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Special Interest Group

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For further information, contact:

GALE c/o JALT Central Office, Urban Edge Building, 5th Floor, 1-37-9 Taito, Taito ku, Tokyo 110-0016, Japan. Tel: (+813) 3837-1630 Fax: (+813) 3837-1630 email: jalt@gol.com

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Editorial Foreword

We are pleased to bring you the 10th issue of The GALE Journal. In this issue, we offer three long papers and one review. Jordan Svien offers a research paper which conducts a detailed content analysis of a widely used English textbook. Svien examines the way gender is represented in the book through a variety of analytical tools, with both positive and negative findings. Second, Tanja McCandie and Sarah Mulvey have written what I believe is the journal's first opinion article. In it, they draw connections between the #metoo movement and discrimination and harassment in both Japanese educational institutions and JALT. They offer suggestions for concrete steps that both individuals and the JALT organization can take to start to address these problems. Third, Gerry Yokota has included a translation of a textbook chapter she wrote (which her publisher, Osaka University Press, has kindly allowed us to reprint) on gender literacy. This chapter helps students learn a way of reading texts through the lens of gender, and has been used as part of a course at Osaka University for nearly a decade.

Thank you to everyone who everyone who contributed to this issue. Without our devoted team of reviewers and proofreaders, publishing The GALE Journal would be impossible. Special thanks to Reiko Yoshihara, our Japanese Editor, for providing and editing the Japanese abstracts. In addition, Diane Nagatomo provided key support as Assistant Editor in discussions about the shape and plan for this issue.

Also, I would like to offer my deepest apologies for the lengthy delay in this issue. In part to make up for this, we are happy to announce that we are already working on the next issue, and hope to have it out by winter 2018/2019. From that issue, Gwyn Helverson will be taking over as the journal Editor, and I will be moving down to an assistant role. Gwyn played a key role in both shaping the composition of the current and following issue, as well as assisted me in managing the practical process of preparing everything. I am confident that Gwyn will successfully carry on The GALE Journal tradition.

Finally, I would like to give recognition to a recent project started by two GALE members, Tanja McCandie and Paul Arenson. One of the ongoing problems in academic conferences is the lack of balance (gender, nationality, etc.) in presenters, panels, and keynote speakers. Neither Japan nor JALT is an exception to this problem. One of the commonly expressed responses to criticism of unequal representation is that conference organizers will state that while they are happy to include presenters of all genders, nationalities, etc., they

simply “don’t know” anyone who is female/Japanese/non-native speaking/etc. In an effort to help address this problem, McCandie and Arenson have created the “Gender Equality: ELT in Japan” website, which can be found at <https://equalityeltjapan.net/>. The site provides a database of women ELT presenters in Japan organized by name and topics that they can present on (including both gender-related and other topics). There is also a place where male allies can pledge to present only on panels (etc.) that are diverse and representative. Additionally, the site includes resources on gender, including lesson plans that can be used in the classroom. Anyone is welcome to register as a presenter/ally or to suggest additional resources.

Aaron Hahn is a Lecturer at Fukuoka University in Fukuoka, Japan. His current research includes critical discourse analysis of professional publications in the field of TESOL and study of how to transform English language teaching from a native-speaker-centric model to a global model that values English speakers using all varieties of English via an ELF orientation.

Toward 21st century egalitarianism: Gender representation in a contemporary EFL textbook

Jordan Svien
Hiroshima Bunkyo University

Abstract

Twentieth century ESL textbooks often suffered from omission of females in multiple contexts, such as lack of female spoken dialogue, lack of female pronouns, or lack of respect for women by positioning them as low status or as the butt of jokes. As awareness of these issues has heightened, many textbook editors have made a stronger effort toward gender egalitarianism in their discourse and visual depictions. This paper critically analyzes *Smart Choice Starter*, Second Edition (Wilson & Healy, 2011) for its verbal and visual representations of females and males. The author finds that while the text presents a vastly more egalitarian perspective of gender than older textbooks, defining lines between the sexes have yet to be eliminated, and latent biases within the count of visual depictions, occupations, and norm-breaking indicate the text is not yet fully comfortable giving women the equality or individuality that men enjoy.

概要

20世紀のESLテキストは、女性の会話文の欠如、女性代名詞の欠落、女性を低地位に位置付けたり冗談の標的にすることによる尊敬の念の欠如など、複合的な文脈の中で女性の記述に関する重大な脱落に悩んできた。これらを問題視する動きは高まり、多くの編集者が男女平等主義に向けて会話文や視覚的描写において多大な努力をしてきた。本研究は、女性と男性の言語的、視覚的表象について *Smart Choice Starter 2nd Edition* (Wilson and Healy, 2011) を批判的に分析したものである。筆者は、本テキストは従来のテキストに比べ男女の平等性を表現している一方、男女の線引きは未だに取り除かれておらず、男女の描写、職業、模範における偏見が描かれていることを明らかにした。そして、本テキストが男性が享受している平等性や個人主義を女性に与えていないことを明示した。

