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Gender Inequality in Arabic Textbook: Misrepresentation of Women in Culture and Society

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Abstract

The composition of the *Al- 'Arabiyyatu baina Yadaika (ABY)* Arabic language textbook perpetuates gender inequality. This textbook not only constitutes language elements but also incorporates texts and illustrations that depict gender dynamics. This research examines the representation of gender imbalance in the composition of the textbook, including its contents and illustrations, and analyzes the portrayal of gender roles as depicted in the textbook's examples. The study is founded on data gathered from reviewing, recording, and analyzing the textbook, with consideration given to gender relationships. The focal point of this research analysis is the *ABY* textbook, tailored for non-native Arabic speakers. The findings of the study reveal that the construction of the Arabic language textbook perpetuates a gender-unbalanced representation in both the text and visual depictions of males and females. This study advocates for the development of language textbooks that promote gender equality and fairness in their social and cultural elements.

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1. Introduction

Textbooks remain a prevalent means by which teachers impart course material, including language instruction. The process of language teaching goes beyond merely transmitting symbols and linguistic structures and encompasses internalizing the culture of the language's native speakers, in this particular case, Arabic. As a crucial aspect of language education, textbooks play a significant role in shaping perceptions around gender imbalance. *ABY* textbook is one of the most widely used Arabic books by non-Arab students in Indonesia. The content, structure, themes, and visualizations present in Arabic language textbooks inevitably reflect the social and cultural ideologies of the language's native speakers (Tyarakanita et al., 2021). These textbooks can convey values such as religious values, social values, and cultural values, which can then affect students' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors with regard to certain gender identities (Al-Qatawneh & Al Rawashdeh, 2019). The depiction of unequal relationships between males and females, as portrayed through the text, illustrations, and presentation of gender roles in textbooks, often reflects a skewed distribution of male and female representation. As such, there is a risk that students internalize discriminatory cultural attitudes through their language education via such textbooks. Language education through textbooks can serve as a means to impart cultural norms and shape one's overall perception of the world (Pishghadam et al., 2020), including their perception of women. Therefore, language plays the main function in society, where the way of life of a people is handed down from generation to generation through language (Oboko, 2020).

To date, the examination of gender representation in the construction of textbooks has revealed three distinct tendencies. To begin, there is a trend in textbooks that shows a dominant representation of women (Nagatomo, 2010; Parham, 2013; Setyono, 2018). The construction of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks reveals that women have equal visibility in conversational examples regarding the number of interlocutors, number of turns, and length of turns. However, in these examples, women appear to initiate conversations more often, accounting for 30% more than men (Nagatomo, 2010). Some discourses that emerge

in such textbooks represent constructive images of women (Setyono, 2018). Additionally, in BIPA (Bahasa Indonesian untuk Penutur Asing, or Indonesian for Foreign Speakers) textbooks, women's roles are more dominant compared to men's (Susanto, 2021). The second tendency displays a dominance of male stereotypes compared to women in textbooks (Bataneh, 2020; Esmaili & Arabmofrad, 2015; Izzuddin et al., 2021; Sulaimani, 2017). The examples in such textbooks display more men, with higher activities, compared to women (Esmaili & Arabmofrad, 2015). In line with this, this tendency shows how women are underrepresented in textbooks, being excluded from half of the units in the textbooks. Although both genders are positioned in the same subjects and content, women are less frequently characterized than men (Sulaimani, 2017). The third tendency displays textbooks that depict gender equality (Ghajarieh & Salami, 2016; Kayed et al., 2020; Maslihah, 2018). In this case, English language textbooks depict equality between men and women in terms of representation, visibility, activity, and role (Kayed et al., 2020). Similar findings also show the absence of gender discrimination in the teaching material for Arabic at elementary schools in Indonesia (Maslihah, 2018). Furthermore, stereotypes of gender are no longer found in English language textbooks used for instruction in Indonesia (Maufiroh & Lukmana, 2020).

Previous studies have examined the representation of gender equality and inequality in language instructional textbooks. This research endeavors to map the effects of gender imbalance on the depiction of women in Arabic language textbooks intended for non-Arabic speaking individuals. The relationship between language and culture is pronounced in Arabic language textbooks, reflecting the status of women in the prevalent Arab cultural framework. To explore this issue, the study poses two questions: 1) How is gender inequality portrayed in the textual representation of Arabic language teaching materials, and 2) How is gender inequality portrayed in the visual aspects of these teaching materials?

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Gender Inequality

Gender inequality refers to the unequal distribution of power and resources between

men and women and is a result of both cultural and structural factors (Jolidon, 2022). This inequality can affect both men and women, though it tends to be more pronounced for women in their daily lives (Farré et al., 2022). The root cause of gender inequality is not biological but rather arises from societal constructs that view men as inherently holding more authority compared to women (Jaim, 2022). These societal beliefs and constructs are institutionalized and shape individual experiences of inequality (Auguste, 2022). The perpetuation of gender inequality is influenced by various factors, including religious beliefs, cultural norms, and the actions of community institutions (Attoh, 2017; Bui et al., 2018; Lindsay, 2015; Mshweshwe, 2020; Shastri et al., 2021; Sudarso et al., 2019).

Gender inequality has far-reaching consequences on the relationships between individuals of different genders in various aspects of social life (Adisa et al., 2019; Nguyen, 2022). These consequences include the subordination, stereotyping, and discrimination of both men and women. Subordination, for instance, is reflected in political exclusion, where women are marginalized in their roles and positions due to societal beliefs that restrict their participation in domestic spheres (Khelghat-Doost & Sibly, 2020). Additionally, Kern-Goldberger et al. (2022) posit that gender inequality also influences stereotyping, as seen in scientific publications where authorship bias affects the acceptance of articles, with the chances of acceptance being dependent on the gender of the author in a particular field of study. The acceptance rate of scientific articles in the field of midwifery, for instance, is known to be relatively high when the authors are women. Furthermore, gender inequality is manifested in the unequal distribution of workload and wages, with women often receiving lower pay compared to their male counterparts (Mun & Kodama, 2022). Thus, it is evident that gender inequality has a significant impact on the lives of both men and women.

