Adriana Petra Blažević, mag. educ. philol. angl. et mag. soc.
University of Split
Arts Academy
adrianapblazevic@gmail.com
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4871-7794

Mara Ruža Blažević, mag. educ. philol. angl. et mag. paed.
University of Split
Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture
mrblazev@fesb.hr
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6068-0445

REPRESENTATIONS OF CULTURE, RACE AND GENDER IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS

Abstract: In order to investigate and understand the relations between different social groups participating in copious Anglophone settings, this paper sets out to present and discuss the findings of a quantitative analysis of culture, race and gender in nine English language textbooks for first-year secondary school students in Croatia. The first section of the paper offers a theoretical background of the three previously mentioned social phenomena in the light of the importance of English in modern education, frequently associated with various systems of social inequality. What follows are the results of the content analysis of sampled English language textbooks. The results of the study indicated significant differences regarding the representation of specific social groups as well as the intersections between gender and employment status. Thus, an inherent partisanship towards specific social groups was revealed, indicating a subliminal reproduction of social power through education. Such results align with numerous other studies on the topic, both in the Croatian and the foreign contexts.

Keywords: education, language learning materials, social inequality

INTRODUCTION

The influence of globalisation forces, evident in almost all spheres of society, has triggered the need for the redefinition and re-evaluation of the education system. In other words, "the new philosophies of upbringing and education have been shaped by the processes of globalisation, internationalisation, Europeanisation, informatisation, standardisation, long life learning and social knowledge" (Mlinarević, 2016, p.13). As a result, in the process of globalisation English has started to lose its national and geographical determinant and is becoming a neutral communication tool. Furthermore, the standardisation of the English language is often perceived as socially useful because it eases international communication and exchange of information in the world of multinational intersection. In keeping with the above, the domination of English is made legitimate by its "inclusive potential" and universal international communication. However, in such an environment English also functions as a means of delimiting social groups. The inclusion of one then has the potential to ensure the social exclusion of others in social spheres demanding knowledge of English (Pennycook, 2017).

Furthermore, affirmation of the English language as an international tool of communication has had significant cultural implications. In other words, given the inseparability of language from culture, learning a foreign language compulsorily implies learning about another cultural context (Williams, 2010, according to Syhari & Susanti, 2016). Accordingly, an international language is inherently marked by multiculturalism. Pursuant to that, such a language is not exclusive to one culture, not even to the one that uses it as a mother tongue (McKay, 2000). Moreover, "belongingness of a language cannot be limited, a language belongs to all of those who use it, and cultural aspects of educational materials must lean towards multiculturalism, and not biculturalism" (McKay, 2000, p.7). However, cultural implications of teaching materials are not always explicitly obvious, so in the analysis of the cultural contents of textbook materials, one often talks about the potential "hidden curriculum". On the one hand, the official curriculum includes explicit cognitive and affective educational aims, while the hidden curriculum nevertheless includes unstated norms, beliefs and values which are transferred to the learner during the educational process (Giroux, 1988). Therefore, elements of the hidden curriculum, to which learners are exposed to as participants as well as products of the educational process, significantly impact the construction of their identity (Cotton et al., 2013).

In this sense, it is important to investigate cultural identity as well as racial and gender relations presented in textbooks. In the aim of addressing the stated research needs, this paper is based on the results of quantitative content analysis extrapolated from nine English language textbooks. The textbook sample exclusively included recent textbook editions which at the moment of

research were used in first year of secondary school in Croatia. Even though issues of culture, race, and gender in English as a second language textbooks are extremely relevant, the stated phenomena have nevertheless not been researched enough in the Croatian context. For that reason, this investigation is directed at acquiring a deeper insight into the bias of the analysed contents to uncover the discriminatory potential contained in English language textbooks for the first year of secondary school in Croatia.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEXTBOOKS IN LEARNING ENGLISH

English language textbooks are a primary teaching tool in learning English, and choosing an appropriate textbook most often is the task of the teacher or other participants involved in the language learning process (Chao, 2011). According to Aliakbari (2004), textbook materials represent the way the world is seen through the cultural perspective of the authors. In other words, the content of teaching materials is shaped by the values and belief systems of the authors. Furthermore, as educational materials come about on the basis of existing fundamental knowledge about society and culture, the textbook can also be defined as a form of representation, organisation and classification of a multitude of concepts from social reality. In that sense, teaching materials are created as a mechanism to link certain areas of knowledge to the social world (Basabe, 2006). Ideological implications of textbook materials therefore greatly impact learners who tend to form their own value systems according to the proffered materials either implicitly or explicitly.