Through the language and images presented in the L2 classroom, students create a picture of

both language and culture, which in turn influences them as users of the L2 and as learners in general. Lakoff (1973) argued that language is reflective of our society, where assumptions and ideals in our society are in turn echoed in our language. For language classrooms, cultural acquisition is an inseparable element, and often an explicit goal (Hartman & Judd, 1978). Beyond the teacher, the most prevalent source of language in the L2 classroom is the textbook, the contents of which must be scrutinized for their presentation of gender and sociolinguistic appropriateness due to their tremendous pedagogic importance (Otlowski, 2003). Yet historically speaking, many EFL course materials have failed to present an image of gender that allows for egalitarian opportunities in the L2 classroom. Twentieth century EFL materials contained language that reflected traditional androcentric biases, and even as they began attracting more attention and analyses, these biases continued to persist with claims they were too minor to be worth fixing (Porreca, 1984). However, androcentric gender biases frequently serve to dictate women's gender roles and expectations, and the problem is especially prevalent in the EFL classroom (Cochran, 1996). With more time, discourse, respect, attention, positivity, and greater bands of normalized behavior afforded to men, women can easily feel disenfranchised in both the learning process and in the L2 and its ascribed set of cultural values, leading to dangerous and counterproductive societal implications, confining female learners' sense of self-worth and academic and career choices (McMahill, 2001; Ndura, 2004). Rectifying these inequities starts with raising awareness of the issue among educators along with a critical examination of instructional materials (Ndura, 2004).

Undeniably, how students react to a text is partially influenced by both the teacher's method of shaping cultural discourse and to themselves as learners and individuals, and arguments have been made that purport one to be dominant over the other. Jones, Kitetu, and Sunderland (1997) argued the former, that the teacher is ultimately responsible for the presentation of a text, capable of transforming sexist texts into egalitarian ones and vice versa. Talburt and Stewart (1999) suggested the course curriculum, and by extension the teacher, should be invited to use gender "as a fulcrum for critical understanding... encouraging students to learn from others' experiences as an alternative to generalizations." In contrast, Sunderland, Cowley, Rahim, Leontzakou, and Shattuck (2000) argued the students ultimately hold the authority. Although texts that do not mesh with a given student

population's norms may cause some learners to feel alienated and/or disengaged, others may outright reject these biases and assumptions or even enjoy their absurdity, reinforcing their individual agency (Sunderland et al., 2000). In ideal circumstances, learners can be self-deterministic in generating linguistic value and learning opportunities from a book despite apparent sexism; or, the sexism can be viewed cross-culturally to determine how different cultures would approach it (Jones et al., 1997).

However, while teachers' awareness levels toward facilitating gender dialogue and learners' abilities to cognitively process and accept or reject gendered imbalances they perceive should not be discounted, neither should they be used as permission to fail to rectify imbalances that are present. In many cases, the textbook acts as the authority on the language, causing those marginalized in its pages to suffer from reduced learning opportunities, both in a practical sense, such as lowered opportunities for lexical skills (i.e., conversational openings and exchanges) and from a demotivational standpoint, as expectations of disempowered roles take hold in the minds of the learners (Jones et al., 1997). This notion is doubly present in the case of younger learners, whose inherent impressionability and acceptance of authority, not only due to age but also social context, allows for gender stereotyping and its ramifications to have a lasting impact on their linguistic learning and value systems (Porreca, 1984). Furthermore, it should not be taken for a given that teachers are aware of the imbalances themselves and have the wherewithal, or more practically, the lesson time to promote gender-based dialogue. Supplementary materials provided to students, for example, may be chosen for their facilitation of self-study content with little or no teacher-led discussion of the material and its potential biases, a situation particularly applicable to Japan and its culture of exam cramming (Lowe, 2013).

With this in mind, what notion of gender equality should course books strive for? Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008), in a consideration of the range of character and personality roles (primarily negative ones) afforded to men in course materials, wondered if representing women and men on truly equal terms would indeed promote true egalitarianism. They argued that showing a completely equal division and ignoring gender roles does not reflect the social realities for our learners, and that pretending that women have more social equality to act against ascribed norms than society today permits distorts the ideal as to render it farcical rather than aspirational. Rather, ensuring that while *stereotyping* is

eliminated, proportioning these negative roles toward how they accurately are found in society does not serve to perpetuate stereotypes but rather allows learners to connect the textbook contents more directly to their own lives as they match their realities.

On the other hand, the language classroom presents itself as an opportunity to transcend one's known culture and notions of the social status quo. In an ethnographic study of Japanese feminist approaches to English learning, McMahon (2001) found that due to the role English plays in career promotion and economic independence, in addition to increased opportunities for participation and representation in societal discourse, feminist learners saw English as a liberating conduit, particularly in contrast to ascribed gendered linguistic constraints inherent in the Japanese language. For these women, choosing to speak English itself can indicate access to and an expression of a new gender identity, as "the struggle to express oneself in a second language can entail the reconstruction of all aspects of one's social identity, including gender" (McMahon, 2001).

Considering the consequential impact the materials serve to play on learners' future selves, I believe there is no benefit to unequal representation in course materials. While today's society may not be egalitarian, material publishers should strive to remove lines of gender and promote full egalitarianism as they help fulfill learner ambitions.

Gender Inequality in EFL Materials

A plethora of analyses and case studies have been conducted on how gender inequality is manifested in EFL materials. This section summarizes several key findings in the literature and considers how non-egalitarian notions are still present in today's materials along with positive changes.