2.2. Misrepresentation

Misrepresentation is characterized as a deceptive portrayal that results from a flawed or inaccurate representation of information on one side of a particular issue (Guasti & de Almeida, 2019). This type of misrepresentation has the potential to engender widespread

misunderstanding and fear in public (Pillay, 2020; Robinson et al., 2019). False information conveyed in this manner can cause harm by perpetuating misunderstandings among the general population (Martin et al., 2021). In the realm of written works, misrepresentation can be viewed as an explanation that generates a negative perception through reading (Boutron & Ravaud, 2018). Within the framework of gender, misrepresentation stems from socio-cultural phenomena and can be addressed by raising awareness of the issues of gender misrepresentation, violence, and inequality through symbolic capital (Fernández, 2018). Furthermore, instances of misrepresentation related to gender equality have been observed in religious institutions (Chawla & Sharma, 2019; Leung et al., 2020; Mustofa et al., 2021).

The misrepresentation of women is a result of the persistent disparity in the allocation of economic, legal, social, and political rights (Al-Tarawneh, 2022). Historical and theoretical analyses reveal the pervasive perception of women as inferior, which has translated into a weakened standing for women in both discourse and practice (Celis & Childs, 2020). Despite the important roles and contributions of women, their experiences and perspectives are frequently distorted or ignored, leading to negative consequences for gender equality (Hagos, 2018). Women are often portrayed as mere “companions” to their husbands or as objects serving male satisfaction (Aziz et al., 2020). This exacerbation of unequal sociological perspectives further perpetuates the legal disparities that negatively impact women, making the misrepresentation of women an obstacle in the quest for justice and perpetuating the cycle of women’s dependence and vulnerability (Ponthieux & Meurs, 2015).

2.3. Arabic Language Textbooks

The advancement of technology has facilitated greater flexibility for teachers and students in obtaining learning resources. However, despite the plethora of resources available, traditional textbooks still remain the primary choice among educators for imparting knowledge (Saparini et al., 2021). As noted by William Francis Mackey, a good textbook must meet four criteria, which include selection, gradation, presentation, and repetition (Mulyani, 2020). Additionally, textbooks serve as a valuable source of character education, incorporating

relevant concepts without the need for separate subjects (Fitriyah et al., 2017). As stated by Mansur Muslich (cited by Roviin, 2018), textbooks are an essential guide for students, enabling them to gain a broader understanding of the world. Ramah and Rohman (2018) add that textbooks also hold sway over the field of science, as they impart knowledge in the form of understanding, behavior, and skills, all of which are critical for achieving academic proficiency standards (Zamzami & Syamsyiah, 2020). One particular area where textbooks serve as a crucial reference is in the learning of the Arabic language. It is imperative that Arabic textbooks receive due consideration, as high-quality teaching materials can greatly enhance the success of language acquisition (Ritonga, 2021).

The intricate grammatical structure of the Arabic language presents a challenge for students to comprehend written and spoken language effectively and accurately (Bahrudin & Halomoan, 2019; Muliensyah & Baroroh, 2020). This difficulty is compounded by the scarcity of Arabic language textbooks that are tailored to the needs of learners (Jamil & Agung, 2019). Additionally, Fauzi and Zakiyah (2021) have observed that the predominant focus on discussion in the study of Arabic often overlooks other crucial elements of language acquisition, resulting in concerns about the inadequacy of Arabic language education in adapting to the evolving landscape of education. In an effort to address these challenges, Nasution & Walad (2022) devised a constructivism-based Arabic textbook, which was demonstrated to have a positive impact on improving writing skills. Hence, there remains a requirement for the continued development of Arabic language learning materials to facilitate the acquisition of this complex language.

3. Methodology

3.1. Materials

Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, this paper explores the relationship between the construction of Arabic language teaching textbooks and the cultural internalization of gender inequality. The main focus of the analysis is the Arabic language learning textbook, *Al-'Arabiyyatu baina Yadaika (ABY)*, which literally means "Arabic before you". The book — comprising

three volumes, each consisting of two books (A & B) — is authored by three highly competent experts in Arabic language teaching for non-Arabic speakers: Abdurrahman bin Ibrahim al-Fauzan, Mukhtar Thahir Husain, and Muhammad Abdul Kholiq Muhammad Fadhal. *ABY* is published by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and is widely used in Indonesian educational institutions, including universities and Islamic boarding schools. The authors of *ABY* have conducted workshops on its use, making the book a core resource for millions of Arabic language learners in Indonesia.

This research is confined to the *ABY* textbook series, specifically books 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B, published in 2014 (second printing). The study data encompasses textual content, dialogues, and visual elements that embody the cultural and social relationships that distinguish male and female activities and tendencies. The collected information was utilized to examine the correlation between the composition of Arabic language textbooks and the occurrence of gender disparity and misrepresentation of women.

3.2. Procedure

This study commenced by conducting a thorough examination of the four *ABY* books, examining each page, theme, text, linguistic choices, character roles, and visual representation. This stage was undertaken to uncover data that indicated a skewed cultural transmission of gender roles. Subsequently, the data was collected from the textbooks by documenting relevant variables. This process involved the categorization and organization of textual and visual content based on themes. Through these stages, the research aimed to attain a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter under investigation.

The collected data underwent a three-step analysis process comprising data condensation, data representation, and data inference (Miles & Huberman, 1994). During the data condensation phase, the data was structured and organized into themes, both in the form of text, dialogues, and visual elements. Coding was used to simplify the categorization process. In the second phase, the data were presented graphically and in a table format, with accompanying clear descriptions. This representation serves as a sample of the comprehensive data found in the

books. Finally, the data inference phase was carried out to draw conclusions about the construction of the Arabic language books and their contribution to perpetuating gender inequality and the misrepresentation of women. These analysis techniques and stages were implemented to arrive at conclusions about the study's main topic.