Historically, English language textbooks have mainly represented the culture of those countries in which English is the mother tongue (Basabe, 2006). Within the listed groups of countries, the preference towards the cultural systems of the United Kingdom and/or the United States was ingrained. However, at the end of the twentieth century, the imbalance and bias of textbook contents started to be re-examined in light of the ever increasing need to adapt materials to local contexts and represent the up till then underrepresented cultures. Existing tendencies, strengthened by the international expansion of the English language and the increase in people wanting to learn languages, resulted in the denationalisation of educational materials. Thus, the up till then accepted concepts on the superiority of native speakers lost their importance, and the desire to "imitate" their linguistic practices died down. Anglophone culture was no longer ideal, and the importance of developing intercultural linguistic competences began to be nurtured in English language classes. In other words, the ability to transfer one's own, as well as understand the foreign culture through communication in a foreign language have affirmed themselves as important educational outcomes, more important than modelling

phonetic articulations of native speakers (Basabe, 2006). The stated alterations in priorities regarding learning English as a foreign language Alptekin (1990) calls "deanglinisation" of the language in both a linguistic and cultural sense.

CULTURAL COMPONENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

The phenomenon of culture cannot be contained in one singular definition. In a wider sense, culture is a way of life for a certain social community, shaped by views, beliefs, language, dress style, taste in food, music, home decor and many other factors and peculiarities of a certain cultural context (Abercrombie et al., 2008). Culture has an extremely prominent role in the language learning process. Debate on the role and influence of culture in the foreign language learning process are therefore extremely relevant, particularly in the context of the contemporary globalised society characterised by the dominance of the English language (Aliakbari, 2004). Even though the rapidity of modernisation and global development prevents an exact assessment of the number of English speakers, it is presumed that this number is around between 700 million and one billion. This includes three different groups: native speakers of English, speakers of English as a second language, and speakers of English as a foreign language. Within the globalised frame of modern society, the latter has the fast growth tendency (Pennycook, 2017).

Even though language primarily functions as an indispensable communication tool, linguistic competence also includes understanding the cultural aspects of the linguistic community. Linguistic competence is a form of social behaviour which includes understanding and sensibility towards cultural differences. In other words, access to language and achieving successful communication demands possessing certain social skills and competence (Kim & Paek, 2015). However, given the comprehensiveness of English and its global recognition, communication in English often is not linked exclusively to the anglophone culture. In keeping with this, the concept of "mother tongue" in the context of English is gradually dying out as one can no longer talk of the possibility of "possessing" language or its attachment to specific geographical contexts (Tollefson & Perez-Milans, 2018). The development of intercultural competencies therefore is an especially relevant aspect of English language learning. Pursuant to that, *CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)* also mentions the development of intercultural competences as a pre-requisite for the construction of individual and collective identity in the process of foreign language acquisition (Council of Europe, 2011). In that sense, foreign language acquisition surpasses the art of knowing grammar, vocabulary, or other linguistic aspects of the language. Rather, complete

mastery of the language includes the possibility of appropriate behaviour in socially and culturally charged situations (Byram et al., 2002).

Pursuant to the above, the development of intercultural competences acknowledges the importance of the following aims: "the development of general intercultural and linguistic competences, preparation for interactive situations with those belonging to foreign cultures, understanding and accepting foreign cultures and individuals with specific values, behaviours and cultural characteristics, and encouraging contemplation on the advantages which emerge from intercultural interactions" (Byram et al., 2002, p.10). Furthermore, intercultural sensibility may only develop in an environment marked by multicultural content (Kim & Paek, 2005). According to that, learners exposed to varied cultural contents are more susceptible to understanding the norms and values of various cultures. Furthermore, the teaching atmosphere which enables recognising intercultural similarities and differences also equips learners to identify their own culture in relation to foreign cultural contexts. Also, including contents from various parts of the world enables eliminating set concepts about the linguistic standard of native speakers as of the only correct way of using the language (Kim & Paek, 2015). That is, implementation of culturally diverse contents in teaching contexts contributes to developing sensitivity and understanding towards all cultures in which English is used, independent of the historical tradition of its use.

PERPETUATION OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION

Analysis of the subliminal gender-specific notes in teaching materials stems from the social expectations and norms linked to the constructs of "masculinity" and "femininity". Thus, the analysis of gender as part of the hidden curriculum is inseparable from the phenomena of homophobia and heterosexual normativity (Bartulović, 2013). As the analysis of gender relations based on the dichotomous model "male vs. female" remains dominant and deeply rooted in most modern societies, a critical examination of gender identities within teaching materials is a necessary prerequisite for a successful identification of oppressive gender-specific patterns in education.

Informed by the results of their research in the Iranian context, Abdollahzadeh and Baniasad (2010) indicated the underrepresentation of women as well as the perpetuating patterns of sexist ideologies within English language textbooks. Similarly, Baranović, Jugović and Doolan (2008) based their realisation of gender-specific stereotyping in education on the analysis of primary-level Croatian language textbooks. They claimed that an idea of males as the carriers of social power, governing various decision-making processes in the public sphere was promoted within the textbooks. On the other hand,

women were represented as confined to the privacy of the domestic sphere and family-life. Finally, Bartulović (2013) detected gender-specific dimensions in education and alerted to oppressive sexist patterns within the curricula of Physical Education, Sex Education, Mathematics and History. Hence, according to Bartulović (2013), the representation of gender relations within teaching materials is currently performed by implicit stereotyping of women as passive and fragile beings, largely dependent on the protection of males.