Omission

Porreca (1984) found EFL course books suffered from omission of females as characters or even in the text at all. The course books she analyzed saw few female characters and even less as the focus of feature stories, results that were later substantiated by Thompson (2006), Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008), and Ghorbani (2009). Hellinger (1980, in Jones et al., 1997) and Porreca (1984) also found a lack of female spoken dialogue, with total word counts heavily favoring men.

Narisawa and Yokotu (1991, cited in Mukundan & Nimehchisalem, 2008) found unrealistic preference for male characters in Japanese ELT materials, with males usually in the protagonist role, while Lowe (2013) found male pronouns 25 times more visible than female pronouns in Japanese cram school materials. Farooq (1999) and Stockdale (2006) found textbooks contain more references to male names than female ones, while Hartman and Judd (1978) and Rifkin (1998) found that women are often referred to by “pet” or informal names while men are called by formal names or titles. Stockdale’s (2006) analysis of *Impact Values* found single-sex dialogues representing the majority of spoken text, with male-only dialogues outnumbering female-only three to two.

Occupational Roles

Numerous studies (Porreca, 1984; Farooq, 1999; Otlowski, 2003; Thompson, 2006; Ghorbani, 2009; Lee & Collins, 2009) found men to outnumber women in occupational depictions. Men have been found in a wider range of occupations than women (Ghorbani, 2009) and in jobs of higher status than women (Thompson, 2006). Furthermore, several textbooks have perpetuated the notion of women as homemakers (Otlowski, 2003; Ndura, 2004; Thompson, 2006), both in direct occupational depiction but also linguistically (where women’s language tends to be centered more inwardly toward the home while men’s language points outside of it). Hartman and Judd (1978) and Porreca (1984) both found female characters often positioned as the butt of jokes and disrespect. Similarly, Levine and O’Sullivan (2010), found grave imbalances in *Talk a Lot, Starter Book*, Second Edition, where in addition to an overwhelming preponderance of male visual depictions, the rare female depictions fall into juvenile stereotyping and low economic statuses. Lee (2014) similarly revealed that Japanese Ministry of Education approved English course books applaud men for their wealth and achievement while relegating women to indoor activities and emotional fragility.

Firstness

Several studies (see Hartman & Judd, 1978; Porreca, 1984; Stockdale, 2006; Ghorbani, 2009) found gendered noun or pronoun firstness (which gendered word is placed first

in complementary pairs, such as *he/she* or *mother/father*) heavily skewed toward men in analyses of several EFL course books. ETHEL (1980, cited in Jones et al., 1997), Porreca (1984), Poulou (1999, in Ghorbani, 2009) and Stockdale (2006) also found a preponderance of males starting dialogues, and Porreca (1984) found more males than females receiving the first gendered reference in drills and activities.

Lexical Functions

Considering lexical analysis of gender, several studies (see Hartman & Judd, 1978; Farooq, 1999; Rifkin, 1998; Hellinger, 1980; Sano, Iida, & Hardy, 2001; Lee, 2014) found men in EFL course books to use more discourse and decision-making words. Hellinger (1980) argued that men utilized more verbs in their speech in textbooks to show activity and decision making, a concern later supported by Lee (2014). Furthermore, Hartman and Judd (1978) frequently found gendered suffixes applied to occupational and positional titles (such as businessman or newsman) to designate gender roles within certain occupational fields. Thompson's (2006) gender course book analysis found women and effeminate males utilizing more negative vocabulary, often complaining. She also found men more lexically dominant by making categorical statements and interruptions more than women, whereas women overlapped and used backchannels to ensure they were listening to what was being said.

Gender Norms and Acceptability

Lowe's (2013) analysis of Japanese cram school texts found adjectives used in relation to males outnumbering adjectives used for females sixteen to two, with both female-related adjectives with negative connotations (*injured* and *spinsterly*). While one quarter of the male adjectives were also negative, most adjectives described men glowingly, such as *best-educated*, *qualified*, or *exceptional*. Several of the adjectives were in regard to the "generic male", where a generic individual is male by default as opposed to female, which is seen as a more distinct characteristic. In contrast, Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008) found negative characters to be overwhelmingly male as opposed to female in their study of Malaysian EFL course books. While one may argue that decrying this dynamic is hypocritical considering Porreca (1984), Hartman and Judd (1978), Thompson (2006), and

Levine and O’Sullivan’s (2010) criticism of women in such capacities, it, along with Lowe’s (2013) findings, also normalizes the outer bands of acceptability for men and similarly constricts them for women. Regardless of how far society has progressed in the early portion of the 21st century, there is little denying the fact that men enjoy privilege over women in terms of their behavioral acceptability, where women understand they must walk a finer line regarding appearance and behavior to accommodate themselves within society, an issue that is exacerbated in more gender imbalanced cultures such as Japan. Considering McMahonill’s (2001) discussion of “internalized sexism” among Japanese women, where women traditionally feel their sense of self-worth is tied to marriage, children, and grandchildren, these concerns are hardly disputable if texts present men as the gender with the capacity for acting outside of social norms while women must take care to follow them. This in turn results in an identity construct at odds with the liberation McMahonill’s (2001) learners were attempting to gain out of their second language study. Finally, portraying negative characters as only male may inherently limit female story or dialogue participation, as the negatively characterized males often supplant them as the central focus of the text (Mukundan and Nimehchisalem, 2008).