4. Results

The evidence of gender inequality in the composition of the four *ABY* books can be seen through both the written text, such as dialogues and narratives, and visual elements. The portrayal of gender roles and language usage in the dialogues and narratives highlight this tendency. The visual elements serve to complement and reinforce the vocabulary, context, and nature of the activities portrayed.

Additionally, the unequal representation of female and male characters in the text and illustrations demonstrates the gender inequality and misrepresentation of women.

4.1. Gender Inequality in Textual Constructions

The textual construction of dialogues in the books reveals a pattern of gender segregation, where male characters engage in conversations exclusively with other male characters, and female characters only interact with other female characters. Cross-gender dialogues are limited to familial relationships, such as between husbands and wives and parents and children. There is no representation of dialogues between individuals of different genders in any other context. These tendencies are demonstrated in Figure 1.

Text 1 (Book 1A, p. 82)	Text 2 (Book 1A, p. 84)	Text 3 (Book 1A, p. 192)
<p>الرجول الثاني ، أنظر واستمع وأعد.</p>  <p>طارق : منى تشققت ؟ طارق : الشققت بجد الفجر ؟</p>  <p>طارق : أين تمشي الفجر ؟ طارق : أصلي الفجر في المسجد .</p>  <p>طارق : هل تقرأ بعد الصلاة ؟ طارق : لا ، لا أقرأ بعد الصلاة .</p>  <p>طارق : ماذا تفعل بعد الصلاة ؟ طارق : أقرأ القرآن .</p>  <p>طارق : ومن تذهب إلى المدرسة ؟ طارق : أذهب الشابة الصغيرة .</p>  <p>طارق : هل تذهب بالمسيرة ؟ طارق : لا ، أذهب بالحافلة .</p>	<p>الرجول الثاني ، أنظر واستمع وأعد.</p>  <p>الأم : هذا يوم العطلة . الأب : هذا يوم العمل .</p>  <p>الأم : ماذا ستفعل يا طارق ؟ طارق : سأفعل غرفة الجلوس .</p>  <p>الأم : وماذا ستفعلين يا فاطمة ؟ فاطمة : سأفعل غرفة النوم .</p>  <p>الأم : وماذا ستفعلين يا أحمد ؟ أحمد : سأفعل الملابس .</p>  <p>الأم : وماذا ستفعلين يا لطيفة ؟ لطيفة : سأفعل الملابس .</p>  <p>الجد : وأنا سأفعل الأطباق . الجد : وأنا سأقرأ القرآن .</p>	<p>الرجول الثاني ، أنظر واستمع وأعد.</p>  <p>العميد الأول : ماذا ستفعل بعد الدراسة ؟ العميد الثاني : أنا أدرس الطب في كلية الطب . العميد الثالث : أنا أدرس الشريعة في كلية الشريعة . سأفعل محاضراتي . إن شاء الله .</p>  <p>العميد الرابع : أنا أدرس التمريض في كلية التمريض . سأفعل ممرضاً . إن شاء الله .</p>  <p>العميد الخامس : أنا أدرس الهندسة في كلية الهندسة . سأفعل مهندساً . إن شاء الله .</p>  <p>العميد السادس : أنا أدرس الطيران في كلية الطيران . سأفعل طياراً . إن شاء الله .</p>  <p>العميد الأول : أنا أدرس التربية في كلية التربية . سأفعل مدرساً . إن شاء الله .</p>
Text 4 (Book 1A, p. 166)	Text 5 (Book 1B, p. 352)	Text 6 (Book 1B, p. 350)
<p>الرجول الثاني ، أنظر واستمع وأعد.</p>  <p>ندى : السلام عليكم . إمام : وعليكم السلام .</p>  <p>ندى : إسمي ندى . أنا سورية . إمام : إسمي إمام . أنا سورية .</p>  <p>ندى : أنا طالبة في جامعة دمشق . إمام : أنا طالبة في جامعة أم القرى .</p>  <p>ندى : هي أي كلية تدرسين ؟ إمام : أدرس في كلية التربية . ندى : وهي أي كلية تدرسين أنت ؟ ندى : أدرس في كلية الطب .</p>  <p>إمام : سأفعل ممرضاً . إن شاء الله . ندى : وسأفعل طبيبة . إن شاء الله .</p>	<p>الرجول الثاني ، أنظر واستمع وأعد.</p>  <p>السوقف : هذا وسفلا . السفارة : ففدت خففتي .</p>  <p>السوقف : من أين أنت طارق ؟ السفارة : أنا هادم من سفلاتي .</p>  <p>السوقف : أين العزوة وإن الذبوة ؟ السفارة : هذا هو العزوة وهو من الذبوة .</p>  <p>السوقف : ما تدرى الخفبة ؟ السفارة : أدرى أيتها السرة .</p>  <p>السوقف : هل هدم خفبتك ؟ السفارة : نعم ، هدم خففتي .</p>  <p>السوقف : ماذا هي الخفبة ؟ السفارة : هي الخفبة مالمين .</p> <p>السوقف : لغج الخفبة . السفارة : هدم خففتي .</p>	<p>الرجول الثاني ، أنظر واستمع وأعد.</p>  <p>السفارة : السلام عليكم . السفارة : وعليكم السلام . السفارة : هذا هو جوز السفي . السفارة : هل أنت مادي ؟ السفارة : لا ، أنا كشميري .</p>  <p>السفارة : هل أنت هدمي ؟ السفارة : لا ، أنا هدمي لأريزة والمزرة .</p>  <p>السفارة : هم يوماً سفيتي هدا . السفارة : لثلة اسمع نظرياً .</p>  <p>السفارة : أين سفيتي ؟ السفارة : سأفعل هي هدمي قرب من السفيد . الخرام .</p>  <p>السفارة : هدمت سفيتي . السفارة : خروا الله الخفرا .</p>

