivalent of someone's biological sex. Rather, it is a person's identity. Also, it is necessary to understand that often in schools, boys and girls are treated differently solely based on their gender. Next, the concept of hidden curriculum is introduced.

3.2 The hidden curriculum

In school students should be treated equally as individuals and not as members of one of the two sexes. In fact, it is considered that students in Finland have equal opportunities to educate themselves and that teachers in Finland do not treat boys and girls differently. However, studies show that a hidden curriculum exists, which according to Metso (1992), is all the things the students learn that is not mentioned in the official curriculum. Teachers subconsciously treat boys and girls differently. "The hidden curriculum is that set of implicit messages relating to knowledge, values, norms of behaviour and attitudes that learners experience in and through educational processes . . . and each learner mediates the message in her/his own way" (Skelton 1997, p. 188). Clark (2016) continues to describe the hidden curriculum as the practices of school life that take on an appearance of accepted normality. It reproduces the many inequalities in society. The hidden

curriculum contains the unstated norms, values and beliefs that are transmitted to students through the underlying rules that structure the routines and social relationship in school and classroom (Kentli, 2009 as cited in Yasin et al., 2012). According to Tarmo (1992,) teachers link their behaviour towards the students based on the students' individuality. They think that if they treat someone differently it is because of the differences in the students' motivation, attitudes and intelligence, not the gender. However, studies have shown that the differences in how the students are treated come from the teachers' perceptions of gender.

In fact, I believe most people think that men and women are treated equally. Especially teachers or counsellors would not want to be guilty of sex discrimination or gender bias. However, the truth is very different. According to Stitt and Erikson (1988, p. xiv), the behaviors of educators are based on deep-rooted assumptions that differentiate between the appropriate behaviors, roles and jobs for women and men. These assumptions may not even be conscious but people tend to behave in the same way as generations before them have.

Girls, and boys, are told that they can be what ever they want to be when they grow up, but in reality, not everybody gets the same opportunities. According to Stitt and Erikson (1988), subtle factors group minority and female students in stereotyped patterns that prepare them to accept traditional roles and jobs in adult life. "These subtle influences on students are part of the unplanned, unofficial learning that children absorb as they move through school—the hidden curriculum" (Stitt & Erikson, 1988, p. 20). So, a difference in treatment of boys and girls exists in schools and this may lead to sexist behavior. The next section explains sexism, sex-stereotyping and gender bias in depth.

3.3 Sexism, sex-stereotyping and gender bias

Michel (1986) calls sexism to be one of the most serious ills afflicting humanity. Sexism is the practices, prejudices and ideologies that treat one sex as inferior to the other in worth and status. Prejudice is a belief or an opinion; something corresponding to a fixed or general pattern and lacking individual distinguishing features. It is a standardized mental picture held in common by a group and representing an overly simplified opinion, attitude or judgement (Michel, 1986, p. 15). Sexist stereotypes of males and females, according to Michel (1986), deny the worth of women and girls and overemphasize the importance of men and boys. Deem (1978, p. 23) describes sexism as "a process by which certain kinds of phenomena and behaviour are attributed to a particular sex". For example, the colour pink is associated with female or the action of crying and being emotional in general as if males did not have emotions. Fixing cars is associated with being male. However,

nothing about these actions or phenomena demand that they are male or female. Still, many think it is unmasculine to do skin care, for example or unfeminine to curse and have a “bad mouth”.

Another term that can be used is *gender bias*. Stitt and Erikson (1988, p. 3) define gender bias as a set of beliefs or attitudes that indicates a primary view or set of expectations of people’s abilities and interests according to their sex. I would like to point out that sexism affects both men and women and the purpose of this study is to, indeed, investigate how possible sexism is portrayed on both genders.

Deem (1978, p. 24) continues to explain that sex-stereotyping is “a process whereby individuals are socialized into thinking that they have to act and think in a way appropriate to their sex”. For example, girls who like to play in dirt or do not like to play with barbies are labelled as “tomboys”. Sexist stereotypes serve to legitimize and justify women’s position of dependence, and inequality in society (Michel, 1986). Stereotypes prevent women and girls from developing their full emotional, intellectual and volitional potential by refusing to recognize them as human beings in their ownright. Deem (1978, p. 24) points out that “sexism and sex-stereotyping are evident in the school curriculum in the way pupils interact with each other and with teachers, in reading schemes and textbooks, in the allocation and distribution of resources, in games and play facilities, in uniform and in many other aspects of education”. Sexism and sex-stereotyping often portray a picture of the world that is not accurate. It is therefore harmful for these to appear in school when children are not old enough to comprehend that not everything can be taken as the universal truth.

When children leave school as young adults, they have adopted the ideology of their teachers and the larger forces surrounding education. They have learnt the abstract definitions of femininity and masculinity, and they have learnt “to have placed themselves, using such class and gender identities, in the hierarchies of the domestic and waged labour forces” (Sprecher, K. M., Stone, L., & Thayer-Bacon, B. J. 2013, p. 27). Horney (1967) states accurately the reason to why things often stay the way they are:

At any given time, the more powerful side will create an ideology suitable to help maintain its position and to make this position acceptable to the weaker one. In this ideology the differentness of the weaker one will be interpreted as inferiority, and it will be proven that these differences are unchangeable, basic, or God’s will. It is the function of such an ideology to deny or conceal the existence of a struggle. (Horney 1967, as cited in Sprecher et al., 2013)

Michel (1986) argues that there are two categories of sexism. The first is explicit sexism, when children’s textbooks depict men and women only in stereotyped conventional roles, without

showing the diversity that exists in the real world. The second category is implicit sexism, meaning that the textbooks "describe a real society where women and girls are treated as inferior to men and boys, and make no attempt to challenge this alleged inferiority - -" (Michel 1986, p. 49).

According to Michel (1986) sexism is present in the text and illustrations of textbooks when they depict men and women, boys and girls, in stereotyped activities. Matters are worse if the books do not reflect the diversity of the roles of men and women, and boys and girls. Michel (1986, p. 48) continues to say that the first sign of sexism is "the refusal to acknowledge social reality and the diversity of situations, resulting in a caricatural depiction of male and female roles". It is also important that if a text shows an existing sexist situation it is criticized and/or offered an alternative. If not, the situation amounts to a "tacit acceptance of the inequalities and discriminatory behaviour afflicting girls and women in most societies today, and thus serves to strengthen them" (Michel 1986, p. 48). Michel (1986) points out that a children's textbook is not sexist if, throughout the text and illustrations, there is only one stereotyped role for one character. There must be repetition for sexism to exist.

Michel (1986) gives four categories to help detect sexism in children's textbooks. These are activities, social and emotional behaviour, social references and language. Michel (1986) divides activities into five categories which are: domestic tasks carried out in the home, leisure activities, political or social activities, professional activities and contributing to the education of children. Domestic tasks are, for example, cleaning and other housekeeping activities, cooking and shopping. "The sexist stereotypes are those texts and illustrations which show such tasks as being the domain of women and girls alone - -" (Michel 1986, p. 51). The category of contributing to the education of children concerns the relationships between adults and children, those relationships' frequency and their nature. Sexism appears if only women are shown as attending to the material and emotional well-being of their children while men are shown as authorities, for example, helping their children to solve problems or answering their questions. The category of professional activities refers to male and female characters shown acting in a professional capacity. According to Michel (1986), sexism steps into play when the professional activities of men and women are broken down into roles of "doing the work" and "giving the orders". Men are more often depicted as giving the orders and having authority while women are shown to take the orders and carrying tasks that require little initiative. Political or social activities include activities involving political or social responsibilities outside the family or work. Leisure activities include hobbies and artistic activities, for example. If women are depicted as passive observers and men as active doers in these activities, sexism can be said to be present. Girls and boys should be brought the same amount of initiative and daring.

Therefore, sexism can be detected when activities assigned to boys are full of adventure and excitement and activities assigned to girls are passive and lack in initiative. Social and emotional behaviour Michel (1986) includes positive versus negative emotions, resistance to social pressure versus dependence and docility and weakness of character versus strength of character into this category. Often female characters are depicted as emotional and male characters as aggressive or insensitive. Men can be depicted as being independent and women as feeling social pressure. Women are referred to as helpless and dependent while men are brave and independent. A character's weakness appears in texts in the form of confusion, cowardness and helplessness while a character's strength is expressed in bravery, a sense of responsibility and an ability to give orders.

Social references involve the character's marital and family status, employment, occupation and lifestyle. Women's status is often linked to marriage while men are independent. Men are depicted as head of the household. Women are also often referred to as mothers and staying home taking care of the children while men go to work and earn money so that they can support their family. Seldom are men depicted as fathers or described by their relationship to their children. The depiction of women as only mothers take away from the women who find fulfilment outside of motherhood. As for occupations, women's occupations are shown to be an extension of women's traditional domestic roles, for instance, a nurse, hairdresser or a teacher. Matters are worse if the book does not show women in any other occupation like as a doctor. "textbooks portraying only men in occupations that carry prestige or authority – contradicting what children see in the real world – can also be dubbed sexist" (Michel 1986, p. 51).

Sexism in vocabulary can manifest itself as excessive use of the masculine gender to denote all individuals. It has long been known that English is, in this sense, a sexist language. Michel (1986) gives an example: "to say that 'all men are created equal' is to tell the child that women are not equal to men" (p. 53). Also, English uses masculine words to denote functions and occupations that can be male or female. "Fireman", "postman" and "chairman" are all examples of using masculine nouns to name occupations that can be performed by both men and women. This can lead a child to think that these occupations are for men only. Another example is the use of words such as "waitress" and "actress" when describing females in these occupations. Why does there have to be separate words for males and females for the same job? These words give the impression of females as something that comes as second. There has to be something extra added to the word for it to describe women while a "male word" is the norm. However, there seems to be a change to a more neutral way of speaking. Neutral words such as "police officer" and "fire fighter" are becoming popular.