In that sense, current research investigating the reproduction of gender inequalities in education point to a polarisation of gender roles as well as the reproduction of gender stereotypes within learning environments. As a result, textbooks as fundamental learning tools may function either as a means of cancelling such discriminatory practices or contribute to their affirmation.

PERPETUATION OF RACIAL INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION

Even though Hooks (1994) emphasises the importance of integration, acceptance and cooperation in education and promotes a strong opposition to established social practices which confirm racial segregation, the identification of racial tendencies in modern society is an extremely sensitive issue. According to Gillborn (2006), a fruitful fight against racism surpasses simple addressing of racial premises in education as it demands fundamental reforms to the entire educational system, including the curriculum, choice of materials and education of teachers. Also, there is no single method which guarantees success in the fight against racism in education, given that it must be contextually sensitive and adapted to specific social conditions (Gillborn, 2006).

Furthermore, the expansion of English can be understood in terms of colonialism and postcolonial tendencies (Pennycook, 2017). That is, the imperative for learning English has become a new form of imperialism which acts implicitly and positions itself as a self-explanatory and unavoidable process. Pursuant to this, Roohani and Molana (2013) analysed three English language textbooks and illustrated the imperial overtones of textbook contents which were achieved by establishing "white" normativity and tendencies of ethnic exclusion. According to this, Frerreira (2019) in researching the contents of English language textbooks in Brazil and Cameroun, also warns of favouring of Caucasians in textbooks and the drastic underrepresentation of African Americans, despite formally stated aspirations towards ethnic inclusivity and multiculturalism. Moreover, Frerreira (2019) also sees racial, gender and class intersection in textbook materials and warns of double discrimination of black women in English language textbooks.

On the same note, the aim of this research also includes uncovering and understanding the bias of textbook materials in the context of perpetuating the

stated social inequalities in the educational system. Therefore, the presented theorical settings enriched by the findings from the stated research, have defined the subject of this paper which has as its aim uncovering the mechanisms of representing culture, race, and gender in English language textbooks. The following paragraphs will present the results of a quantitative content analysis of nine English language textbooks for the first year of secondary school in Croatia.

METHODOLOGY

In order to identify, categorise and critically evaluate the contents in English language textbooks for first year secondary school, the method of content analysis was used. Content analysis is an empirically established method by which classification and evaluation of key symbols and elements of textual communication attempt to demystify manifest and latent meanings contained in the examined text (Krippendorff, 2019). Furthermore, content analysis is an extremely relevant research method in sociology because it includes data analysis which are "not designed nor gathered in order to research human behaviour, but sometimes can to a great extent assist in enlightening it" (Milas, 2005, p.487). For the needs of this research, textual and pictorial characteristics of English language textbooks were subject to analysis in the aim of establishing forms of cultural, racial and gender bias of the stated teaching materials. An important criterion for the selection of chosen textbooks was their approval by *the Ministry of Science and Education* so as to include precisely those materials currently used in secondary schools throughout Croatia.

In the final sample nine English language textbooks used for teaching in the 2020/2021 academic year were included. The process of gathering quantitative data lasted from March to June of 2021 and a total of 407 textbook clippings were coded and interpreted. The textbook materials were numerically coded in order to extract empirically relevant material. The constructed coding plan was comprised of four variables through a prism of which textbook clippings and pictures were interpreted: cultural context, employment status, gender, and race. Moreover, the coding plan emerged from the very research process and was adapted to the textbook sample. The collected material was then subjected to statistical tests (frequency distributions and chi-square test) in order to establish statistically significant differences regarding the representations of specific cultural, gender and racial groups in English language textbooks.

In other words, statistical tests were performed to examine four hypotheses:

H1: There is a statistically significant difference in the frequency of representation of cultural content (elements of "high" and "popular" culture) of English-speaking countries in relation to other countries shown in English language textbooks.

H2: There is a statistically significant difference in the frequency of representation of males in relation to females in English language textbooks.

H3: There is a statistically significant difference in the frequency of representation of males in the context of employment in relation to females in English language textbooks.

H4: There is a statistically significant difference in the frequency of representation of Caucasians in relation to African Americans and Asians in English language textbooks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Within 407 analysed clippings a total of 348 nationally defined excerpts were identified. Thirty-five different national contexts were recognised of which England, leading with 54%, was mentioned 188 times. The American cultural context, identified in 65 excerpts follows with 18.7%. Every other cultural context mentioned in the analysed materials was represented with less than 5% (Table 1).