Positive Trends

Despite several recent studies cited above finding continuations of sexist tendencies, others have found progress has been made in developing more gender egalitarian texts. Litz (2005) found the authors of *English Firsthand 2* to have clearly considered and avoided gender biases and stereotypes, with presentation of gender neutral vocabulary and a range of occupational depictions for both sexes. In an analysis of three course books, Jones et al. (1997) found gender differences too small to be significant. Two of the three course books (*Headway* and *Look Ahead*) saw women more visible on its pages, had more female text and dialogue firstness, and a slightly greater variety of social and occupational roles, while *Hotline* trended slightly in the opposite direction in each category. Nevertheless, Jones et al. (1997) declared the investigation “largely positive”, noting that these course book publishers are more apt to avoid *thinking male* and carefully consider gender, language, and social roles. McCarthy (2008) found *New English Upgrade 2* to represent females and males evenly, including eschewing titles in favor of first names only, splitting occupational roles and using

gender-neutral vocabulary, and finding no noticeable gendered-discourse trends. Interestingly, McCarthy (2008) found the text to have a reversal of pronoun firstness sexism, with *she* placed before *he* in 96% of circumstances, leading to overall female firstness in 60% of the text, prompting McCarthy to consider if this construction was forced in an attempt to draw attention to traditional gender biases.

From these studies, it seems that some textbook editors have made stronger efforts to be more egalitarian, while others have swung the pendulum past the center, melding together a superficial egalitarianism in terms of occupations, gendered nouns, depictions and firstness with a hesitancy to take risks in portraying females in any light but positive, leading to its own set of biases and ascribed roles. While one may argue this is preferable to blatant sexism, this still does not represent true egalitarianism, giving girls and boys yet equal opportunities for an L2 linguistic and cultural identity. As a result, it is still essential that textbooks published in today's world are further vetted for gender biases to determine how these biases are currently manifested and what progress is truly being made in this realm.

Textbook for Analysis and Methods

The present study focuses on a contemporary four-skills textbook that was used at a prior teaching institution of the author's in Japan: *Smart Choice, Second Edition* (hereafter called SC) by Ken Wilson and Thomas Healy (2011, Oxford University Press). While not limited to Japanese EFL learners, this series has been heavily promoted and adopted in Japan and other Asian countries (Wilson, 2017). This analysis will focus on *Smart Choice Starter*, the first of the four books in the series. This text was chosen due to the applicability of its content (such as occupation focused chapters) to a gender analysis, in addition to its target audience of teenagers and young adult learners (Wilson, 2017), thus allowing for the potential for presence of gender egalitarianism or gender biases to set early language learning impressions and assumptions.

In his review of gender course book analysis methods, Graci (1989) argued for a higher level of standardization in gender analyses, purporting that research done before his study had been too haphazard and selective in its analysis methods. Graci (1989) contended that all researchers should ensure their investigations contain the counts of female and male appearances, names, titles, pronouns, illustrations, and stereotyped social roles, in addition to

the counts and relative distribution of occupations, thus ensuring comparability between future studies. As all of Graci's (1989) indicators are applicable to SC, this base methodology was chosen. Furthermore, considering the implications of usage in Japan, the findings of several Japan-specific studies, including a preponderance of male characters and protagonists (Narisawa & Yokotu, 1991, cited in Mukundan & Nimehchisalem, 2008; Levine & O'Sullivan, 2010), greater male personality bands (Lowe, 2013) and male discourse and decision-making lexis (Sano et al., 2001; Lee, 2014) were included for observation. Based on these studies and to compare results against the literature, representations of men and women in SC were analyzed both lexically and visually. The lexical elements consisted of:

- Speaking time and linguistic diversity: Which gender receives more speaking time in the text, and how many word types do they use?
- Word selection, including names and verbs used: How are different genders addressed? Is there disparity of certain words, including verb usage, in particular discourse and decision-making verbs?
- Gender representation within and firstness of dialogues: Do men start more conversations than women? Are dialogues primarily single or mixed-sex?
- Dialogue topics: Are certain topics relegated to a single gender?
- Gender firstness of pronoun presentation: Which gender is presented first within language presentation text and activities and also within complementary constructions?

Secondly, visual depictions of characters and illustrations were analyzed:

- Counts of male and female depictions: In a simple sense, how often are men and women seen on the pages? Do "background" or "filler" images follow the same trends as genders displayed prominently?
- Recurring characters: How many female/male characters are there, and do any fall victim to stereotyping?
- Occupations: How often do women and men have a discernable occupation, and what range of occupations are found?
- Norm-breaking/humorous depictions: Who breaks social norms, and in what way?

For linguistic analysis, the text analyzed came from the conversation practice pages, listening pages, and any grammar practice pages with clear gender markers, such as a nearby picture or name, while text without clear markers was not used. Words were transcribed into text files of male and female speech and tabulated via the *word list* function of the corpus tool AntConc (Anthony, 2017) to count both word types (distinct words) and total words (including repeated word types). Microsoft Excel was subsequently used to compare the word types in determining word dominance. For visual depiction analysis, both stock photos and illustrations were observed for total counts of males and females in addition to depictions of occupations and characterizations. For each analysis category, running totals were kept in Excel for each chapter, divided by subcategory where applicable. Chi-square calculations were completed via the QuickCalcs chi-square calculator (GraphPad Software, 2018).