Insinuations are a camouflaged form of sexism. Michel (1986) describes how insinuations serve to attribute non-conventional roles to one sex as if such roles were the exclusive property of only one sex. For example, to say that someone is good at ice-hockey “for a girl” is sexist. Or, to say that “she runs just as fast as a boy” is to imply that it is normal for boys to run fast but not for girls. Therefore, it is sexist. Conversely, to say of a boy who plays with barbies, for example, that he plays “girl’s games” is sexist. “We have seen that no aspect of human potential, whether it involves intelligence, emotion or activity, can be denied to human being on the basis of his or her sex” (Michel, 1986, p. 54). The categories discussed above appear in the *Open Road* books as will become clear in the analysis.

A part of sexism, especially when concerning women, is also patronizing behavior. Vescio, Gervais, Snyder and Hoover (2005) suggest patronizing behavior to be a special instance of stereotype-based social inequity, whereby members of negatively stereotyped groups receive few valued resources. Research has found something that is called benevolent sexism. It is characterized according to Gervais and Vescio K (2012, p. 480) “by seemingly kind, but condescending and paternalistic behaviors, like helping women with tasks that are stereotypically beyond their reach”. The seemingly kind acts of benevolence can mask gender inequities. For example, at a gym a man may offer his help to a woman who is lifting and setting weights to a machine. At first, this is a seemingly kind act but it is based on the man’s perception of the woman’s weakness that she cannot possibly be strong enough to lift heavy weights on her own. Also, women’s niceness can promote patronizing behavior. “Patronizing behavior may serve as a cue to women that they are being viewed in sexist ways - -“ (Gervais & Vescio 2012, p. 481). Yet, Gervais and Vescio (2012) state that men who are treated in patronizing ways may not feel stereotype threat. According to Vescio and Gevais (2005), powerful men often adopt an apparently benevolent responsibility for the welfare of subordinate women. This may lead to men not seeing women as equals. “Although the motivation may be genuine, one may adopt an air of condescension toward one’s subordinates when stereotyping unwittingly occurs” (Vescio & Gervais, 2005, p. 670). Children’s textbooks are not the only source where children learn sexism from. The school hierarchy is a place for sexism as well. Professional roles are unequally distributed between men and women. While usually most teachers are women, the leading positions are held by men. Michel (1986) points out that the majority of inspectors in school are men. This too builds up the stereotype that men are in control and women are only capable of occupying subordinate positions. The following section explains sexual stigma and harassment and how they are intertwined with power and privilege. People’s ideas of

masculinity and femininity influence the way we we treat each other. Sometimes it can lead to harassment. Textbooks can influence children's views of gender.

3.4 The behaviour of boys and girls in school and their treatment by teachers

Tarmo (1992, p. 287) discovered in her study that a myth about gender neutrality can be found from Finnish schools. This myth hides the fact that the two genders are appreciated completely differently in schools. Tarmo interviewed eight teachers who had to think about their students' behaviour in school, their success in school and their working methods in school. At first, it seemed like the teachers reasoned the differences between the students as just differences between individuals, not between genders. As the interviews went on, the teachers noticed that there were indeed differences between boys and girls. For example, the teachers felt that girls were being "nice" if they were quiet, obedient, or took others into consideration. Girls are expected to be invisible in the class room, but at the same time if boys behave badly, it is tolerated more. Coates (1999, p. 66) strongly argues that "it is undeniable that one of the burdens of being born female is the imperative to be nice". The ideal of femininity is being the perfect wife and mother. In effect, to be nice to people means that girls and women have to hide what they really feel. Boys and men, on the other hand, are allowed to be even rude. If boys make mistakes, for example, they can laugh about them and even brag. "mistakes which he presents to his friends as something to laugh about, as proof of his laddishness" (Coates, 1999, p. 67). As the saying goes, "boys will be boys"; boys are allowed to do so much more without any judging from others.

Blumberg (2009) states that GBIT is suspected of diminishing girls' achievements in school. The weakest school systems in the poorest countries seem to have the severest problem, with often gender-biased teachers' attitudes and learning materials. GBIT seems to be ubiquitous, to varying degrees. Blumberg (2009, p. 246) argues that "only in Sweden have government efforts to eliminate gender bias from textbooks and curricula apparently succeeded. - - Swedish textbooks may depict males in stereotypically female domestic tasks more often than is prevalent even there".

Girls are also expected to be motivated to study and they are considered to be diligent. Boys, on the other hand, are seen as minding their business and wanting more reasons for why something is done in class. Tarmo (1992, p. 292) discovered that the teachers felt that if girls are hard-working or thorough, it is because they want to show off or suck up to the teacher. The teachers also felt that these qualities are something girls are born with. However, boys' carelessness or indifferentness was explained by their attitude or "bad" environment. Tarmo points out that teachers are not

necessarily biased, rather, that sexism is strong in our society and schools are no exception to this. According to Stitt and Erikson (1988), girls start out ahead of boys in speaking and reading. In the early grades, girls' academic performance is equal to boys' in math and science. However, throughout the school years, girls' achievement-test scores show significant decline. Boys, on the other hand, will reach and surpass the scores of their female counterparts, particularly in the areas of math and science. In spite of this, girls receive better grades in school. This can be viewed as a reward for being more quiet and for their good behaviour. Therefore, girls are more likely to be invisible in classrooms. "They receive fewer academic contacts, less praise, fewer complex and abstract questions, and less instruction on how to do things for themselves" (Stitt & Erikson, 1988, p. 4). According to Francis (2000), the teacher's perceptions of gender differences and their expectations of pupils affect classroom interaction and pupil self-perception. However, she points out that since the 1980's more and more teachers are aware of this and sensitive to gender issues.

Francis (2000, p. 32) found out in her study that there are very subtle ways with which teachers promote gender stereotypes. "Ms D" told a boy to take his hat off by saying: "You're in the presence of ladies." Francis (2000) also discovered in her research that two of the male teachers took a different approach to "the girls" than he did for "the boys". "Mr L" frequently put the boys on the spot and used humour with them while the girls received much more understanding and kindness if they did not seem to understand or follow the class. This led to allowing the girls to refrain from participation. The girls got away with chatting about other subjects while rigorous attention was paid to the boys. Also, male teachers often talk to boys in a harsher manner than they do to girls. It is hard to say, however, if this is due to the character of the boys or if it is a gendered action. Often girls are considered more fragile compared to boys, so it is possible that boys are expected to accept the harsh manner they are talked to. This kind of thinking belittles girls and puts pressure on boys to be "tough". The stereotyped images of boys in children's literature have the effect of cutting boys and men off from their emotions and natural feelings (Michel, 1986).

Michel (1986) cites a Peruvian study in his work and the study revealed that the teachers of the Peruvian school in question did not understand that the sexist stereotypes in the textbooks did not reflect real-life situations but the teachers felt that problem was not serious. The teachers felt that it is the responsibility of the teachers to explain to the students that girls are just as capable as boys (Michel, 1986, p. 26.) Michel (1986) points out that many teachers might fear challenging traditional sex roles because it would mean upsetting moral values. These moral values are bound with a traditional view of the family and of the woman as the centre of the household. This view of moral values and the household is outdated, however. There are many different forms of family in

the present day that rarely fit the traditional description of family anymore. The Peruvian study also revealed that the teachers were more attentive to boys and more strict with girls. Spaulding (as cited in Michel, 1986) discovered that in the United States teachers encourage boys to express themselves while girls are told to stay in the background. In addition, creative encouragement was directed more towards boys.

3.5 Learning materials

According to Uusikylä and Atjonen (2000, p. 140), a learning material is a source of information that has something to learn in it and it is a tool to teach with. Learning materials are supposed to ignite something within the students, experiences that make them learn what ever it is they are supposed to learn. Learning materials are designed to make the students ask questions, search for answers and actively do something. “A Canadian study found that the average teacher uses textbooks for 70 to 90% of classroom time” (Baldwin and Baldwin, 1992, as cited in Blumberg, 2009, p. 346).

Michel (1986) states that literature written for children is one of the most effective ways of communicating values, ideologies and standards. Something that he calls sexist indoctrination begins with picture book designed for pre-school children. The younger the child, the less well equipped he or she is to resist the powerful stereotypes. Books are likely the most used form of learning materials. The author of a book has his or her own vision of how a chapter in a book should be used and taught in class, but that vision very rarely comes true because every teacher and a group of students is different. Therefore, it does not matter what the intention of the author was when he or she wrote the book. An author may not intend there to be any sexism in his book, but what matters is how these issues are handled in the class room.

Clark (2016) lists the criteria (according to the United Nation’s Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979) that textbooks have to meet in order to promote gender equality, here are a few of them: a) females are protagonists, b) females and males are not described according to a stereotypical sexual division of labor, c) ways of living free of conventional ideas of femininity and masculinity are described positively, d) topics encourage students to think about sexual discrimination and gender equality. Obviously, the standards are set very high but study after study prove that textbooks do not meet these standards (see, e.g. Parker, Larkin and Cockburn, 2017; Leo & Cartagena, 1999; Parham, 2013). My analysis also reveals that the *Open Road* books fail to have females as protagonists. There are some, but most of them are

male. Males and females are described according to a stereotypical sexual division of labor, such as women as housewives and mothers and men having high status jobs. However, there are some topics throughout the books that challenge gender stereotypes and encourage students to think about discrimination.