Table 1

Cultural context

Cultural context	N	%
England	188	54
United States of America	65	18.7
Australia	10	2.9
Spain	8	2.3
Canada	6	1.7
France	6	1.7
Croatia	5	1.4
Scotland	5	1.4
Greece	5	1.4
India	4	1.1
Germany	4	1.1
Italy	4	1.1
Russia	3	0.9
New Zealand	3	0.9
Turkey	3	0.9
Thailand	3	0.9

Table 1 (continues)

Cultural context	N	%
Kenya	3	0.9
Wales	2	0.6
Austria	2	0.6
Mexico	2	0.6
Brazil	2	0.6
Mali	2	0.6
Ireland	1	0.3
Jamaica	1	0.3
Guatemala	1	0.3
Myanmar	1	0.3
Egypt	1	0.3
Iraq	1	0.3
Nigeria	1	0.3
Uganda	1	0.3
Mozambique	1	0.3
Papa New Guinea	1	0.3
Indonesia	1	0.3
Singapore	1	0.3
Sierra Leone	1	0.3
Total	348	100

Furthermore, of the 348 nationally marked clippings, 280 of them (80.5%) contained a reference to the cultural contexts of those countries in which English is spoken as a mother tongue. The said category included 8 countries: England, United States of America, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Within the category of English-speaking countries, the cultural context of England was represented with 67.1% and the cultural context of the United States of America with 23.2% (Figure 1).

Figure 1

English-speaking countries
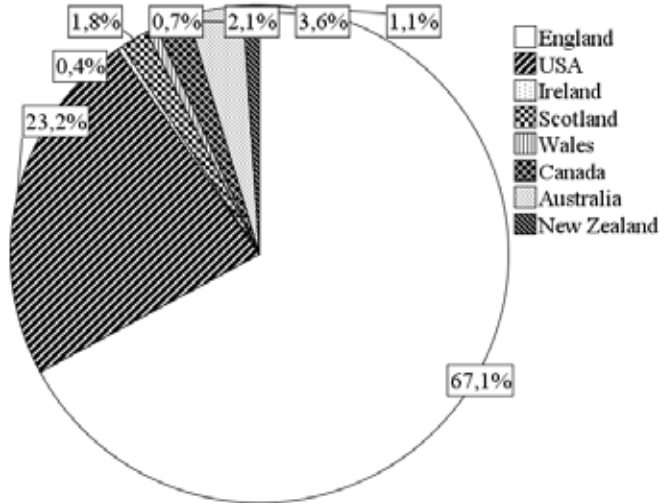
Apart from the geographical category entitled "English-speaking countries", four other categories were identified within the cultural context variable: Europe (encompassed those countries in which English is not spoken as a first language), South America, Asia and Africa (Table 2).

Table 2

Geographical areas

Geographical classes	**N**	**%**
English speaking countries	280	80.5
Europe	40	11.5
South America	4	1.2
Asia	14	4
Africa	10	2.9
Total	348	100

Results of the quantitative research showed that English language textbooks mainly represented the cultural contexts of English-speaking countries. Furthermore, the results also indicated a dominant representation of the cultural context of England. Following the cultural context of England, the American cultural context was also greatly represented in the analysed textbooks. Similar

results were indicated by Basabe (2006) who emphasised the cultural dominance of those countries in which English was spoken as a first language. Moreover, within the said category of countries, Basabe (2006) recognised a preference towards the cultural contexts of the United Kingdom and The United States of America. Of course, the results of the research most definitely refute the claims about the "de-anglicisation" of educational materials (Alptekin, 1990) and illustrate the dominance of British and American culture in English language textbooks. Thus, a preference towards the cultural contexts of English-speaking countries remains obvious despite a growing demand for the local adaptation of materials and the representation of numerous of underrepresented cultures.

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution results for the first hypothesis. The gained results point to a statistically significant difference in the frequency of showing cultural contents of English-speaking countries in relation to other countries shown in English language textbooks. The most significant difference was noted in the representation of "popular" culture of English-speaking countries in relation to other cultural contexts. As a result, the represented contents of "popular" culture in 89.5% of cases referred to anglophone countries. Furthermore, from the "English speaking countries" group, "popular" culture of England was represented in 34 cases (59.6% within the entire total of countries), and the "popular" culture of the United States of America in 22 cases (33.8% within the entire total of countries). Also, there exists a statistically significant difference in the representation of contents of "high" culture of English-speaking countries in relation to other cultural contexts. That is, 72% of the contents of "high" culture were contextualised in English speaking countries. Within the group of anglophone countries mentioned within the context of "high" culture only England (represented in 88.9% of cases) and United States of America (represented in 11.1% of cases) were identified. In relation to the whole group of countries identified in the textbook sample, 64% of the contents of "high" culture was related to the cultural context of England, while the contents of "high" culture of the United States of America were represented in 8% of cases.