Figure 1
Gender Inequality in Dialogues

Table 1*Translations*

Text 1	Text 2	Text 3
<p>Thariq: What time do you wake up? Thahir: I wake up at dawn. Thariq: Where do you perform the <i>fajr</i> (dawn) prayer? Thahir: I perform the <i>fajr</i> prayer at the masjid. Thariq: Do you (go back to) sleep after the prayer? Thahir: No, I don't (go back to) sleep after the prayer. Thariq: What do you do after the prayer? Thahir: I read the Qur'an. Thariq: What time do you go to school? Thahir: I go to school at 7 o'clock. Thariq: Do you go by car? Thahir: No, I take the bus.</p>	<p>Mother: Today is a day off. Father: It's the day when we do house chores. Mother: What are you going to do, Thariq? Thariq: I will sweep the living room. Mother: What are you going to do, Fathimah? Fathimah: I will sweep the bedroom. Mother: What are you going to do, Ahmad? Ahmad: I will do the laundry. Mother: And what are you going to do, Lathifah? Lathifah: I will iron some clothes. Grandmother: I will clean the dishes. Kakek: And I will read the Qur'an.</p>	<p>Student 1: What will you do after you graduate? Student 2: I will study medicine in the faculty of medicine, And I will become a doctor <i>insha-Allah</i> (God-willing). Student 3: I will study pharmacy at the faculty of pharmacy, and I will become a pharmacist <i>insha-Allah</i>. Student 4: I will study midwifery in the faculty of midwifery, and I will become a nurse <i>insha-Allah</i>. Student 5: I will study architecture in the faculty of architecture, and I will become an architect <i>insha-Allah</i>. Student 6: I will study aviation science in the faculty of aviation, and I will become a pilot <i>insha-Allah</i>. Student 1: I will study educational science at the faculty of education, and I will become a teacher <i>insha-Allah</i>.</p>
Text 4	Text 5	Text 6
<p>Nada: <i>Assalamu 'alaikum</i> (Peace be upon you). Ilham: <i>Wa 'alaikum salam</i> (And peace be upon you). Nada: My name is Nada. I am a Syrian. Ilham: My name is Ilham. I am a Saudi. Nada: I am a student at the University of Damascus. Ilham: I am a student at the University of Ummi al-Qura. Nada: At which faculty do you study? Ilham: I study at the faculty of education. At which faculty do you study? Nada: I study at the faculty of medicine. Ilham: I will become a teacher <i>insha-Allah</i>. Nada: I will become a doctor <i>insha-Allah</i>.</p>	<p>Officer: Welcome. Traveler: I lost my suitcase. Officer: Where are you from? Traveler: I am from Bangladesh. Officer: Where are your passport and visa? Traveler: Here are my passport and visa. Officer: What color is your suitcase? Traveler: It is black. Officer: Is this your suitcase? Traveler: Yes, it is. This is my suitcase. Officer: What (items) are in your suitcase? Traveler: In my suitcase there are clothes. Officer: Please open your suitcase. Traveler: True, this is my suitcase.</p>	<p>Traveler: <i>Assalamu 'alaikum</i>. Officer: <i>Wa 'alaikum salam</i>. Welcome. Please show your passport. Traveler: Here is the passport. Officer: Are you Malaysian? Traveler: No, I am Kashmiri. Officer: Have you come to work? Traveler: No, I have come to visit and perform the <i>umrah</i> (smaller hajj) ritual. Officer: How many days will you be here? Traveler: About three weeks. Officer: Where will you be staying? Traveler: I will be staying at a hotel near Masjidil Haram. Officer: Great location. May your <i>umrah</i> be accepted. Traveler: Thank you.</p>

Figure 1 showcases a categorization of dialog topics into three distinct themes. The first theme encompasses discussions pertaining to daily routines and habits, as exemplified in texts 1 and 2. The second theme pertains to education and various professions, as depicted in texts 3

and 4. Finally, the third theme encompasses conversations regarding travel experiences, as demonstrated in texts 5 and 6.

One of the dialogues within the daily activities theme, Text 1, portrays a conversation between

two male individuals, Thariq and Thahir, as they discuss their daily routine from waking up to attending school. Meanwhile, Text 2 features eight characters, namely the mother, father, Thariq, Fathimah, Ahmad, Lathifah, grandmother, and grandfather, who engage in a dialogue regarding household chores. Despite the mother assuming the role of a household organizer and assigning chores to all family members, the father is not mentioned as participating in domestic tasks. At first glance, the dialogue depicted in Text 2 may reflect an equitable distribution of household chores among both males (the male children) and females. However, the text still perpetuates stereotypes through the depiction of the grandmother performing kitchen tasks and the grandfather reading the Qur'an. These traditional gender roles may contribute to the reinforcement of gender-based discriminatory attitudes toward women.

Text 3 depicts a dialogue among six students who are male (indicated by the masculine noun "thalib") as they discuss their academic and professional aspirations. They express their intentions to study in the fields of medicine, pharmacy, nursing, architecture, aviation, and education, with the goal of pursuing careers as a doctor, a pharmacist, a nurse, an architect, a pilot, and a teacher. In contrast, Text 4 features a conversation between two female characters, Nada and Ilham, who study in the field of education and medical science, respectively, with the objective of becoming a teacher and a doctor. This comparison highlights the disparity in academic and professional opportunities available to men and women, with men having a broader range of options.

Texts 5 and 6 depict two travel scenarios set in an airport and feature exclusively male characters, both as airport officials and travelers. This representation reinforces the notion that men are the dominant actors in public spaces.

جائزة الملك فيصل العالمية

تهنئة:
فكر في الإجابة عن الأسئلة التالية:

- ١- ما المجالات التي تُمنح فيها جوائز الملك فيصل؟
- ٢- ماذا يُمنح الفائزون بجائزة الملك فيصل؟
- ٣- هل تُمنح هذه الجوائز للمسلمين فقط؟
- ٤- اذكر أسماء بعض الذين حصلوا على جائزة الملك فيصل.