According to Ullah and Haque (2016, p. 81), “almost all of the world’s nations adopted the Education for All (EFA) Dakar Goals, as well as the Millennium Development goals (MDG.” EFA is a movement which is “a global commitment to provide quality education for all children, youth and adults” (UNESCO, 2008). One of the objectives includes “the firm global pledge to gender equality in education” (Ullah & Haque, 2016, p. 81). One of the goals is to achieve gender equality by 2015. In Pakistan, a new curriculum was approved in 2007 and new gender fair textbooks were expected. Ullah and Haque (2016) conducted a study of the new textbooks. In the category of activities, Ullah and Haque found them to be gender stereotypical. For example, boys were found doing physically more demanding activities while girls acted in supporting roles. Aspects, such as muscular strength, are gendered. There were also more activities assigned to boys than to girls. “The narrow representation of girls and their portrayal in selective activities does not allow female students to make choices that are in keeping with their own personalities and which are self-empowering” (Ullah & Haque, 2016, p. 83). In the category of dialogues and conversations they found that more males were leading dialogues than women. In the case of mixed dialogues males outnumbered females in leading the dialogues “and if it was initiated by a female she was excluded in the very outset and the dialogues were taken over by male voices” (Ullah & Haque, 2016, p. 83). This is described by Ullah and Haque (2016) as a message of power. Males possess power and exercise it while women are expected to be polite and therefore exercise lesser power. Women are expected to listen more and accommodate to men. In conclusion, the study revealed that all of the 24 books they examined contained gender biased texts and illustrations. Educators at large need to take action in making healthy learning environments for children and the youth and this is only possible by everyday actions in the classroom. Creating equal opportunities for children and creating stereotype-free materials for them are, indeed, some of the motivations behind the current thesis.

Moser and Hannover (2013) studied mainly German schoolbooks of the twenty-first century to find how gender fair they are but mathematics books were included in the study as well. 18 schoolbooks were chosen for the first, third and fifth years of school. Moser and Hannover (2013) point out that all the books included in the study were printed after the introduction of the gender equity law in Germany. They investigated the frequencies with which female and male persons are depicted. Their analysis also included gender-fair language in texts and spatial arrangements in pictures and

males' and females' activities and their occupational and parental roles. Their investigation revealed an under representation of women in comparison with boys and men. However, they found a fairer representation of the genders in books for German. Girls were depicted as frequently as boys. The analysis of activities did not show any indication of gender bias. In other words, "girls' and boys' activities were not restricted to traditional, gender-typical ones" (Moser and Hannover, 2013, p. 398). However, their analysis of adults' occupational and parental roles proved to be gender biased. They found that men were more often described by their occupation than women. Also, occupational terms were mainly used in the masculine linguistic form. In addition, women were depicted at work far less than men and more in the parental role than men. As a whole, Moser and Hannover (2013) considered their study to show that there is some change toward more gender fair schoolbooks in Germany. "The absence of gender differences in activities marks a positive development towards gender fairness, compared to schoolbooks used in past decades" (Moser and Hannover, 2013, p. 399). A theme that seems to continue, however, is the division of social roles. Study after study reveal that men and women are traditionally divided into occupational and parental roles; men go to work and women take care of the home and children.

Yasin, Hamid, Keong, Othman and Jaludin (2012) investigated linguistic sexism in Qatari primary mathematics textbooks. The following were questioned: is there linguistic sexism and role stereotyping in the books, how are linguistic sexism and sex-role stereotyping portrayed in the books? Yasin (et al., 2012) found that there is a preference of males over females and that males are presented as standard. Also, males are portrayed more than females in social and occupational activities. The portrayal of personality characteristics was also biased. Language wise the male pronoun "he" was more noticeable than the female counterpart "she".

They also found that "the occupational roles for females are less diverse and are restricted to stereotypical type of occupations/professions while male occupations show a wider range thus providing them with more options than females" (Yasin et al., 2012, p. 63). The findings revealed that there are more female nouns used with regard to kinship terms. (32 female nouns as opposed to 26 male nouns were present in foreign published textbooks.) This indicates that when talking about women, they are linked to men one way or another, never independently valued. A female character in a book is often a man's wife or girlfriend, sister or child. Another finding was that "the roles of fathers are more acknowledged lexically while society acknowledged the roles of mothers as nurturers and caregivers" (Yasin et al. 2012, p. 63). Males were still seen as maintaining traditional masculinity by being portrayed in more powerful occupations. They were also depicted as more accountable and responsible in those occupations.

Macleod and Norby (2002) investigated sexual stereotyping in Swedish language textbooks. Their focus was on two textbooks for beginners of Swedish language: *Nybörjarsvenska* "Beginners Swedish" published in 1981 and *På svenska!* "In Swedish" published in 1997. Macleod and Norby conducted both quantitative and qualitative observations of the characters of the books in order to see how the two sexes are depicted. First, they found that men and women were stereotypically represented. All the females in *Nybörjar svenska* had traditional female roles, for example, as nurses, cleaners, secretaries and flight attendants. Men were depicted as engineers, mechanics and pilots, in more physical or prestigious jobs. In the book, only men went on business trips while women went on holidays. According to Macleod and Norby (2002, p. 55), "it seems that the only real goal for women is romance and raising a family".

Also, Macleod and Norby (2002) found that females are portrayed as "domestic drudges". They go shopping for groceries for the entire family, clothes for the family, they baby-sit children, cook for the family and so on and so forth. In regard to physical and mental representations, Macleod and Norby (2002) found *Nybörjar svenska* to describe or depict women in traditionally female terms. For example, women are complimented on their clothes, they are described as wives or mothers or nurturers and their physical appearance is commented on. According to Macleod and Norby (2002), *På svenska!* lacks the "blatant" stereotyping typical to *Nybörjar svenska* and rather, demonstrates a higher degree of explicit awareness of gender issues. In addition, Macleod and Norby (2002) explain that conversations in *Nybörjar svenska* confirm the pattern of sexist stereotyping evident throughout the book. "Dialogues between women centre on washing and romance. Men discuss cars --" (Macleod and Norby, 2002, p. 58). *På svenska!*, on the other hand, shows more of awareness of gender representation. "The patriarchal dichotomy revealed in the two textbooks we investigate here lumps women with traditionally gender-based interests and achievements, and defines them in terms of outdated male perceptions" (Macleod and Norby, 2002, p. 67). It is apparent that gender bias is present in foreign language books.

Leo and Cartagena (1999) state in their article that it has been investigated that illustrations using male models far exceed those using female models in anatomy or physical diagnosis texts. Therefore, medical students might be less familiar with the female anatomy, and, furthermore, are at risk for becoming biased in perceiving the male body as the norm. Leo and Cartagena (1999) investigated whether gender bias is present in psychiatric texts. Five texts were selected and 962 case vignettes were examined. An overrepresentation of men was found; 292 vignettes featured male protagonists while 192 had female protagonists. Of all vignettes examined, only two were illustrative of disorders unique to women's health (Leo & Cartagena, 1999, p. 74). Leo and

Cartagena (1999) point out that what makes these findings especially interesting is that women are predominant in psychiatric practice and more women seek medical or psychiatric attention. So, the findings do not represent the situation that exists in the real world. They state that male patients receive more extensive evaluations and follow-up studies than female patients. However, they point out that the impact of gender disparities on readers requires further investigation. The study indicates that gender bias in textbooks can have serious consequences to an individual's health care.

Parker, Larkin and Cockburn (2017) conducted a visual analysis of gender bias in contemporary anatomy textbooks. They made a content analysis of gender images from major anatomy textbooks (17 books) used in medical schools in Australia. The textbooks included in the study were those that were recommended for anatomy subjects during the academic year of 2013-2014. Their research reveals "what visual messages have been ascribed to the gendered body in an educational context" (Parker et al., 2017, p. 106). A total of 6004 images were quantitatively analyzed for gender bias. Of those images, 2136 were female and 3863 were male. Therefore, men were represented more frequently than women in the textbooks. Parker et al. (2017) also considered images coded as narrative "in order to consider what social role information they communicated" (p. 110). 521 narrative images were analyzed. Of these, 45,3% were female and 54% were male. The representation of body type was analyzed. Women were more likely to be represented as toned or untoned while men were more likely to be represented as muscular than any other body type. This confirms that the ideal body for a man is muscular and it is something men should strive for. At the same time, women are rarely pictured as muscular because it is something society does not want women to look like.

The analysis confirmed that women were more likely to be represented in a domestic setting and less likely to be represented in an occupational setting. Furthermore, women were more likely to be represented as having more positive emotions and men having more neutral and negative emotions. The results of the study reveal that women along with transgender people are underrepresented in anatomy textbooks. The white male body was presented as the norm and existing stereotypes as normative, promoting inequality. "The lack of information on heterogeneous populations means that medical students are inadequately prepared for the diverse types of patients they are likely to see on a daily basis" (Parker et al., 2017, p. 111).