Linguistic depictions

Speaking time and word type breadth. The data showed that female and male speaking time was mostly balanced, with females speaking 2,740 words (52%) and men 2,516 words (48%), a narrow but statistically significant difference according to a chi-square test ($p=.002$) when compared to a 50% baseline (2,628 words each). Overall, the balance in male and female speaking time is largely due to the fact that over 85% of the textbook's dialogues contain one female and one male speaker.

Despite the 224 more words women used in the book, women and men used a near identical amount of word types, with men using 474 and women 471, meaning that women's vocabulary breadth was slightly narrower than men's, with women using each word an average of 5.82 times compared to 5.31 times by men. However, when compared to expected lexical development rates (an average rate of 5.56 words per type resulting in an expected 492 and 452 female and male word types, respectively), this discrepancy is not statistically significant according to a chi-square test ($p=0.15$).

One final speaking-time note is that while SC has a male-only narrator in its CD tracks, it is well balanced in terms of females and males voicing the grammar and pronunciation drills. In addition, a student assistant appears once per chapter to offer helpful hints; these assistants vary evenly between female and male each chapter.

Word predominance. Table 1 reports instances where a word is used over 70% of the time by one sex. Male words include games (*play, chess, video, games*), confirmations (*ok*), inquiries about age, who an activity was done with, and playing the guitar. Female words include actors (*Tom Cruise*), types of music (*kind, Latin, dance*), affirmations (*sure*), giving out phone numbers, and discussing what to make for dinner (indeed, the single male instance of *make* is a question of the dialogue's female counterpart: "What do you want to make for dinner?"). While it could be argued that this is a continuation of gender stereotyping (see Ndura, 2004), with word counts being moderately small, a single dialogue, especially one of the few single-sex dialogues, can skew the results in favor of a particular word. Thus, while words predominantly found in one sex are present, the clear majority of words are fairly evenly distributed across both sexes.

Table 1

Top Words by Predominance Score (Used 70% or More by One Sex)

Rank	Male Word	Count	Predominance		Count	Predominance	
			Score	Female Word		Score	Score
1	play	18	12.9	Sure	9	7.2	
2	ok	26	10.5	Went	12	6.0	
3	chess*	7	7.0	make	7	5.3	
4	with	12	6.0	Tom Cruise*	5	5.0	
5	old	9	5.7	didn't*	5	5.0	
6	does	9	5.7	Phone Number	8	4.8	
7	video*	5	5.0	Latin	6	4.3	
8	games*	5	5.0	kind	8	3.6	
9	these	6	4.3	dance	8	3.6	
10	guitar*	4	4.0	had	5	3.3	

Note 1: The predominance score was calculated by multiplying the percentage of the time the word was used by the predominant sex by the difference in its usage over the opposite sex. For example, as *sure* was used by women nine times and by men only once, the resulting calculation is $(9/10) * (9-1) = 7.2$.

Note 2: A star (*) indicates zero uses of that word by the opposite sex.

Names, titles, and verbs. Table 2 contains the count of first and last names used by women and men throughout the text. The data do not concur with the textbook studies above, showing nearly even numbers of usage. Furthermore, the evidence does not concur with Hartman and Judd's (1978) or Rifkin's (1998) findings, as the vast majority of name usage in

SC is first name only, and in the five instances where titles were used, four were regarding females' conversation participants.

Table 2

Name Counts by Sex

Name Type	Women's Usage	Men's Usage	Total
Woman's First Name Only	14	35	
Woman's First and Last Name	2	1	56
Woman's Title and Last Name	1	3	
Man's First Name Only	41	12	
Man's First and Last Name	0	1	55
Man's Title and Last Name	1	0	

Table 3 shows the total and compared usage of several decision-making and discourse words. While it appears the data for decision-making words concurs with Sano et al. (2001), there are two important caveats. Words more strongly correlated to decision making, such as *choose* and *decide* were not found at all in the textbook, thus leaving only words with weaker correlations to decision making. Also, as previously noted, the results for *play* greatly skew the results, indicating games, music and activities are more closely correlated with men than decision making. The data found no evidence to support Sano et al.'s (2001) second finding that women use fewer discourse related words than men, nor support for Hellinger (1980) about total verb usage.

Table 3

Decision-Making and Discourse Verb Usage

Verb Type	Verb	Men's Usage	Women's Usage	Difference
Decision-Making	Go	23	31	F +8
	Play	19	3	M +16
	Work	7	4	M +3
	Look	8	7	M +1
	Total	57	45	M +12
Discourse	Talk	4	2	M +2
	Say	1	2	F +1
	Tell	0	1	F +1
	Think	5	7	F +2
	Believe	1	1	Even
	Write	2	0	M +2
	Total	13	13	Even

Representation within and firstness of dialogues. As noted above, the vast majority of dialogues in SC contain one female and one male speaker. Table 4 displays the percentages of single and mixed-sex dialogues along a breakdown of initial and final speakers.