تمنح مؤسسة الملك فيصل الخيرية، منذ عام ١٣٩٧هـ، خمس جوائز عالمية، هي خمسة مجالات، هي: خدمة الإسلام، والدراسات الإسلامية، والأدب العربي، والطب، والعلوم، وتتكون الجائزة من شهادة، تحمل اسم الفائز، ومُلحَص للعمل الذي حصل به على الجائزة، وميدالية ذهبية، ومبلغ مالي.

فاز بجوائز الملك فيصل كثير من العلماء، من الشرق والغرب، ومن أشهر الذين نالوا جائزة خدمة الإسلام: أبو الأعلى المودودي من باكستان، وأبو الحسن الندوي من الهند، وأحمد ديدات من جنوب إفريقيا، وعبد العزيز بن باز من السعودية. ومن الذين حصلوا على جائزة الدراسات الإسلامية: فؤاد سزكين من تركيا، ويوسف القرضاوي من مصر، ومصطفى الزرقاء من سوريا، ومن الذين حصلوا على جائزة الملك فيصل في الأدب العربي: عبد السلام هارون، وعائشة عبد الرحمن من مصر، وناصر الدين الأسد من الأردن، وعبد الله الطيّب من السودان.

من الذين حصلوا على جائزة الملك فيصل العالمية في الطب: مايكل هيلد من أمريكا، وماريو رينريو من إيطاليا، وألبرت رينولدز من سويسرا، ومن أشهر الذين نالوا الجائزة في العلوم: أحمد زويل من أمريكا، وهو مصري الأصل، ومايكل غطية من بريطانيا، وهو مؤلّف في السودان، وهيربرت هالتر من ألمانيا.

Figure 2
Gender Inequality in A Narrative Sample (Source: Book 2B, p. 181)

The translation for the text in Figure 2 above is as follows:

“The Royal Faisal al-Khairiyah Institute has been awarding world-class honors in five fields since 1397 AH. These (fields) are devotion to Islam, Islamic studies, Arabic literature, medicine, and science. The prize is in the form of a certificate in which the name of the awardee is written with the mention of the professional achievements, a gold medal, and a sum of money. This award has been won by scientists from the East and West. Notable recipients of the service to Islam award are Abu Hasan al-Nadwy from India, Abu al-A’la al-Maudududy from Pakistan, Ahmad Didat from North Africa, and Abdul Aziz bin Baz from Saudi Arabia. This text is about the King Faisal award. The prize is awarded annually and covers five areas. First: dedication to Islam; second: Islamic studies; third: Arabic literature; fourth: medicine; and fifth: science. The winners in the field of Islamic studies are Fuad Sizkin from Turkey, Yusuf al-Qardlawy from Egypt, and Musthafa al-Zarqa’ from Syria. The award winners in Arabic literature are Abdul Salam Harun, Aisyah Abdul Rahman from Egypt, Nasiruddin al-Asad from Urdun, Abdullah al-Thayib from Sudan. The award winners

in the field of medicine are Michael Fiel from America, Mario Retrito from Italy, and Albert Reonaldz from Switzerland. And the award winners in the field of science are Ahmad Ruweil from Egypt, Michael Athiyah from Britain, and Herbert Valtr from Germany.”

Figure 2 presents a textual construction centered on the topic of the “King Faisal Prize.” The text identifies the names of the prize recipients from across the world in five distinct disciplines, namely, service to Islam, Islamic studies, Arabic literature, medicine, and science.

An examination of the 17 recipients reveals a marked disparity, with only a single female recipient recognized in the field of Arabic Literature, representing a mere 6% of the total. The remaining laureates are male, accounting for 94% of the honorees. This disparity underscores the persistent prevalence of gender stereotypes, suggesting a limited role for women in achieving recognition and occupying positions of prominence within the public sphere.

The overall distribution of texts within the *ABY* books 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Distribution of Texts (Including Dialogues) Representing Genders

Book	1A		1B		2A		2B					
Capture	Female Roles	Male Roles	Female & Male Roles	Female Roles	Male Roles	Female & Male Roles	Female Roles	Male Roles	Female & Male Roles	Female Roles	Male Roles	Female & Male Roles
1	3	3	-	1	5	1	1	3	1	1	2	1
2	-	2	1	-	6	1	1	5	1	-	2	3
3	-	4	-	-	6	-	-	1	1	-	2	2
4	-	4	2	1	5	-	2	2	1	-	4	-
5	2	2	1	-	8	-	1	3	-	1	2	2
6	-	6	-	-	12	2	1	3	-	-	5	-
7	2	3	-	1	8	2	2	2	-	-	3	1
8	2	6	-	-	7	1	1	5	-	-	2	4
Total	9	30	4	3	45	7	9	24	4	2	22	13

Table 2 depicts the unequal distribution of male and female presence in the narratives and dialogues in *ABY*. Book 1A demonstrates a predominant presence of exclusively male presence, accounting for 70%, compared to 21% for exclusively female presence. Text constructions featuring both males and females together in the book represent 9% of the total. In book 1B, exclusively male presence

dominates the dialogs and narratives, accounting for 82%, compared to 13% for exclusively female presence, while text constructions featuring both males and females together account for 5%.

Book 2A exhibits a limited presence of exclusively female roles or characters in the text constructions, at 26%, while males and females appearing together account for 4% of

the total, with exclusively male presence still dominating at 70%. Book 2B shows a 35% presence of exclusively female characters, with males and females appearing together accounting for 5%, and text constructions with

exclusively male presence retain a dominant presence at 60%. A more detailed analysis of gender differences in the text can be found in Figure 3.