Demir and Yavuz (2017) also studied possible gender discrimination in ELT coursebooks, ELT meaning English language teaching. Specifically, they studied these ELT coursebooks that were in use in Turkey. Demir and Yavuz (2017) investigated whether the distribution of occupations assigned to males and females in terms of number and traditionality is fair. They found that the

number of occupations assigned only to men more than doubled the occupations assigned only to women, comprising almost one half of all the occupations. In other words, in terms of quantity, men were obviously overrepresented. However, their findings also indicated that was not a tendency toward dividing the occupations into male-specific and female-specific jobs. They did point out, however, that “careers such as *soldier, manager, president, driver* are still associated only with men” (Demir & Yavuz, 2017, p. 109). Some of their findings did suggest that “women are strongly encouraged toward non-traditional careers” (Demir & Yavuz, 2017, p. 109). This is because the non-traditional careers assigned to women in the ELT books overwhelmingly outnumbered those assigned to men. Even though, I would suggest that the traditionally associated jobs with men outweigh these non-traditional careers assigned to women because traditionality is a common factor in what creates sexism. In other words, students possibly pay more attention to the fact that women are not assigned to specific jobs. Demir and Yavuz (2017) concluded that there was not a fair distribution of occupations assigned to men and women in terms of number and non/traditionality. However, stereotyped gender roles were not imposed in the *Yes You Can* books. Other categories where Demir and Yavuz (2017, pp. 112-115) found fairness between males and females were sports and activities, amount of talk assigned to men and women and equal dispersion of males and females as the initiators of conversations.

Parham (2013) wanted to find out whether materials developed to teach English to young children have signs of gender bias in the conversations, illustrations and graphic designs of the cover. The study focused on a variety of books designed to teach children English that are in use in different language institutes in Iran. In the conversations that Parham (2013) investigated male and female characters had more or less equal presence in conversations. In fact, when investigated the initiator factor in the conversations, Parham (2013) found that in 62% of conversations females were the initiator compared to 38% male initiators. In the illustration, however, females were underrepresented. Males appeared 1.5 per cent more times than females in the illustrations. Lastly, in the graphic design of the cover, Parham (2013) found no meaningful difference in the representation of males and females in cover designs. Parham (2013) argues that conversations on EFL books for children have moved toward a more egalitarian representation of females and males. She also argues that females have achieved equitable visibility in conversations. This might be the case for books in Iran but in a world-wide perspective there is still work to be done for equality in childrens’ English textbooks.

Bazzul and Sykes (2010) investigated how a textbook used in Ontario schools conceptualizes notions of gender and sexuality. They argued that “representation of sexuality in science education

still remains rather unexamined and separation of these topics helps to avoid the risk that gender/sex binaries will eclipse the conversation around sexuality in this biology text” (p. 274). Their findings showed that heteronormative and gender binary discourses prevail in the text’s treatment of hormones and reproductive anatomy and physiology, among other things. “The connection of heterosexuality to the presence of hormones, along with the silencing of other sexualities, indicates a destined natural order to heterosexuality; all other sexualities becoming in effect unnatural” (Bazzul & Sykes, 2010, p. 276). The analysis revealed that heterosexuality was employed as the only sexuality and that there were rigid anatomical categories as to what constitutes a male or female. “Any mention or discussion of sexuality or identity beyond the set heterosexual norm or the male/female sex binary is conspicuously absent” (Bazzul & Sykes, 2010, p. 281).

3.6 Men and masculinity in gender bias research

Men are often neglected in studies about gender bias. Most of the focus often goes to how women are portrayed. This might be because results of earlier studies indicate women’s poor representation in textbooks so the interest to study the phenomenon continues. Although I think that women are subject to most of the sexism in school textbooks, men are victims too. Some children’s textbooks contain images of men in stereotypical and traditional social roles. These images include men as “stallions”, men not displaying emotion and men as policemen, firefighters or managers of a company to name a few. Portraying men as strong and tough hinders people from seeing men as vulnerable. It is just as much possible for men to be victims of sexual assault, for example. Stemple & Meyer (2014) conducted a study of the sexual victimization of men in America, an overlooked area of study. They explored patterns of sexual victimization and gender by examining five sets of federal agency survey data of the topic. “ - - we show that 12-month prevalence data from 2 new sets of surveys conducted - - found widespread sexual victimization among men in the United States , with some forms of victimization roughly equal to those experienced by women” (Stemple & Meyer, 2014, p. 19). Despite these findings, depictions of sexual victimization still reinforce a stereotypical paradigm: men as perpetrators and women as victims. The idea that men cannot be victims and women cannot be perpetrators is outdated. Other such ideas are that for men all sex is wanted at all times and male victims experience less harm. Stemple & Meyer (2014) explain that contemporary social narratives and jokes pose obstacles for males coping with victimization. For example, prison jokes about getting raped are very common. Two surveys (2014) revealed that both female and male detainees experience sexual victimization committed by staff and other inmates. Also, The National Inmate Survey 2011-2012 shows that slightly more men than women in jails

and prisons reported staff sexual misconduct, which includes all incidents of sexual conduct with staff (Stemple & Meyer, 2014).

Men are under a lot of pressure to behave in ways that society says is to be a man. It does not seem to be something every man can decide for themselves. There is a theory of “precarious manhood” that contends that one can lose their manhood if they do not behave in certain ways (Bosson & Vandello, 2011; Vandello & Bosson, 2013, as stated in Brinkman, Isacco and Rosén, 2016). It suggests that “manhood is an elusive and tenuous state, such that men must earn and maintain their masculinity through their actions (or in some cases, by avoiding behaviors that are considered feminine and/or contrary to masculinity)” (Brinkman, Isacco & Rosén, 2016, p. 313). If men then do not behave as they are expected to, there might be sanctions. According to Brinkman et al. (2016), men may engage in gender prejudice against their friends in order to keep their friends’ masculinity in check. Gender prejudice is an attitude that an individual deserves to be treated with lower social status because of a gender-related categorization (Eckes & Trautner, 2000 as cited in Brinkman et al., 2016) Through a process of judging and being judged men maintain their status as “real men”.

Past research has investigated gender prejudice among college students and three types have been identified (Brinkman & Rickard, 2009; Kaiser & Miller 2004; Swim et al., 1998) (a) an unwanted sexual comment or advance, (b) a hostile or negative comment about men, or (c) a comment that men should act a certain way; for example, “real men don’t cry.” Men are not allowed to show emotion. If they do, they are considered weak. “Gender prejudice events may trigger gender role stress or a man’s subjective appraisal of meeting (or not meeting) society’s expectations linked to traditional masculine norms” (Cohn & Zeichner, 2006, p. 180 as cited in Brinkman et al., 2016, p. 315).

Brinkman (et al., 2016, p. 320) found in their study that “both men and women pressure men to conform to gender role norms and think it is acceptable to make demeaning comments about men. Men make such comments as a way of asserting their own conformity to traditional masculinity, whereas women’s comments may reflect their own endorsement of traditional masculinity ideologies.” In fact, one can hear women talking about what they think makes a “real man”. Women may expect men to be muscular and in good shape, “tough” and fearless. If a man does not conform to these ideologies, he is considered less desirable as a partner. It is possible that children’s textbooks further these messages of masculinity with their depictions of boys and men. It can be difficult for students to create their own sense of masculinity if the pages on a textbook recreate the traditional views of masculinity, especially when the textbook is read multiple times a week, year after year.

Enforcing traditional gender roles can also be evident in the treatment of sexual minorities. Aggression toward gay men can be motivated by gender role enforcement. According to Parrott (2009), gender role enforcement endorses traditional beliefs about the male gender role. These beliefs reflect adherence to a variety of separate norms, such as status, toughness, which reflects the belief that men are physically tough and even aggressive; and antifemininity, which reflects the belief that men should not do activities that are traditionally considered feminine. Sexual stigma is defined as “the negative regard, inferior status, and relative powerlessness that society collectively accords to any nonheterosexual behavior, identity, or relationship” (Herek, 2007, pp. 906–907). Parrott (2009) also states that men who experience threats to their masculinity feel stressed and this stress can be at risk to engage in aggression toward sexual minorities. “In contrast to masculinity ideology, which reflects the internalization of cultural norms regarding masculinity, masculine gender role stress refers to the negative effects that result from adhering to these prescribed standards of masculinity” (Parrott, 2009, p. 1139). The analysis conducted in this thesis is presented in the following section.

4. Representations of men and women

This thesis aimed to investigate what sort of themes surface in the analysis of the discourses in the *Open Road* textbooks. Based on previous research (Macleod & Norby, 2009; Moser & Hannover, 2013; Michel, 1986) I suspected the analysis to reveal themes of activities and hobbies, social roles, language and overrepresentation of men. Other themes were found in addition. This chapter discusses the themes and how the discourses represent men and women, possible gender bias and sexism. I offer a critical and close analysis of the seven *Open Road* books and their discourses. It is critical since the current paper aims to grab the reader's attention and direct it to the social effects the discourses potentially have. First, the theme of overrepresentation of men in the illustrations, characters and authors found in the research materials is discussed. Other themes of gendered stereotyping and sexism that the analysis found are activities, social gender roles, sexualization and objectification and finally, language.

4.1 Overrepresentation of men

Along with a qualitative analysis of the data, I wanted to conduct a quantitative analysis. Overrepresentation of men in textbooks has been found by many researchers (Parham, 2013; Leo & Cartagena, 1999; Moser & Hannover, 2013). Women are not given as much cover in textbooks as men are but also, as will become clear in my analysis, there are more text extracts by male authors in the *Open Road* textbooks and more men as main characters or "supporting" characters. In general, the reader often sees more males in textbooks. In the analysis the amount of male characters, male authors and illustrations of men were compared to those of women. The analysis did not include drawn images, rather only pictures of real people. The analysis did not include pictures or images where both men and women were represented together. To remind the reader, there are nine chapters in each book and usually each chapter has a main character in the text extract. The results are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Men as characters and authors.