Table 3

Differences in frequencies in showing cultural contents of English-speaking countries in relation to other countries shown in English language textbooks

	"Popular" culture	**"High" culture**
English speaking countries Noted frequency N	51	18
Europe Noted frequency N	2	3
Asia Noted frequency N	1	2
South America Noted frequency N	2	1
Africa Noted frequency N	1	1
Total	57	25

In keeping with this, preferences for cultures of anglophone countries were illustrated through frequent representation of cultural contents of England and the USA. Accordingly, elements of "popular" culture, such as films, music and sport, and "high" culture such as art, theatre, and literature, were dominantly represented in the English and American context. Systematic neglect of other European countries and countries of Africa, Asia and South America is the consequence of unsuccessful realisation of multiculturalism in teaching English. However, the uncovered bias of teaching materials was pursuant to studies to date which also warn of perpetuation of the "native speaker" ideal in teaching English (Basabe, 2006). That is, the contents of published textbooks were written from the anglophone perspective (mainly British and American), and were not appropriate, relevant nor understandable in numerous local contexts.

According to Soto-Molina and Mendez (2020), imbalanced representation of cultural contents in teaching materials has the potential to reproduce dominant cultural systems. In other words, the nature of cultural contents in English language textbooks is characterised by ideological and political connotations. Exposing students to exclusively British cultural contents achieves cultural imperialism marked by colonial overtones (Soto-Molina and Mendez, 2020). Also, gained results align with the findings by Abdollahzadeh and Baniasad (2010), who point to the domination of American actors, musicians, athletes, dancers, and other popular performers in English language textbooks. According to Abdollahzadeh and Baniasad (2010), the preference for American and British cultural contents is a form of cultural hegemony. Of course, such an unbalanced

organisation of teaching materials may implicitly encourage teachers to accept the stated bias and perpetuate the American and English ideal.

Furthermore, in the aim of distributing gender relations, a frequency analysis was carried out on the representation of males and females in English language textbooks. Of a total of 407 analysed excerpts, 328 gender marked clippings were identified. Within the stated 328 excepts, males were mentioned in 212 of cases, while females were represented in the remaining 116 cases (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Gender
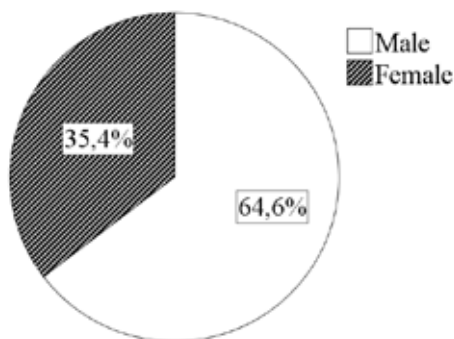
However, in 66 excepts male and females were referred to together. Therefore, of 394 gender contextualised clippings, a total of 220 excerpts referring to males were identified and 174 referring to females (Table 4).

Table 4

Frequency distributions of gender groups

Gender	N	%
Males	212	53.8
Females	116	29.4
Male and Female	66	16.8
Total	394	100

In the aim of establishing the statistical significance of presumed differences, that is, gaining an answer to the research hypothesis, chi-square test was implemented. When the differences in frequency of the appearance of men and women would not be statistically significant, 197 clippings referring to males and 197 referring to females, would be identified in the analysed materials.

In this sense, implementation of the chi-square test attempted to establish the deviance of observed frequencies from the expected frequencies according to equal allocation. According to the results shown in tables 5 and 6 at the risk level of 5% (p<0,05), it was concluded that there exists a statistically significant difference in the frequency of representation of males in relation to females in English language textbooks.

Table 5

Differences in frequency of representation of males as opposed to females in English language textbooks

Gender	Observed frequency N	Expected frequency N	Difference
Males	220	197	23
Females	174	197	-23
Total	394	394	

Table 6

Results of chi-square test

	Gender
χ^2	5.371
df	1
p	0.0204
Yates χ^2	5.14
Yates *p*	0.0234

The stated findings are in accordance with researchers Abdollahzadeh and Baniasad (2010) who recognise forms of sexist ideology in English language textbooks through a prism of underrepresentation of women in teaching materials. Moreover, results of this research pointed to the polarisation of gender roles and the reproduction of gender stereotypes in English language textbooks. Therefore, males in the analysed textbooks more often carried out socially desirable and well-paid jobs such as teacher, doctor, athlete, and manager, while women were shown in the context of motherhood and cooking. The afore mentioned examples illustrate the extremely slow transformation of family roles in modern Western society, despite the rapid redefinition of gender roles in many spheres of social life (Gere & Helwig, 2012). In addition, the results of the research indicated a subliminal reproduction of heterosexual

norms in English language textbooks as members of the LGBTQ community were not represented in any of the analysed clippings.