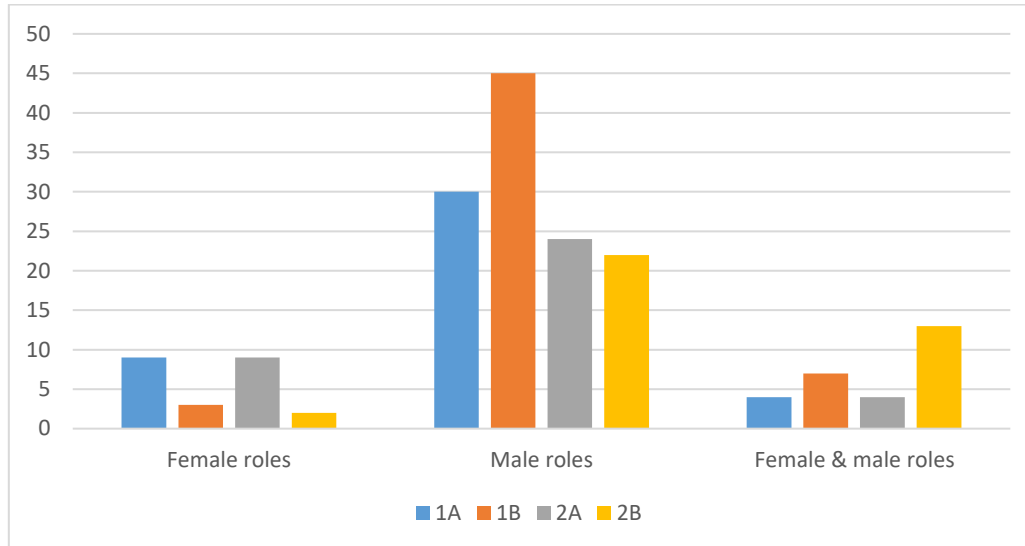


Figure 3
Gender Roles in The Texts

The analysis of the distribution of texts reveals a dominant representation of male characters in dialogues and narratives across all themes, situations, and conditions present in each book. This underscores the pervasive influence and power of men in the texts. In contrast, the absence of meaningful involvement of female characters highlights a clear disparity and underrepresentation of women in the narratives.

4.2. Construction of Gender Inequality Through Visual Elements

Each of the *ABY* books is specifically crafted for non-Arabic speaking students and presents an adaptation of linguistic scenarios and expressions to align with the Arabic cultural context. These accompanying visuals facilitate the non-Arabic speaking students' comprehension of the Arabic language. By paying heed to these visual aids, it is anticipated that students will find the presented narratives and dialogs easily understandable. A selection of the visual elements in *ABY* is depicted in Figure 4.

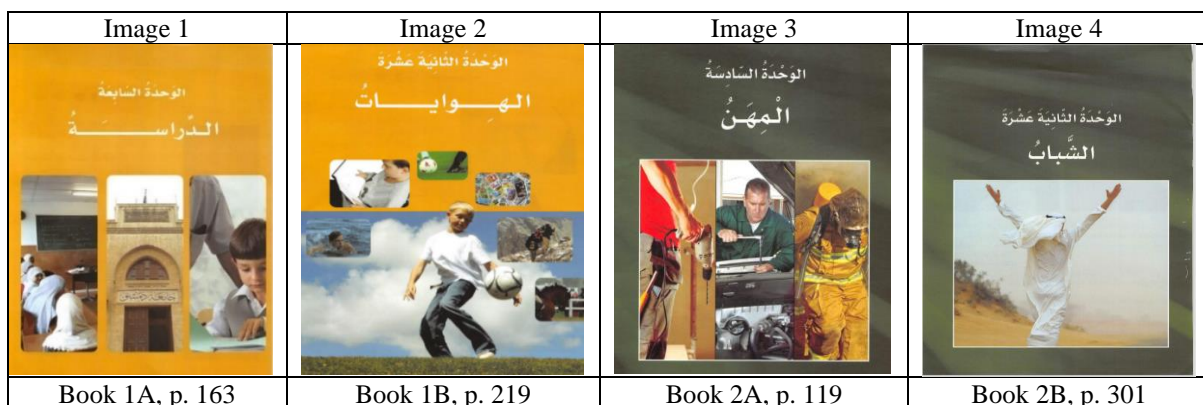


Figure 4
Gender Inequality in Visual Elements

In each *ABY* book, visual elements are presented in accordance with the theme of each narrative and dialogue. As demonstrated in Figure 4, Image 1 showcases the theme of education through the depiction of both male and female students. The female students are portrayed in a rear-facing position, while the male student is depicted facing forward, thereby enabling clear identification. This disparity in representation raises concerns about gender inequality in visualization, suggesting that while men can be depicted openly in public, women are relegated to being hidden or not recognized by others. Despite this disparity, Image 1 exemplifies equality in terms of educational opportunities for both genders.

Image 2 showcases the theme of hobby and underscores the prevalence of male representation. The image illustrates six different hobbies, namely swimming, reading, soccer, photography or photo collecting, hiking, and horseback riding. Notably, the hobby of photography or photo collecting is depicted in a gender-neutral manner, indicating that it can be pursued by individuals regardless of gender. When evaluated in the context of the limited opportunities for women to participate in activities in public spaces, this depiction suggests that photography can be a hobby practiced within the domestic setting. However, the male representation in the depictions of other hobbies implies that outdoor pursuits are exclusive to men. In conclusion, Image 2 reinforces conventional gender roles by portraying men as the dominant participants in outdoor hobbies or leisure activities.

Image 3 illustrates the theme of vocations and showcases a carpenter, a technician, and a firefighter. The exclusive representation of men in these roles appears to indicate that these positions entail a higher level of physical exertion and involve greater risks, rendering them unsuitable for women. This implies that women are better suited for jobs that are characterized by lower risks, minimal physical demands, and reduced cognitive requirements, which are traditionally considered to be feminine in nature. This reinforces the gender-based categorization of work, with masculine jobs being attributed to men and feminine jobs to women.