Book	Male characters	Male authors
Open Road 1	5	4
Open Road 2	3	3
Open Road 3	4	4
Open Road 4	4	4
Open Road 5	9	9
Open Road 6	9	9
Open Road 7	9	9

Especially books 5, 6 and 7 of the series have an overwhelming overrepresentation of men over women. The three books represent hugely important themes such as employment, education and nature and this is why it is important to portray these themes to the students equally, with both genders appearing on the pages of the books. Girls should not feel as they study the books that they cannot become scientists or doctors nor should boys feel that they cannot become hairdressers, for example. The lack of gender equality in the books can lead to these ideas. The situation is made worse if in class, the teacher does not point out the unfairness of the books. It is the teacher's responsibility to familiarize herself or himself with the contents of the textbooks he or she is teaching in advance so that discussions in class are possible. The conclusion can be made that the *Open Road* textbook series as a whole contains an overrepresentation of men. There are overall more men and boys as characters and in main character position in comparison to women and girls. More male authors have been relied on when searching materials for the books. Finally, more males appear in the illustrations on the pages of the books and also, on the covers. Table 2 presents the number of women in the *Open Road* books.

Table 2. Women as characters and authors.

Book	Female characters	Female authors
Open Road 1	4	3
Open Road 2	1	2
Open Road 3	2	3
Open Road 4	1	2
Open Road 5	0	0
Open Road 6	0	0
Open Road 7	0	0

The following examples indicate the overrepresentation of men in the exercises of the books. The first example comes from *Open Road 4* chapter 4 *This Is Where I Come From*. In exercise I part 3 the students are instructed to match eponyms with their descriptions and to find out who they are named after. There are 14 words or terms and behind every single explanation is a man. The explanations of these words are given in the teacher's file. For example, the word "a gallup" is explained as follows:

- (1) George Horace Gallup (1901–84) founded the American Institute of Public Opinion. He devised the Gallup Poll, where emphasis was on representative sampling.

The question of why there are no words or terms originated by women, remains. This example represents overrepresentation of men. It also represents the poor representation of women as inventors and important figures in history.

Open Road 5 chapter 4 *Truth Is the First Casualty* gives an example of underrepresentation of women. The text is about the photographer Robert Capa and the listening exercise 4F *Shooting photos and bullets* connected to the text continues his story. However, another photographer, John Moore, is mentioned. This would have been the perfect opportunity to write about a female photographer for a change but the authors of *Open Road* chose differently. There are many famous male photographers but the same amount of recognition is not given to women.

The last example of overrepresentation of men in the exercises of the books is a warm up exercise for chapter 9 in *Open Road 5*. The listening task is called *Jean Sibelius: A Reminiscence*. It lists seven short stories that all in one way or another are linked to famous musicians and some incidents, none of the stories revolve around women. It can be concluded that there is an overrepresentation of men in the research materials. Not only are there more male characters and authors, there is also an underrepresentation of women in high value jobs and positions in the exercises of the books.

4.2 Activities

Sex-stereotyping and gender bias can be found in the research materials based on what type of activities are given to male and female characters, whether in the texts or in the illustrations. As mentioned earlier, if the discourses lack the diversity of the real world, they are sexist (Michel, 1986). If, for instance, leisure activities assigned to boys are adventurous and activities assigned to girls are more passive, sexism can be detected. Indeed, activities was one of the themes that emerged from the texts in the textbooks. Particularly, in the form of leisure activities or hobbies. Here, I give an analysis of what type of traditional gender activities were found in the research materials.

An example of stereotypical free time activity for boys comes from *Open Road 1* chapter 8 *Playing with Fire*. It deals with gaming, playing violent video games in particular. The only illustration on this spread is of a young man apparently playing video games since he is holding a controller in his hands. The text is an article by Peter Olafson called *Learning to love mass murder* and since the text is in first person narrator, the reader can assume that the gamer is male. Furthermore, the illustration accompanied by the author suggests that playing video games is something only boys and men do.

The narrator describes how and why he plays video games and, in a sense, justifies killing people in the virtual world. Especially playing violent video games is considered masculine. The activity assigned to this young man is adventurous, as activities for boys stereotypically are. Some consolation comes from the text, however:

(2) Killing innocent characters makes me feel bad. Why would I do such a thing, even in a game?

At least the action of killing in a video game is not straight linked to enjoyment.

Another example of stereotypical activities for boys and men is an illustration that appears on page 10 in *Open Road 1* depicting two men playing cricket. While, of course, men playing cricket in itself is not biased, the fact that the book has no examples of women playing sports makes it so. Also, this is another case of an adventurous activity assigned to men, not to women or girls. Therefore, there is a lack of diversity in the hobbies assigned to the characters.

Hobbies assigned to specific gender appear in *Open Road 2*. Right before the first chapter *Same Old Same Old* begins there is a listening comprehension exercise on page 6. The students' job is to listen to different people describe their hobbies and then to mark the speaker's hobby on pictures on the page. Some of the hobbies illustrated are quite stereotypical. Students are given a limited representation of hobbies. Hobbies assigned for women and girls are quilting, making jewellery, morris dancing and writing a blog while hobbies assigned to men and boys are hunting, photography and birdwatching. All these are stereotypical hobbies.

Open Road 3, chapter 1 *Future of sorts* contains another stereotypical activity. The main character Sam skateboards. Sam is described in the text as a fifteen-year-old boy who is a "skateboarding buff". In the text Sam is meeting his girlfriend Alicia's family over lunch. Alicia's parents, particularly her father, seem to be quite harsh on Sam and disapproving of his hobbies. Skateboarding is an activity stereotypically performed by boys and men when, in fact, many girls and women skateboard even on a professional level. If a girl or woman skateboards in a text, she is often considered a "tomboy". According to Michel (1986), insinuations of this kind are sexist because it insinuates that a girl skateboarding is not normal.

A stereotypical activity assigned to a woman is given in this example. A woman is illustrated as having been shopping on page 17 in *Open Road 1*. There are many shopping bags on the floor and she is lying on the couch exhausted. She is also wearing high heels. Men are not depicted as shopping in the book series. Men are seldom depicted shopping in general. If they are, it is

something they hate and often doing it as a request by their girlfriends or wives. Or, men who enjoy shopping are depicted as “feminine” or homosexual. On page 18 in the same book is an illustration of a group of cheerleaders, all girls. There are plenty of boys and men who cheer but they are often then labelled as homosexual, or "feminine".

The next example contains a woman shopping again. It can be found in the listening materials for chapter 9 in *Open Road 4* in exercise 9H. In the fourth dialogue a woman is talking about her plans to buy herself a new handbag. A stereotypical activity for women is shopping. Especially an interest in brands and high-quality clothes and shoes and other accessories is considered “feminine”.

(3) Woman: Prada, Vuitton, Burberry, Armani, Gucci, Escada...

Man: What are you talking about?

Woman: I'm just planning to buy myself a new handbag.

In *Open Road 3* chapter 2 *Finnish Whizz Kids* the text discusses the Finnish education system and why Finnish students do so well in the international PISA tests. Finnish Fanny Salo is described as a smart and dedicated student but for some reason she is also described by her love for shopping and watching TV shows such as *Gossip Girl* and *Desperate Housewives*. A boy or man would never be said to watch those TV shows even if in fact he did. Describing Fanny by these features is completely unnecessary. This is an example of a hobby that is passive and does not have an adventurous spirit. Passive activities, when assigned to only girls, are sexist according to Michel (1986).

In Chapter 8 *Classic Metal Never Rusts* in *Open Road 5* Will Byers discusses what makes a classic metal anthem. He lists bands such as Metallica, Deep Purple and Black Sabbath and individual artists such as Jason Newsted and Cliff Burton but does not list any women. The authors of *Open Road 5* had the opportunity to choose any text but they decided to choose one with no women. This might also reveal the problem of sexism being so rooted in our thoughts that we immediately associate rock or metal music with male artists. Also, being a rock star is a highly stereotypical activity for a man.

Men as athletes can be found in *Open Road 2* in Chapter 6 *A Wave of Sound*. In exercise 6G *Sport anecdotes* there are nine anecdotes and every one of them describes a male athlete. In the exercise,

the students are asked to listen to the audio tape about sport anecdotes and choose from alternatives what is discussed. Example 4 provides one of the anecdotes on the tape.

(4) The award for the most courteous rower of all time must go to the Australian Henry Pearce. In a rowing event at the 1928 Olympics he was in the lead when a family of ducks passed before him in single file. Pearce politely raised his oars, waited for the family to pass – and went on to win the race.

Again, an adventurous and active activity is given to a man. He is also portrayed as heroic. Women are underrepresented in sports and most sports are seen mostly performed by men such as ice-hockey, football, soccer, basketball and baseball. According to Hartmann-Tews and Pfister (2003, p. 1), “physical activities are always intertwined with the structures, norms and ideals of a society, and they always mirror that society’s gender order and gender hierarchy. Therefore - - women have played a specific, but often marginal, role in - -physical activities”. They continue to state that there is a gendered sports culture which is specific to each sport but differs from country to country. There are gendered images of sports and they too are different in each culture. However, as more and more women are taking sports such as body-building or boxing, women are resisting the gender order. Resistance can also possibly lead to change in the construction of gender (Hartmann-Tews & Pfister, 2003). The third theme that emerged from the materials is social gender roles.

4.3 Social gender roles

Stereotypical social roles would be, for instance, women as caretakers or mothers. Another instance is when their relationship to men is described but nothing else. The work they do at home or having stereotypically female jobs such as a nurse, teacher or flight attendant. Men would be described in "tougher" jobs such as a mechanic or in higher position jobs such as a pilot or a principal. Emotions, or the lack there of is also under the theme of social roles. Actions such as crying or sulking are considered “feminine” and as something men are not allowed to do. Otherwise, they are “weak”. The analysis revealed that both men and women are represented in stereotypical social gender roles in the *Open Road* books.