Lead by the presumption of the discriminatory potential of textbook materials, the third hypothesis presumed significant differences in how often males were depicted in the context of work as opposed to women in English language textbooks. Tables 7 and 8 show the results of the chi-square test for two independent samples. Two variables, "employment status" and "gender", were placed in relation so as to determine whether the differences in how often men were depicted in the context of employment compared to women were statistically significant. Within the stated group of frequencies, the biggest difference between genders was observed in the category of "employed person". In other words, males were in 66.8% of cases shown as actively employed, while women were depicted in the context of employment only in 27.2% of textbook excepts. Given that the gained chi-square value (χ^2=15,837) exceeds value limit (χ^2>9,49), with a risk level of 5%, it can be concluded that a statistically significant difference in how often males were depicted in the employment context compared to women in English language textbooks really exists.

Table 7

Differences in frequency of depiction of males in the context of employment as opposed to females in English language textbooks

	Men	Women
Pupil or Student Observed frequency N	54	43
Employed person Observed frequency N	123	50
Unemployed person Observed frequency N	0	1
Household duties Observed frequency N	0	2
Pensioner Observed frequency N	2	5
Total	179	101

Table 8

Results of chi-square test

	Gender and Employment status
χ^2	15.837
df	4
p	0.032

Moreover, the perpetuation of traditional gender roles was affirmed through various images presented in the analysed textbooks. Hence, pictures in which males were depicted in the context of driving or sports, and women in the context of cooking and childcare were noted. Thus, in the textbook *Headway* (p.56) an image of a male behind a wheel with the description "to run out of petrol", as well as an image of a woman carrying a baby with the description "to take care of a child" were noticed. In another task of disputable gender connotations, illustrations of people in common day-to-day situations were presented; males playing a game of rugby and a female baking a cake (Figure 3). Therefore, males illustrated in the textbooks frequently participate in outdoor activities whereas females tend to be presented in the context of the domestic sphere and housekeeping duties. Moreover, as playing sports is still perceived as a traditionally "male" activity, presenting males in the context of sport contributes to the polarisation of gender specific roles. In addition, as team sports and sports with more physical contact are socially perceived as more "masculine" (Riemer & Visio, 2003), it is understandable why "rugby" as a prototypical masculine sport was illustrated in this textbook.

Figure 3

*Stereotypical representations of gender in the textbook Headway (p.112)*

Similar gender bias in teaching materials is warned of by Baranović, Jugović and Doolan (2008) while researching contents of Croatian language textbooks for primary school. Results of their study illustrated the tendency to show males as actively working and responsible for relevant social decisions, whereas in the analysed materials women were more often shown in the context of motherhood and the household.

The race variable was shown to be particularly relevant for the needs of this research. In other words, the most significant disproportion emerged from the analysis of racial relations in textbook materials. Therefore, of 316 racially defined excepts, Caucasians were represented in 288. Underrepresentation of Asians was particularly evident given that they appeared only 5 times in the textbooks that is, in 1.6% of cases (Figure 3).

Figure 4

Racial Groups
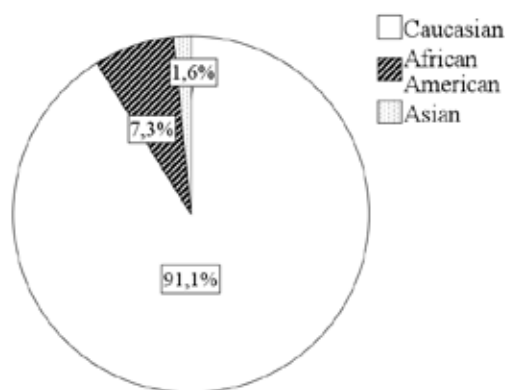
In Table 9 it is possible to read a drastic difference in representation of Caucasians (91.1%) in relation to African Americans (7.3%) and Asians (1.6%). Theoretical frequencies were formulated based on the following distribution: 2/3 of Caucasians, 1/6 of African Americans and 1/6 of Asians. The difference between so elaborated frequencies showed to be prominently statistically significant as the gained chi-square value was 88.704 (Table 10). In other words, the hypothesis was confirmed and the statistically significant difference in the representation of Caucasians, as opposed to that of African Americans and Asians in English language textbooks really does exist.

Table 9

Difference in representation of Caucasians compared to African Americans and Asians in English language textbooks

Race	Observed frequencies N	Observed frequencies N	Difference
Caucasian	288	210	130
African American	23	52.6	-56
Asian	5	52.6	-74
Total	316	316	

Table 10

Results of chi-square test

	Race
χ^2	88.704
df	2
p	0.00

Accordingly, research findings point to implicit perpetuation of racial inequality through English language teaching contents. Gained results are in accordance with much previous research on racial components in English language teaching materials. For example, Roohani and Molana (2013) warn of the underrepresentation of African Americans in English language textbooks despite formally expressed aspirations for ethnic inclusion and multiculturalism. Accordingly, Frerreira (2019) based on research of racial and gender relations in English language textbooks in the Brazilian context, points to the separation of textbook contents from real life. In other words, we are warned of the inappropriacy of contents marked by preferential treatment of Caucasians in a context where more than half of the population is mixed or African American. According to Roohani and Molana (2013), by establishing "white normativity" in education, tendencies of ethnic exclusion as well as distortion of the entire educational experience are perpetuated.