Image 4 illustrates the theme of adolescence and showcases a young male. It is noteworthy that all the elements depicted in this chapter, *Al-Syabab*, are exclusive to men, thereby reinforcing the dominance of male representation and ignoring the role of women. The activities depicted in this chapter appear to be restricted to men and unsuitable for women.

The visual elements discussed above perpetuate gender discrimination and limit women's rights and freedoms, including in their selection of hobbies. This can lead to the internalization of stereotypes among non-Arabic speaking students who are using the textbook for learning Arabic. The students may perceive that men possess greater opportunities and freedoms to participate in a wider range of activities while women have a confined and limited scope of involvement. The representation in *ABY* perpetuates a culture that sanctions gender inequality through the unequal distribution of male and female representation.

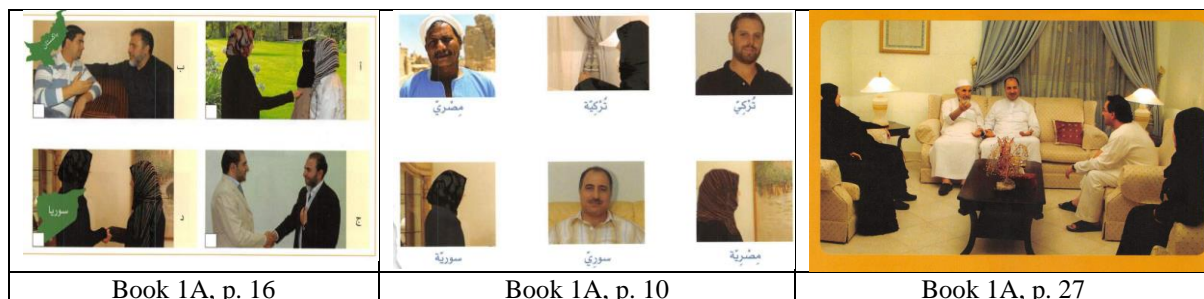


Figure 5

More Visual Elements Showcasing Gender Inequality

Figure 5 illustrates the representation of men and women in *ABY*. The images of men are depicted with clear facial and bodily features,

making them easily identifiable. Conversely, the images of women lack distinct facial features, as if they should not be recognizable

to others. The women are depicted with their faces partially obscured, often viewed from the side or back, and wearing hijab that covers both their faces and bodies. These images also seem to suggest that men should only interact with other men, and the same applies to women. The

presence of both men and women in a shared space appears to be limited to the familial realm. These observations affirm that the visual elements in *ABY* reflect the social and cultural norms and values of Saudi Arabia, specifically in regard to male-female relations.

Table 2

Distribution of Visual Elements Representing Genders

Book	1A		1B			2A			2B			
Capture	Female Images	Male Images	Female & Male Images	Female Images	Male Images	Female & Male Images	Female Images	Male Images	Female & Male Images	Female Images	Male Images	Female & Male Images
1	71	97	-	3	17	1	-	4	-	-	1	-
2	75	102	13	4	15	1	1	8	-	-	6	-
3	-	14	-	0	32	5	1	-	4	-	3	-
4	15	65	1	4	67	-	-	1	-	-	7	-
5	13	39	9	7	26	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
6	1	50	-	1	60	2	1	8	-	-	8	-
7	20	45	-	0	66	1	2	-	-	-	2	-
8	13	99	9	5	74	1	-	5	-	-	2	-
Total	208	511	41	24	357	11	6	26	4	0	30	0

The unequal representation of gender in the visual components of *ABY* is demonstrated by the data presented in Table 2. The results indicate a clear dominance of male representation, with 924 visualizations of men, compared to 238 visualizations of women and only 56 visualizations featuring both men and

women. This translates to a distribution of 76% male images, 19% female images, and 5% images of men and women together, showcasing the disproportionate representation of women in *ABY*'s visual elements. Visualization of the role difference by gender is presented in Figure 6.