A girl is depicted as emotional in *Open Road 1*, chapter 3 *Love Letters*. The text extract is from Kate Walker’s *State of the Heart anthology*. The main character Nick talks about his relationship

with his girlfriend Fleur (described as "my chick"). Fleur longs for romance and wants Nick to write her love letters. Men are never described as wanting romance. Only women are considered to need such things or having emotions in general. Also, only Fleur is described by her looks. The text depicts her as someone all the boys in the school want because of her looks. This type of description makes the reader think that women only have their looks to offer and that is all men want and appreciate in a woman. Fleur's actions are "dramatic" when Nick leaves her by handing her a break up letter.

(5) She didn't take it too badly, just ripped it up and fed it through the shredder. But then two days later photocopies of my *personal* letter started to circulate the school.

A man would not be described doing the same thing or being "dramatic". Such qualities and actions would, however, be assigned to a homosexual male. Many "feminine" attributes are often associated with homosexuals, they are described as "drama queens". Also, women are often depicted as men's possession. Here, Fleur is Nick's chick. Women are given names such as chick in the materials when talked about by their boyfriends and husbands. The equivalent, negative names do not exist for men in the English language. For example, there is no term to describe a man as someone's boyfriend which also has connotations to his sexuality.

Another emotional woman can be found in chapter 6 *Little Dude and Little Big Tom* in *Open Road 1*. The main character Tom's mother is described as constantly "sobbing".

(6) My mom spends a great deal of time crying regardless of who happens to be married to whom. Odds are she's crying right now. I'll bet you anything.

There are no men described as having such emotions nor expressing them in the *Open Road* books. Women are portrayed weaker and in need of both emotional support and practical advice from men. Men are expected to be strong no matter the situation and they should get through difficulties alone. In fact, there are no examples of men or boys crying in the *Open Road* books.

A direct example of a woman as the care taker of the home can be found in chapter 7 *The Life and Times of the Thinderbolt Kid* in *Open Road 1*. The main character's mother does all the chores in the house while the father goes to work and provides for the family – a very traditional and stereotypical division of roles.

(7) The only downside of my mother's working was that it put a little pressure on her with regard to dinner, which, frankly, was not her strong suit. - - Theirs truly was a

marriage made in heaven, for no one could burn food like my mother or eat it like my dad.

The roles could have been reversed. The mother could have gone to work and the father could have taken care of the house.

In *Open Road 2*, chapter 4 *A Tough Homecoming* there is a listening exercise 4J *Music to your ears* that has four different news clips. The students are asked to listen to the news on MTV and then answer four questions in Finnish. A part of the fourth news clip goes:

- (8) The Bridge School is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping students who are physically challenged. One of its co-founders is Pegi Young, wife of rock legend Neil Young, and they're both in charge of organizing the event, which will be the 21st annual benefit.

Pegi Young is only referred to as Neil Young's wife, as if she has no value as herself and is somehow Neil Young's property. It is much rarer to describe a man only as a woman's husband. This links to the example of Nick and Fleur's characters where women are portrayed as something to own.

Both men and women are depicted in stereotypical jobs in *Open Road 3*. In chapter 1 *A Future of Sorts* the main character Sam's father is a plumber and in chapter 7 *Careerwise* a woman is a librarian. When only such examples are presented to the students, the books deny the diversity that exists in the real world. Girls might think they cannot become pilots because that is something "girls do not do" and boys might think they cannot become dancers.

On page 52 in *Open Road 3* exercise A offers a reading task that consists of a dialogue between Spike and Jelena In *Open Road 3*. Jelena has been invited for a job interview and she has decided to call her friend Spike for some advice.

- (9) Jelena: I was hoping you could give me some advice.

Spike: Sure thing. What's on your mind?

Jelena: I've got a job interview next week and I know you've got some experience with interviews.

Spike: Yeah, as it happens I've got an interview next week. But I only know about interviews here in the UK.

Jelena is depicted as in need of help. She cannot handle the situation alone, needs advice and is “worried”. The assignment says: “She’s worried that she won’t be able to cope with an interview - - “ The man in the situation, Spike, offers advice and support. He is independent, experienced and wise.

Open Road 4, chapter 2 *Stealing the Scream* lacks diversity. The text is an extract from Edward Dolnick’s book *Stealing The Scream – the Hunt for a Missing Masterpiece*. In the extract two men steal a famous painting from a Norwegian art museum. If there are thieves or any other criminals in stories, they are most often described as males.

(10) It is also described in the text that the art show in the museum “was an exhibit celebrating the work of Norway’s greatest artist, Edvard Munch.”

Again, the book is ignoring the diversity of the real world where women can be thieves, too and there are many excellent female artists that deserve to be celebrated along with men. The story of the two male thieves continues on page 26 with exercise A. The exercise has a small snippet of text from the same novel revealing the ending. No female characters turn up in the ending either.

Diversity is also lacking in chapter 3 *A Change Is Gonna Come* in *Open Road 4*. The chapter presents the theme of politics and human rights by introducing Martin Luther King’s speech *I have a dream* and quotes from Barack Obama’s *Dreams from My Father*. These two men are unquestionably important figures in American political history and have had a huge impact on people’s lives in the United States. Therefore, including them in the book is justifiable. However, only two women out of 15 political characters are introduced on page 37 in exercise I. It would be good to mention that there were many men and women who fought for their rights and some who even lost their lives in the battles.

Open Road 4, chapter 6 *The Seven Deadly Sins* presents seven stories that are old teachings collected from different parts of the world passed from one generation to another. According to the book these Christian teachings were used to educate and instruct followers. One of the stories goes as follows:

(11) A beautiful young Japanese woman in a kimono stood there waiting to get to the other side was afraid of the currents. - - - ‘As Buddhist monks, we have taken vows not to look on a woman, much less touch her body. Back there by the river you did both.’

There are a couple of issues with this snippet. First, the Japanese woman is described being afraid. Women, not men, are often described in such manner. Women are thought to be weaker, less able

and more emotional than men. To be afraid is considered to be “normal” behavior while if a man is afraid, he is a “pussy” or a “sissy”, less of a man. All the other stories in chapter 6 have all male characters.

There is an illustration of Christopher Lee as Dracula and a woman is represented as his helpless victim in *Open Road 5*, chapter 1 *Fantastic Faces of Film*. What makes matters worse is that Christopher Lee's name is given under the illustration but the female actor is not mentioned. Men are more often given bigger roles in movies and they get paid more than women. Women are cast in supporting roles and often only act a role that is somehow connected to the main male character either as his wife, girlfriend, mother or sister, for example. The authors of *Open Road 5* choose to maintain this division of roles by not giving the female actor the recognition she deserves.

Chapter 2 *Die Another Day* in *Open Road 5* presents again, more men. The chapter is dedicated to the James Bond movie franchise. The text in chapter 2 is adapted from an article by Roger Moore for *The Times*. Roger Moore, who has played James Bond discusses the several actors that have taken upon the role of James Bond. The text in itself does not have gender bias but the problem is, again, in the authors' choice to include this text in the book. While the previous chapter has already mentioned famous males from the movie industry it would only be reasonable to dedicate a chapter to females. Not one of the chapters in book 5 have women in the centre of focus.

Men are the centre of focus also in chapter 3 *The Perfect Biscuit Tin* in *Open Road 5*. This becomes a theme in the fifth book. An extract taken from Iain Pears' novel *The Portrait* focuses on prestigious titles handed to men, not women.

(12) Henry MacAlpine, one of the hottest new artists in early twentieth-century London and William Nasmyth, an influential art critic.

Chapter 4 *Truth Is The First Casualty* in *Open Road 5* provides more men. It discusses Robert Capa, a photographer who became famous with his shot of a falling soldier in 1936. While Capa's influence on photography was huge I am sure, there are many female photographers who deserve recognition and could have been chosen for this chapter of the book. The authors' intentions, however, are unclear whether the point of the fifth book was to intentionally introduce important men through different industries.

Open Road 5 contains underrepresentation of women. Chapter 5 *Literary Circles* differs from the other chapters in the fifth book as it does not present a text for the students to read but it directs the

students to organize a book club of sorts in the classroom. The first half of the chapter presents five short stories by five different authors and the students' job is to read the stories and then discuss them in class. Only one of the five authors is a woman. Also, this marks the half way point of *Open Road 5* and only one woman has been mentioned.

Lack of women is clear in chapter 9 *Jean Sibelius: A Reminiscence* in *Open Road 5*. The text tells the tale of the composer Jean Sibelius by the words of Eugene Ormandy, an American conductor and violinist. The final chapter of the book does not have any women in it either. The contents of the text do have gender bias in itself but rather, the choice of an influential male figure instead of a woman represents gender bias. The illustrations associated with the chapter are mainly of male musicians and composers. Even an exercise on page 99 where students have to fill in missing musical words in to sentences, the majority of the sentences have men as doers.

(13) My dad plays the tuba, my uncle plays the trombone, my cousin plays the French horn and I play the trumpet, and we all belong to brass band, which is called *Torvikopla*.

Her father is an organist. He can also play the harpsichord and other keyboard instruments.

The best male voice choir in this country is probably *Ylioppilaskunnan laulajat*.

It is clear from the examples that *Open Road 5* has a significant overrepresentation of men in social positions of value.

Open Road 6 chapter 9 *What I Believe But Cannot Prove* asks scientific questions.

(14) What roles does intuition and belief play in scientific enquiry? The Edge Foundation asked some of the world's leading minds what they believe but cannot prove.