Pursuant to the above, analysis of English language textbooks for first year secondary school in Croatia shows the political colouring of educational materials. In other words, multi-layered ideologies implicitly permeate teaching contents and contribute to the perpetuation of existing social relations of inequality. Therefore, the results of this research support "hidden curriculum" theories in the context of which education is perceived as a means of social control rather than social transformation via materials contributing to enlightening mechanisms of social inequity.

CONCLUSION

In this paper we analysed the forms of representation of culture, race, and gender in English language textbooks for first year secondary school. The results of quantitative analysis of textbook contents pointed out much social bias contained in the analysed material. So, English language textbooks are characterised by preference towards the cultural contexts of English-speaking countries in relation to other cultural contexts. Moreover, cultural contexts of England and the United States of America are indisputably more represented in textbook materials.

Furthermore, analysis of English language teaching materials pointed out the bias of textbook contents towards males. The results of this research are supported by studies to date which point out the elements of gender inequity in English language textbooks (Abdollahzadeh & Baniasad, 2010). Furthermore, the results of this research showed the normalisation of heterosexuality in English language textbooks given that members of the LGBTQ community were completely excluded from teaching contents.

Finally, the racial component was determined on the basis of photographs in textbook materials and was extraordinarily fruitful. Research results pointed out the marked domination of Caucasians and the drastic underrepresentation of other racial groups. Therefore, English language textbooks are marked by a clear preference towards Caucasians. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that English language textbooks for the first year of secondary school nurture the ideal of "Anglo-Saxon, heterosexual and white male". Moreover, informed by the results of this research, it is an indisputable fact that social groups excluded from the stated definition in English language teaching contents are subjected to passivation or complete neglect.

Lastly, the drawbacks of the implemented research must be emphasised. The research samples could be widened and extended to other English language/ Foreign language textbooks (i.e., English/languages for specific purposes). In addition, for a deeper understanding of the stated phenomenon, it is necessary to include teachers, students, and other participants of the education process into such research. Therefore, by implementing semi-structured interviews with teachers and students a more detailed insight into the manifestation of the hidden curriculum in teaching might be gained. Also, a study of ethnographic observation on the teaching of English should be implemented so mechanisms for addressing the stated inequitable relationships in ideologically marked materials can be seen. Hence, directions for further research into this stated phenomenon require triangulation of research methods by combining methods of content analysis with interviews and ethnographic observations in the aim of achieving a true understanding as well as terminating mechanisms for perpetuating social inequality in education.

REFERENCES

Abdollahzadeh, E., & Baniasad S. (2010). Ideologies in the Imported English Textbooks: EFL learners and Teachers' Awareness and Attitude. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, *53*(217), 1–17.

Abercrombie, N., Hill, S., & Turner, B. (2008). *Rječnik sociologije*. Čačić-Kumpes, J. & Kumpes, J. (ed). Jesenski i Turk.

Aliakbari, M. (2004). The Place of Culture in the Iranian ELT Textbooks in High School Level. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, *9*, 1–14.

Alptekin, C. (1993). Target-language culture in EFL materials. *ELT Journal*, *47*(2), 136–143. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/47.2.136

Baranović, B., Doolan, K., & Jugović, I. (2010). Jesu li čitanke književnosti za osnovnoškolsko obrazovanje u Hrvatskoj rodno osjetljive? *Sociologija i prostor*, *187*(2), 349–374.

Bartulović, M. (2013). Test konfrontacije: rodna dimenzija interkulturnog obrazovanja. *Pedagogijska istraživanja*, *10*(2), 265–281.

Basabe, E. A. (2006). From de-anglicization to internationalization: Cultural representations of the UK and the USA in global, adapted and local ELT textbooks in Argentina. *Profile, 7*, 59–75.

Byram, M., Gribkova, B., & Starkey, H. (2002). *Developing the International Dimension in Language Teaching: A Practical Introduction for Teachers*. Language Policy Division.

Cotton, D., Winter, J., & Bailey, I. (2013). Researching the Hidden Curriculum: Intentional and Unintended Messages. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, *37*(2), 192–203. https://doi.org/10.1080/03098265.2012.733684

Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching Assessment.* Cambridge University Press

Ferreira, A. (2019). Social Identities of Black Females in English Language Textbooks Used in Brazil and Cameroon: Intersectionalities of Race, Gender, Social Class and Critical Racial Literacy. *Revista X*, *14*(4), 20–40, https://doi.org/10.5380/rvx.v14i4.66191

Gere, J., & Helwig, C. (2012). Young Adults' Attitudes and Reasoning About Gender Roles in the Family Context. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *36*(3), 301–313, https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684312444272

Gillborn, D. (2006). Critical Race Theory and Education: Racism and Anti-Racism in Educational Theory and Praxis. *Discourse Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *27*(1), 11–32, https://doi.org/10.1080/01596300500510229

Giroux, H. A. (1988). *Teachers as intellectuals: Toward a critical pedagogy of learning*. Bergin and Carvey.