Table 4

Sex and Firstness of Dialogue Participants

Dialogue	Female	Male
Single-Sex	9 (7.7%)	7 (6.0%)
Mixed-Sex	101 (86.3%)	
Initiate	45 (45%)	56 (45%)
Conclude	56 (55%)	45 (55%)
Initiate and Conclude	12 (12%)	12 (12%)
Total	117 (100%)	

In the 101 mixed sex dialogues found in SC's grammar drills, listening practices, conversation practices, and background illustrations, a slight preponderance of males speaking first and females finishing the conversation is found. However, it is important to look at where these dialogues are found. Throughout the book, conversation practice exercises and listening exercises are the main medium through which dialogue is presented, and a greater level of parity is found among these types. Furthermore, over half of the 11

additional dialogues that are started by men are accounted for by a background illustration that is repeated six times in various chapters (shown in Figure 1), where a silhouetted man asks a question and a silhouetted woman answers.



Figure 1. Conversation silhouette

Notably, all dialogues in SC contain only two speakers, never a third party. Furthermore, these dialogues are entirely turn-based. There is never an instance where a speaker, unable to come up with what to say, is interrupted by their dialogue partner, and as such, each speaker finishes their line completely before their partner begins. While this approach is somewhat stilted in terms of portraying authentic communication, it nonetheless eliminates opportunities for exchange element bias as found by Stockdale (2006), where men initiate more dialogues but reply or follow-up less than women. Indeed, within SC an equal number of women and men are found who both initiate and finish a mixed-sex dialogue. However, due to the larger number of males beginning dialogues, this translates to roughly 21% of male-first dialogues being finished by men, while 27% of female-first dialogues are finished by women.

Dialogue trends. While most dialogues contain discourse related to the functional topic of the chapter, such as food, schedules, or cities, there are a few noticeable gender-based trends within these dialogues.

Table 5 shows SC's single sex dialogue topics and gender tropes. In five separate dialogues, men ask women for their phone numbers, and on four occasions women reply with the information (although two instances are accompanied by a school registration picture), while women do not ask for men's phone numbers at all. Additionally, on two occasions

(with a third having similar intonations), a male character flirts with and is rebuffed by a female character, and in another, two males are talking about an attractive female sitting nearby. In contrast, women discuss having shopped or spent time at the mall twice as often as men. In one instance a woman exclaims “I love shopping!” a man replies with “I don’t like shopping.” when asked to go by his female counterpart. Finally, both men and women are presented in multiple dialogues as working and having jobs. However, in reference to spending time at work, men mention being at work on three occasions, including one who worked on a Saturday and another all through his birthday, while twice women’s dialogues discuss how they were absent from work (one being sick, the other to go to the mall) and a third mentions that she is free to shop for groceries while her roommate (a man) works. While this image is balanced by a dialogue in which a male interviewee clearly fails his interview with a female boss due to a lack of work skills, it nevertheless tends toward an image of men spending more time on and having more dedication to work than women. On the other hand, women being placed in more “adult” roles than men in at least two occasions is at odds with Thompson (2006), who found women more inclined take on negative linguistic discourse and lower statuses. Most of the dialogue in SC is positive and upbeat, and negative discourse rarely takes on a bigger role than expressing a dislike of a food or music genre and is not strongly correlated to gender.

Table 5

Single Sex Topics and Gender Tropes

Female Only Topics	Male Only Topics	Female Tropes	Male Tropes
Movie Stars	Cute Girls	Shopping	Flirting
Apartment + Bathrooms	Chess (x2)	Skipping work	Working
Shopping		Giving phone num.	Asking phone num.
Eating Out		Responsible adults	Childish
			Playing the guitar

Wilson and Healy’s (2011) text includes a nearly even number of topics significant to female and male audiences, a result contrary to Stockdale (2006). On the other hand, as SC’s dialogues are predominantly mixed-sex, the single-sex dialogues serve as a strong indication about which topics are geared toward females or males. SC depicts shopping, celebrities, and

restaurants as topics geared toward a female audience, while chess (as the only repeat single-sex topic) and girls are topics for a male audience. These dialogues contribute strongly to many of the gender predominant words found in Table 1.

Firstness of gender presentation. SC's language presentation pages (grammar and pronunciation drills) often demonstrate target structures using third person pronouns. Additionally, female and male names, nouns, and pronouns are often found in grammar, listening, speaking, and writing questions and activities. From these pages, two kinds of complementary constructions were tabulated: A/B constructions (such as he/she) and A and B constructions (such as mother and father). A more general count was also taken regarding which gender was used first in a text or activity (if both genders were eventually present) or found in isolation. These totals are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

Text Firstness – Language Presentation

Source	First Reference		Isolated References		A/B Constructions		A and B Constructions	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Language Presentation	8	5	2	6	1	0	0	0
Language Activities	19	19	11	14	0	0	3	3
Appendices	11	6	7	8	32	0	2	2
Total	38	30	20	28	33	0	5	5

Note: The data was originally coded to reflect firstness of gendered nouns/pronouns in found in near proximity to each other, but this method was rejected due to being too ambiguous, as it was too subjective where one “near proximity” section ended and another began. As a result, the data shows only which gendered word begins a section rather than all gendered references with each section.