All of these "leading minds" are men. They are Karl Sabbagh, Todd Feinber, and John Horgan. These examples neglect women and depict the world as a place where only men can be called "the leading minds." Women in science are rare. Even rarer are women in higher positions no matter the work field. According to Manfredi (2017), in the UK, women represent over 54% of the total workforce in the Higher Education sector but still only 20% of them are in Vice-Chancellor and Principal roles. Across Europe only 15% of rectors are women. Manfredi (2017) states that there are invisible barriers which prevent women from progressing into senior roles. The invisible barriers include "a gendered construction of leadership, the impact of cognitive bias, which results in women being constantly judged less favourably than men and accumulate disadvantage throughout their career" (Manfredi, 2017, p. 1). Women are also more likely to experience sex discrimination and harassment in the work place.

The first chapter in *Open Road 7, A night in the Woods*, is a story by Bill Bryson describing two boys on a camping trip in the woods. The boys are woken up in the middle of the night by strange noises, possibly a bear. Camping is a relatively stereotypical activity for boys specifically. More interesting though, is the relationship between the two boys. Bryson is described "hysterical" and "frantic" when he is simply afraid of a possible bear attack. The other boy Stephen is calm and not frightened at all.

(15) What are you doing, Bryson? Just leave it alone and it will go away.

How can you be so calm?

What do you want me to do? You're hysterical enough for both of us.

If boys or men are scared they are labelled hysterical or "pussies". So, men are supposed to be tough, courageous and afraid of nothing. In a potentially scary situation they are expected to be the heroes and the protectors. Any other kind of behaviour is considered weak.

More men in important positions can be found in chapter 6 *Ultimatum* in *Open Road 7*. The text presents an excerpt from a novel by the same name by Matthew Glass. The story takes place in 2033 when a landmark agreement on climate change is to be signed by the Chinese and the Americans. All of the characters in the story are men. This can be assumed by listening to the audio tape for chapter 6. The characters are ministers, presidents, government official and other politically important people in leading work positions. This begs the question of why none of these characters could have been women. Women are seldom in high status positions whether that is in politics or other work places. To this day women do not have the same opportunities when moving on in their career as men do. Therefore, the lack of female characters in the story recreate the problems of today's society.

Open road 4 chapter 1 *A Finn from Afar* exercise *News of the World* has eight news reports and the seventh one discusses male drivers:

(16) The mayor of Bogota, Antanas Mockus, may try banning male drivers to see if it cuts accidents and "road rage".

This sort of information denies women being a possible part of the problem of having road accidents. Gender has nothing to do with one's behavior on the road. Certainly, news reports should not make such assumptions. They simply bring objective information to people. At least, this is what is expected of them.

For the most part book 7 takes more of a scientific approach, so there is not much room for stories per say. The lack of stories therefore lead to a more objective, fact-based view of the world, although some instances of gender bias are found. All in all, many instances of stereotypical gender roles are given to the characters in the textbooks. In addition, more men appear in important roles and in roles that carry value. Sexualization and objectification is the next theme under discussion.

4.4 Sexualization and objectification

Fasoli, Durante, Mari, Zogmaister and Volpato (2018) describe sexualization as a focus on the sexual appeal of a person whose value is solely based on her/his sexiness. Another term that can be used is objectification which Fasoli et al. (2018) define as reducing a person to a body and treating her/him as an object. Her or his mind and personality is denied and the person becomes passive and an instrument for other's satisfaction. Fasoli et al. (2018) point out that sexualization can result in dehumanization, perceiving women and men as less competent and intelligent among other things. The results of their study showed that an increase in the level of sexualization led to an increase in the perception of the female targets as sexual objects. Sexualization of men may be signaled through a focus on body parts. Specific focus is paid to muscularity. Portraying men as fit and muscular is a way to emphasize masculinity and dominance (Fasoli et al., 2018).

In *Open Road 5* Dracula and vampires in films are discussed in chapter 1 called *Fantastic Faces of Film*. Although it is good that two female characters are mentioned, *Buffy the vampire slayer*, and *Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter*, they are both sexualized.

(17) In Laurell K. Hamilton's *Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter* series, Blake – despite her job-description – seems to spend as much time in bed with vampire-lovers as she does fighting the creatures of the night, and the same may be said of the wildly successful television heroine *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

It seems as if these two women are judged for being sexually active, something that men would never be judged for. In fact, men are encouraged to be active. The chapter mentions nothing about the male characters' sexuality.

Chapter 6 *The Book Thief in a Room of Plenty* in *Open Road 5* presents an example of describing women by their physical features. One of the women is described by her physical features and vulnerability. Women are often described as small, weak and vulnerable. A man would never be compared to the size of a doorway, for instance.

(18) When she came and stood with an impossibly frail steadfastness, she was holding a tower of books against her stomach, from her navel to her the beginnings of her breasts. She looked so vulnerable in the monstrous doorway.

Open Road 4 chapter 6 *The Seven Deadly Sins* presents the seven sins and each sin is introduced with the help of short stories. In one of the stories two monks are described as crossing a river when they see a Japanese woman trying to cross the river as well. Later, they talk about her:

(19) I have a bone to pick with you. As Buddhist monks, we have taken vows not to look on a woman, much less touch her body. Back there by the river you did both.

The first monk said: "My brother, I put that woman down on the other side of the river. You're still carrying her in your mind."

The Japanese woman is sexualized and objectified. She is not seen as a human but as an object of lust. The other monk is described as only wanting and thinking about sex. The generalization that all men want sex no matter the hour is sexist. None of the other short stories in the chapter have female characters, so, the only representation of a woman in the chapter is a sexual one. Women are traditionally marginalized in religious circles and this chapter seems to make no exception to the status quo. Men also are depicted in a very narrow manner.

Open Road 1 chapter 4 *Every Shoe Tells a Story* has a listening exercise 4I called *Who's got the looks*. The exercise contains a text about men's fashion throughout the years. The students are asked to match a description of a man to a corresponding picture. The beginning of the tape script goes as follows:

(20) We've all drooled over the latest hot guy, and been driven crazy by the season's sexy studs. But what exactly is it that makes a guy gorgeous? Well, that rather depends on when and where you're looking.

This snippet sexualizes men. It describes them as objects rather than human beings. A person's looks should not make a difference in the way she or he is treated and perceived. As Fasoli, Durante, Mari and Volpato (2018) define it, sexualization happens when the focus is on the sexual appeal of a person. The second paragraph makes matters worse:

(21) Way back in the 18th century BC, the men of Crete were not quite the stallions that we admire today. Instead they were slim and emphasized their thin waists with broad leather belts. To top it all off, they were in the habit of shaving off all their bodily hair.

Describing today's men as "stallions" who are admired adds to the pressure of men that they should be very muscular but maintain small body fat at the same time. This type of labelling takes away from men that are not muscular nor slim. Discourses in school books should not discuss appearances. The third paragraph goes as follows:

(22) -- but what about the Egyptian ladies' man? Well, back in ancient Egypt, your real hottie was bald and clean-shaven, and would line his eyes and eyelids with a black dye.

This describes men as sexual beings whose only goal is to "get" as many women as possible. It puts pressure on men to achieve the attention of women, particularly in a sexual manner. This type of discourse enforces traditional gender roles for men and might make female students think it is acceptable to pressure men conform to these norms (Brinkman et al., 2016).

A woman is sexualized in *Open Road 4*, chapter 6. The listening exercise *Creation stories* includes three creation stories collected from around the world. The second story is from India and it describes how God made a man called moon and sent him to heaven.

(23) At the end of her two years, Morningstar returned to the heavens to live there forever. Again Moon wept in his loneliness. God offered him another wife, but he warned Moon that this time the husband would die after two years. Thus Eveningstar came to live with Moon. When they first made love, she gave birth to goats and sheep and cows on the next day. On the day after that, she gave birth to the antelopes and birds. On the third day, boys and girls were born. Moon wanted to sleep again with Eveningstar, but God warned him that he should not. He did so, however, and on the next day Eveningstar gave birth to the lions, the leopards, the snakes, and the scorpions that plague humankind because Moon ignored the warning. As Moon's daughters grew up, they became beautiful, and he wanted to sleep with them, too. He did so, and they had many children.

Again, a man is depicted as wanting to sleep with multiple women. The only task assigned to the wives is becoming pregnant and giving birth to the babies. Sex is not discussed from the perspective of enjoyment or pleasure. The discourse gives the image that sex's only task is reproduction.

In *Open Road 4* chapter 9 exercise 9H consists of six dialogues always between a man and a woman. In the second dialogue the man and woman are talking about underwear and how a company has made a way to produce ecological products. The woman says that she is wearing these ecological pair of underwear as they are talking and the man's response is:

(24) Well, I never! Any chance I might take a look at them any time soon...?

This kind of discourse sexualizes the woman. It also creates the image that all this man thinks about is sex. As if when a man is in the company of a woman, he cannot see her as anything else than an object. This rather simplifies men. The final theme discussed in the analysis is language.

4.5 Language

One example of sexist language was found in the research materials. *Open Road 7* chapter 8, listening exercise 8G *Cowboy laughs* has four snippets that are stories about cowboys. All of the stories have “a cowboy” as the main character without a name given but the cowboy is always referred to as “he”.

(25) A cowboy stood leaning on a fence he was mending. He watched as a red sports car came over the top of a hill and followed the road up to the spot where he stood. The driver pulled over to the side of the road and called out to the cowboy.