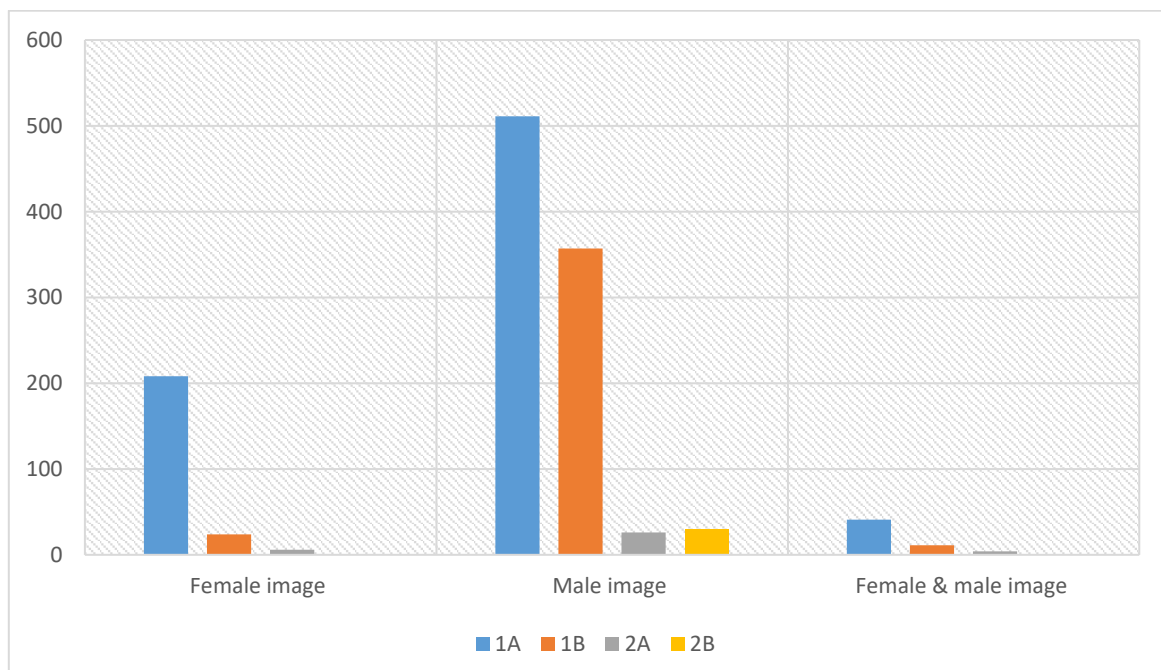


Figure 6
Gender Roles in Visual Elements

5. Discussion

The results of this study indicate a persistent gender imbalance in the composition of the Arabic textbook *Al-'Arabiyyah baina Yadaika*. The visual elements and texts of the textbook are dominated by men and underrepresent women. This inequality reflects the deeply ingrained social and cultural values of the Arabic-speaking community, demonstrating the connection between language and gender (Foroutan, 2012). The representation of women in the textbook is inadequate, both physically and psychologically. The female-type vocabulary portrays women as linguistically inferior, having dependent, passive, and weak characteristics, while male-dominated sentences showcase dominance, strength, and independence (Muassomah, 2022). Women are portrayed as merely a means to an end in relationships between the genders. It is important to acknowledge the significant influence that textbooks have on students as they impart not only knowledge but also shape norms and cultural values (Zamzami & Syamsyiah, 2020), and therefore, the role that textbooks play in legitimizing gender inequality cannot be overlooked (Zamzami & Syamsyiah, 2020).

Cultling is a blend of culture and language, implying that culture can be found in a language (Pishghadam et al., 2020). The gender dynamics present in cultural and social life reveal a marked imbalance of power between men and women (Anderson et al., 2011; Sawer, 2013). In the context of this study, the pervasive influence of male-dominated linguistic and visual frameworks exacerbates the marginalization of women, positioning them in a subservient and passive role, one where they are relegated to the periphery and relegated to only interacting with other women and mahram or blood-related family members. This distorted representation of women perpetuates their societal status as mere accessories to their husbands and mere extensions of a patriarchal system (Aziz et al., 2020). The strong correlation between gender and language is thus not only shaped by cultural and social structures but also by deeply ingrained patriarchal ideology (Foroutan, 2012). The gender inequality reflected in textbooks may be rooted in the Arab culture manifested in the language (Pishghadam, 2013). Consequently, the

language portrayed in educational materials that reinforce gender inequality cannot be separated from the cultural milieu in which the language originates and evolves.

The pervasiveness of patriarchal ideology in Arab culture has had a significant impact on the different utilization of language in accordance with social variables (Jaber, 2022). Within the Islamic context, men and women occupy distinct social and economic roles, which in turn influences the differences in language use between the two genders (Daud et al., 2021). The gender-based social disparities contribute to discriminatory practices in the division of labor between men and women (Shodiq, 2016). Men are typically associated with public spheres, while women are confined to private domains (Sadiqi, 2006). This aligns with the wider socio-cultural tendencies in Arab nations that tend to marginalize women's presence and participation in the public arena, which has a ripple effect on the representation of women. The patriarchal ideology often disapproves of women holding positions of authority (Al-Ghanim & Badahdah, 2017), leading to the likelihood that the representation of women in textbooks reflects the perspective of authors who reside in such culturally patriarchal environments. Thus outstanding impetus triggered by the conceptualization of cultlings (culture in language), language structures, and expressions can manifest the overt and covert cultural patterns in the textbook (Pishghadam et al., 2020).

Gender distinctions can result in various forms of language use in a given society, culture, or tradition (Jafarova, 2021). This gender-based variation in language usage is prevalent in nearly all languages in patriarchal societies or cultures, causing women to experience both a language-related dilemma and discrimination in two forms, including how they are taught to speak and how the language itself views women (Binasdevi, 2021). Language has frequently been utilized by men to oppress women (Jaim, 2022). Language can identify significant characteristics of the enactment of one's culture (Zhumasheva et al., 2022). In the context of Arabic language textbooks, their preparation by a male-dominated cohort tends to reinforce male roles while obscuring the role of women. Vocabulary aimed at women frequently exhibits traits of powerlessness, while

vocabulary aimed at men conveys strength, independence, and innovation (Muassomah, 2022). Moreover, patriarchal Arabic has ascribed specific characteristics to things related to women while comparatively neglecting similar aspects related to men. Similar trends can be observed in other languages, such as English, which often assigns more rigid designations to women. As a result, women are frequently objectified and limited in various linguistic aspects (Izzuddin et al., 2021).

This study draws attention to the perpetuation of gender inequality through certain Arabic textbooks, such as Al-'Arabiyyah baina Yadaika, which serve as a primary means of transmitting educational material. The analysis reveals a significant imbalance in the representation of male and female roles in the texts and visual elements of these textbooks, where men are overrepresented, and women are underrepresented. This reinforces stereotypes that depict women as passive, emotional, and limited to domestic roles, which are deeply rooted in the patriarchal beliefs of Arab society. This highlights the significant impact that these textbooks have on shaping students' perceptions, beliefs, and cultural ideologies, in addition to imparting academic knowledge. The study emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and addressing the role of these textbooks in perpetuating gender inequality in order to promote equality and challenge the dominant patriarchal beliefs that exist in society.

This study focuses on the examination of a single Arabic textbook (comprising several volumes) intended for non-Arabic speaking students. As such, the findings and data presented cannot be generalized to encompass the issue of gender inequality in all Arabic language textbooks for non-Arab students. To address this limitation, it is suggested that further research be conducted, including a comparative analysis of multiple Arabic textbooks published by Arab-speaking countries for non-Arab students, as well as a comparison between Arabic textbooks published by Arab-speaking countries and those published in non-Arab-speaking countries. This would allow for a more comprehensive and diverse understanding of

the issue. The results of this study can serve as a valuable reference for future studies and as a basis for evaluating and analyzing the design and preparation of textbooks that promote gender equality.

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