Hooks, B. (1994). *Teaching to Trangress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge.

Kim, S., & Paek, J. (2015). An analysis of culture-related content in English textbooks. *Linguistic Research*, *32*, 83–104. https://doi.org/10.17250/khisli.32..201507.005

Krippendorff, K. (2019). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology.* SAGE Publications.

McKay, S. L. (2000). Teaching English as an international language: Implications for cultural materials in the classroom. *TESOL Journal*, *9*(4), 7–11. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1949-3533.2000.tb00276.x

Milas, G. (2005). *Istraživačke metode u psihologiji i drugim društvenim znanostima*. Naklada Slap.

Mlinarević, V. (2016). Implicitne poruke u skrivenom kurikulumu suvremene škole. *Život i škola: časopis za teoriju i praksu odgoja i obrazovanja, 62*(2), 13–25.

Pennycook, A. (2017). *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language.* Routledge.

Riemer, B., & Visio, M. (2003). Gender Typing of Sports: An Investigation of Metheny's Classification. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, *74*(2), 193–204, https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.2003.10609081

Roohani, A., & Molana E. (2013). An Investigation into Cultural Representation in Interchange Textbooks. *Issues in Language Teaching, 2*(2), 113–136.

Sadeghpour, M., & Sharifian, F. (2019). World Englishes in English language teaching. *World Englishes 38*(1–2), 245–258. https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12372

Sommier, M., Lahti, M., & Roiha, A. (2021). From 'intercultural-washing' to meaningful intercultural education: Revisiting higher education practice. *JPHE*, *3*(2), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.47989/kpdc130

Soto-Molina, J. E., & Méndez, P. (2020). Linguistic Colonialism in the English Language. *HOW Journal, 27*(1), 11–28. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.27.1.521

Tollefson, J., & Perez-Milans, M. (2018). *The Oxford Handbook of Language Policy and Planning*. Oxford University Press.

Van de Haak, M. (2018). High culture unravelled: A historical and empirical analysis of contrasting logics of cultural hierarchy. *Human Figuration*, *7*(1), 1–21,

Ministarstvo znanosti i obrazovanja (2021). *Katalog udžbenika*. Republika Hrvatska, Ministarstvo znanosti i obrazovanja.

APPENDIX

Textbook sample

	Title	*Subtitle*	**Authors**	**Year of publication**	**Publisher**
1)	*Insight*	*English language textbook for first and second grade of grammar schools and 4-year vocational schools, first foreign language*	*Jayne Wildman, Cathy Mayers, Claire Thacker*	*2019*	*Profil Klett*
2)	*Headway Fifth Edition*	*English language textbook for first and second grade of grammar schools and 4-year vocational schools, first foreign language*	*Liz Soars, John Soars, Paul Hancock*	*2019*	*Profil Klett*
3)	*Forward 1*	*English language textbook for first grade of grammar schools and 4-year secondary schools*	*Anica Gregović, Melita Jurković and Aleksandra Pavličević*	*2019*	*Školska Knjiga*
4)	*Outcomes*	*English language textbook for first and second grade of grammar schools and 4-year vocational schools, first foreign language*	*Hugh Dellar and Andrew Walkley*	*2019*	*V.B.Z.*
5)	*Tune Up!*	*English language textbook with audio recordings for first grade of secondary schools of economics*	*Boris Anić, Petra Buljević, Susan D. Curtis, Milena Gilić and Višnja Pentić*	*2019*	*Profil Klett*

Textbook sample (continues)

	Title	Subtitle	Authors	Year of publication	Publisher
6)	*Focus 1*	*English language textbook for first grade of grammar schools, second foreign language; for first or first and second grade of 4-year secondary schools, first or second language; for first or first and second grade of 5-year vocational schools, first or second foreign language*	*Marta Uminska, Patricia Reilly and Tomasz Siuta*	*2019*	*Ljevak*
7)	*New Success*	*English language textbook for first grade of grammar schools, second foreign language; for first or first and second grade of 4-year secondary schools, first or second language; for first or first and second grade of 5-year vocational schools, first or second foreign language*	*Stuart McKinlay and Bob Hastings*	*2019*	*Ljevak*
8)	*Solutions*	*English language textbook B1 for first grade of grammar schools, first foreign language*	*Tim Falla and Paul A. Davies*	*2019*	*Profil Klett*
9)	*Discover Medical English*	*English language textbook for first year of medical secondary schools*	*Anica Gregović*	*2019*	*Školska Knjiga*