English is muchly a biased language in the way its speakers use it and this is evident in the use of pronouns. Interestingly, boats and ships are referred to using the feminine pronoun “she”. This stems from the fact that boat owners and sea goers have been largely male in the past and their boats and ships are their possession, just how before women were thought of as property of men. The next section showcases examples that broke stereotypes, traditional ways of describing men and women and gender bias.

5. Breaking the stereotypes

This section is dedicated to the findings from the *Open Road* textbook series that broke sexism and gender stereotypes and were not gender biased. The results are discussed example by example. *Open Road 6* the first chapter *A British Pound Coin* makes a promising start to the book with a story of a sixteen-year-old Nigerian girl, Little Bee, who is seeking asylum in the UK. The text is an extract from *The Other Hand* by Chris Cleave and is told in first person narrative by Little Bee. The text is witty and portrays Little Bee as a strong girl taking joy out of a difficult situation.

(26) Most days I wish I was a British pound coin instead of an African girl. Everyone would be pleased to see me coming. Maybe I would visit with you for the weekend and then suddenly, because I am fickle like that, I would visit with the man from the corner shop instead - -

Little Bee's character is one of the few female main characters in the book series and it is a very positive finding that she is portrayed as clever and strong spirited.

Another good example of a strong woman as the main character can be found in *Open Road 4* chapter 9 *Human Trafficking*. It discusses people fighting against human trafficking. The text is from an article by William Finnegan in *The New Yorker*. The text explains Stella Rotaru's work as a repatriation specialist, she brings lost Moldivians home. Also, the chapter discusses an important issue that people need to be aware of and more work should be done to set things right. By creating awareness things can change.

Chapter 7 *Maryam's Marriage* in *Open Road 4* brings forth arranged marriage and forced marriage. While the main text in the chapter has a quite positive outlook on arranged marriage, exercise F on page 81 is a reading exercise and the text is about forced marriage.

(27) Consider this: 33 percent of women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in their lifetime. One of the most brutal forms of abuse is the practice of forced marriage.

If the reading of this exercise is combined with discussing forced marriage further in class with the teacher's lead, chapter 7 fights against gender bias and sexism in textbooks. Creating awareness is an essential task for schools.

Open Road 2 chapter 6 *A Wave of Sound* sets an example of not describing a girl by her features and therefore, it does not sexualize her. The main text is an extract from *Halway House* by Katherine Noel. The text revolves around an 18-year-old Angie and her parents as she is about to compete in a

swimming race. Unlike in some other examples found throughout the *Open Road* books, Angie's body is not described in a sexual manner, in fact, her looks are not described at all. The only focus is in the sport of swimming and how Angie's parents are supportive of their daughter. Swimming is a fairly gender neutral hobby around the world, although a slightly larger amount of men might be represented in news, for example. Therefore, it is important that the text has a female character.

Open Road 3 chapter 5 *Interviews Made Easy* exercise part 3 5A is a listening exercise with a dialogue between "Spike", a boy who is applying for college, and an interviewer. "Spike" is interested in studying literature as his major.

(28) Spike: Well, apart from my interest in the city, I'm particularly interested in the Modern Language course that you offer. It's very much the sort of study programme that I was looking for.

Interviewer 1: And what is it about the programme that interests you?

Spike: I think that of all the language courses I've looked into, this one seems to be the most contemporary. I particularly like the look of the Multiculturalism in Modern France module.

Reading and having an interest in literature are stereotypically thought of as feminine hobbies. There are more female students in the Humanities compared to the technical fields. This exercise shows the versatility that exists in society.

Open Road 4 chapter 3, listening exercise 3G *St Louis Blues* is dedicated to the adopted story of Era Rose Rodosta by Carolyn Brasher. Era is a sad lonely girl who grows up to be the exact opposite:

(29) By ninth grade she was changing. The sniffing stopped. Her legs became long, and she was becoming thin and curvaceous – all hidden under those still-horrible clothes. Every now and then, she did a thing or two with her hair, and even applied occasional lipstick. She was enveloped in velvet skin, and her ash-brown hair was heavy and shiny. I noticed her name on the lists of art clubs I was too busy to join; then one day I saw her leave an art room actually walking and talking with someone.

Era's story sets the example that women and girls are strong and capable of doing everything they desire. Against stereotypes the story does not depict Era as weak, dependent nor small.

Chapter 7 in *Open Road 4* has an oral exercise for the students in the teacher's file. The students have a piece of text each and they have to fill in the text according to what their partner reads out loud to them. The texts deal with the Islamic revolution and women and Islam in Iran.

(30) The revolution promoted the segregation of sexes, and women caught by revolutionary officials could be subject to virginity tests. Or, if they were not wearing the ‘hijab’, the veil covering their body except their hands and face, they could be punished. After the revolution, the marriage age for girls was lowered to nine years old.

This exercise is very educational about women’s rights, or rather, the lack there of in specific societies. Younger people might not be aware of how things are outside Finland, so it is the very meaning of education and schooling to create awareness and bring knowledge to students.

Open Road 7 chapter 7, listening exercise 7G *Unexpected heroes* offers an example of a woman in a valued job. It tells the story of Cheung Yan who founded Nine Dragons, probably the largest paper-recycling business in the world. As the amount of women in high job positions and as leaders in the *Open Road* books is very small, this example of Cheung Yan is welcomed. Also, she is not only the leader of the company, but also, she started the business from the beginning on her own. It is an encouraging example for the female students.

Open Road 6 chapter 5 *Media Watch* talks all things media and makes the students work in small groups on media research projects. One of the topics of discussion is gender roles in the mass media. The page provides the students with five questions that the students can use as a guide of their discussion. The questions include, for instance:

(31) Start off by getting two large pieces of blank paper for your group. Write ‘act like a man’ on one, and on the other, write ‘be ladylike’. Then brainstorm on each piece of paper the kind of behavior that is *traditionally* expected of people in order to earn respect as either a man or a woman.

Why are stereotypes useful for the producers of mass media content? Stereotypes seem to be particularly common in adverts – why is this?

Nowhere else in *Open Road 6* are stereotypes or questions of equality brought up. However, I used the *Open Road* book series when I was in high school myself and I do not remember that this chapter would have been dealt with in class. Teachers have the freedom of deciding how the books are used in teaching and they can leave out what they wish. This exercise would be very beneficial for the students to do because it forces the students to think about the things they are surrounded by daily and it challenges them to possibly start thinking differently and not just go by the status quo. These are positive examples of the *Open Road* series that show the diversity that is in society. The examples, however, are mostly of girls and women doing “masculine” things. There could still be

more diverse ways of portraying men and boys, too. The last chapter of this thesis presents the discussion from this research.

6. Discussion

The final section presents the discussion and conclusions drawn from the analysis. Gender bias and sexism in textbooks have long been researched and hit a new speed after the second wave of feminism. Previous studies have found an overrepresentation of men and theme of describing both men and women in traditional activities and social roles. This paper aimed to reveal the themes that emerged from the *Open Road* textbooks and reveal a possible gender bias. Unlike much of previous research, this paper paid attention to how men are described and depicted as well. It is important since gender equality does not put women before men. Neither should it mean that women's treatment in textbooks should be investigated more than men's. The *Open Road* textbooks presented an overrepresentation of men as characters and in the illustrations. The majority of the authors that offered their work for the textbooks were also male. It is possible that the lack of female authors had an effect on the types of stories and texts that were chosen for the textbooks. However, the process that goes into selecting the texts for learning materials is not familiar to me. Therefore, I cannot say what the ideas behind choosing each text are. I would guess that more attention is paid to the texts themselves than to the authors of these texts. In other words, who the author is (their gender and so on), does not concern the *Open Road* authors. It is also possible that they pay no mind to the fact that maybe they should also take into account the gender. The gender does matter. Students see the names and pictures of the authors on the pages of books. They might not pay attention to them consciously but the information might affect them unconsciously.

Stereotypical activities was not as big of a theme in the *Open Road* series as has been found in other studies. The amount of extreme examples was, perhaps, smaller. By extreme, I mean overly traditionally colored hobbies assigned for men and women. For example, the books did not have an entire chapter about shopping with only female characters with the colours of the pages being pink. Nor was there a blue colored chapter about boys playing soccer, for instance. However, examples of girls shopping and boys playing video games were found. Another visible theme was social roles. The male and female characters were often divided by their behavior such as crying which was only performed by girls and women and men having "tough" jobs such as plumbing. It is necessary to have children's and youngster's textbooks that represent reality. The reality where women work as plumbers and men are emotional. Or, that women can be in executive job positions and men can be stay-at-home fathers.

The theme of sexualization was quite new in the context of children's textbooks in my study. Both men and women were discussed in a sexual manner a few times and the characters' value was indeed only sexual. Their looks were described sexually and one exercise (*Open Road 1* chapter 4

exercise 4I *Who's got the looks*) even described how a man *should* look to catch the attention of the opposite sex. Women in particular are very sexualized in today's society, whether it is in commercials, TV shows, movies, games or apps. Men's sexualization is of how society and media pressures them to be "studs" and maintain a muscular physique. If they are not constantly sexually active, they are less manly. This, at least, is the heteronormative way of thinking. The textbooks depicted both men and women in traditional social roles. The depiction of men in socially important positions was evident. The books create small hope for girls to pursue careers of high value such as president, an inventor or a professional athlete.

Children's textbooks and learning materials should be researched in the future as well because studies are needed to reveal possible gender prejudice and traditional stereotypes of men and women. Future research should also investigate how men are portrayed in the discourses more than the present research does. I think teachers play a big role in fighting against stereotypes by creating awareness and discussing these themes with their students. Teachers should be critical toward the teaching materials they are provided with and as a community they can have an influence. A more diverse group of people should produce textbooks in the future.

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