Different portions of the text show varying levels of egalitarianism. The language activities contain an equal number of A and B constructions (i.e. *mother and father, Dave and Linda*) and an equal mix of women or men receiving the first question in activities, in addition to lacking any A/B construction types at all. Furthermore, the third-person gender

referenced in these activities almost always alternates within themselves, with no males or females being referenced more than twice in a row. Across the entire book, solo gendered pronoun references are commonly found, with solo female references more prevalent than solo male references. Finally, there is no omission of male or female forms of gendered occupational pair words. For example, the chapter on occupations teaches both gendered forms of several occupation nouns, and the female form *businesswoman* is introduced before *businessman*.

However, in the language presentation texts, there is a slight preponderance of male pronouns being presented first, concurring with Stockdale (2006). This pattern becomes exacerbated in the appendices, where male pronouns are found first more often in exercises, alternate less often with females, and are always put first in A/B pairings (or in grammar charts with identical predicates) with female pronouns, with the only bright spot being an equal number of A and B constructions. It can be surmised that while the main chapters, particularly the activity pages, carry a sense of being more careful to limit pronoun firstness, the appendices, being more “streamlined,” do not share this practice.

Visual Depictions

General and total depictions. The majority of people in SC are young, college age students, likely to make them relatable to SC’s target audience. Both male and female movie stars and musicians are found, similar to depictions found in Litz (2005), and these celebrities are always presented in a positive light to be seen as role models. However, unlike in Litz’s work, there are few older celebrities or characters with speaking roles, and even the peripheral illustrations, whether stock photos or cartoons, depict mostly young and attractive people. Although exceptions are rare, when they do occur, they are usually male.

Table 7

Visual Depiction Counts

Depiction Type	Women	Men
Featured in Illustration	147	163
Background of Illustration	38	59
In Silhouette	80	106
Total	265	328

Note: These figures were counted twice due to the subjectivity in denoting a depiction as a featured or background illustration, with the second counting finding 148/164 featured women/men and fewer background illustrations.

Table 7 displays the total visual depiction counts of women and men in SC. A total of 328 men (55%) versus 265 (45%) women are depicted, a statistically significant result ($p=0.010$) compared to equal distribution on a chi-square test. A distinction was made between those who were the focus of the picture or illustration and those who were featured in the background or only in silhouette, and after dropping these bit images, the totals lower to 163 men (52.6%) versus 147 women (47.4%). Nonetheless, a greater number of men are depicted in ten separate chapters or sections of the book, while women are more frequently seen in six chapters, though due to the close total prominent depiction counts, the predominant gender has only a single additional depiction in seven of these instances.

Looking beyond the featured depictions, 60% of all bit characters and 57% of all silhouettes are male, betraying a subtle androcentricity in which it is more natural for a generic person when needed to fill an illustration to be male. In only one chapter do background women outnumber men, while the opposite is true for six chapters. The main cause of the silhouette discrepancy is a group work icon used in every chapter of the book depicting 2 males and 1 female as shown in Figure 2.

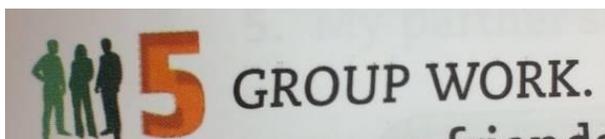


Figure 2. Group Work silhouette

Recurring characters. Spoken dialogue participants are almost entirely non-repeating; that is, the dialogue participants are mostly random. Only in one page per chapter are participants from the “core” character set seen, a set of five women and six men who

collectively make 24 appearances between them (split evenly between the women and men). As a result, the same actor is seen at most three times over the entire textbook.

Depictions and occupations. A greater percentage of men is depicted in occupational capacities than women. While nearly half of male illustrations have a discernible occupation (48%), only one third of female illustrations (32%) follow suit. Table 8 shows the full range and counts of occupations depicted.

Table 8

Occupation Depictions

Male Occupation	Count	Female Occupation	Count
Musician	13	Singer	9
Businessman	7	Musician	5
Photographer	7	Actress	4
Actor	5	Businesswoman	3
Singer	4	Teacher	3
Teacher	4	Cashier	2
Sportsman	3	Artist	1
Chef	2	Boss	1
Concierge	2	Mail Carrier	1
Cowboy	2	Waitress	1
Security Guard	2	Writer	1
Boss	1	Total	31 (11 types)
Cashier	1		
Criminal	1		
DJ	1		
Registrar	1		
Waiter	1		
Total	57 (17 types)		

In addition to depictions of working men outnumbering working women 1.8:1, men are depicted in a wider variety of jobs than women. While efforts have been taken to depict men and women in the same jobs (there are 10 such instances), men outnumber women in seven of these professions, with the exceptions being *bosses* (evenly depicted) and *cashier* and *singers* (with more females depicted than males). Men are also depicted in traditional male roles, such as sportsmen, cowboys, criminals, and security guards, while only one (albeit one that is easily missed) woman is depicted in a traditional male role as a mail carrier. In contrast, five out of the six parental figures depicted are female. It is worth noting that the chapters in which occupations are a primary focus of the instructional content do a very good

job at balancing the genders and occupations depicted. Where things break down, however, is in the incidental illustrations in chapters not directly related to occupations, where it is evident that less caution was exercised.

Some of the visual depictions of men and women serve to counterbalance a few linguistic tropes, although it is more often women put in linguistically-designated male roles rather than the opposite. Women are twice depicted playing video games and one plays the guitar, even though verbally the topics are male-dominant. Conversely, one man is happily shopping (albeit accompanied by a woman), a heavily female topic.

Norm-breaking/humorous depictions. The number of men placed in norm-breaking or humorous situations far outnumbers the number of women placed in similar circumstances, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Humorous/Norm-Breaking Depictions

Male Depiction	Count	Female Depiction	Count
Womanizer	3	Bad cook	2
Bad singer	2	Ditzy	1
Chased by dogs	2	Forgets homework	1
Disheveled	2	Has same clothes as store display	1
Ashamed of car	1	Oblivious	1
Bad comb-over	1	Swoons over cars	1
Bad dancer	1	Total	7 (6 types)
Bad driver	1		
Badly sunburned	1		
Fails at laundry	1		
Liar	1		
Oblivious	1		
Running after bus	1		
Slob	1		
Useless	1		
Total	20 (15 types)		

This table shows the range and counts of humorous or norm-breaking depictions in SC: male images depicted humorously or outlandishly outnumber female ones nearly 3 to 1. The most egregious of these situations, depictions in which characters are outlandishly breaking

typical social norms, are all men: the bad dancer boss with a comb-over, the heavysset man buying junk food and slovenly eating cookies before purchasing them (Figure 3 below), the young man crashing his car, or, among the recurring characters, the womanizer, the boy lying to his mother about his whereabouts, or the clueless man failing his job interview.



Figure 3. Example norm-breaking depiction

As such, the notion of negative or norm-breaking roles being predominantly a male characteristic concurs with the findings of Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008). Female humorous depictions by contrast are much milder, the most deviant of which is a lady who ignores her date by talking on her cell phone.

Discussion

Table 10 summarizes the verbal and visual factors analyzed.

Table 10

Summary of Smart Choice Gender Biases

Topic	Bias Direction	Strength
Decision-Making Verbs	Male	Weak
Dialogue Participants	None/Minimal	-
Discourse Verbs	None/Minimal	-
Drill Practice Voices	None/Minimal	-
Firstness – A/B Constructions	Male	Strong
Firstness – A and B Constructions	None/Minimal	-
Firstness – Activity References or Examples	Male	Weak
Humorous/Norm-Breaking Depictions	Male	Strong
Name Usage	None/Minimal	-
Number of Gender Specific Dialogues	Female	Weak
Occupation Depictions	Male	Moderate
Range of Vocabulary	Male	Weak
Recurring Characters	None/Minimal	-
Recurring Student Assistants	None/Minimal	-
Sexual Assertiveness	Male	Strong
Title/Full Name Usage	Female	Weak
Total Visual Depictions	Male	Moderate
Total Word Count	Female	Weak

Overall, the analysis of SC's text and spoken dialogue reveals SC to be fairly gender balanced. Wilson and Healy (2011) have clearly rejected the sexism found by Porreca (1984) and others in 20th century EFL course books, as a conscientious effort has been made to present women and men as equals and to minimize gender biases. It is likely that Cochran (1996), who lamented the ongoing struggle of eliminating verbal exclusion and sexual stereotyping, would take solace in the 21st century approach to gender depiction that SC takes, while Levine and O'Sullivan (2010) would celebrate SC's gender equality as a counterbalance to the stereotypes Japanese learners would observe and potentially perpetuate through images found in *Talk a Lot, Starter Book, Second Edition*. Many traditional biases, such as female omission from dialogues, names, verbs of context, or word count, range from non-noticeable to altogether absent.

One text-based area where SC somewhat falters is in its presentation of pronouns. While care has been taken to avoid gender biases within A and B type constructions and within the firstness of textbook activities, male pronouns are found first much more often within the structured language presentation texts, especially in A/B type constructions. Considering Lee's (2014) argument that this commonly overlooked practice serves to reinforce latent prejudices of male superiority, it seems an easy yet obvious opportunity for minimizing androcentric bias that has not yet been realized. However, the book seems clearly comfortable with women being the only gender to receive a reference in numerous activities or practice activities, showing little notion of women as an appendage to men and rejecting the notion of the "generic male".

Although gender-based vocabulary and dialogue content exists, there are only a handful of gender-specific inclinations to be uncovered rather than a textbook-wide trend. Men are inclined to play music, work hard, and be sexually flirtatious, while women sing and shop. In future editions, one or two of these trope dialogues could have the genders reversed for better balancing and linguistic diversity, or alternatively more counter-balancing images could be inserted. However, as a whole, the substantial bulk of the text reads as gender neutral, and only at few points would reversing the male and female participants of any given dialogue cause any noticeable difference.

In contrast to the spoken/written text, SC struggles with its visual presentation of males and females, especially when depicting smaller characters in the background. Although the book makes obvious attempts to feature both men and women as the subject of texts or as the accompaniment to dialogues, men are simply found more often in its pages, especially men whose occupations can be determined based on dress or action. In Figure 1, the textbook repeatedly sees a silhouetted man standing on the left asks a question and a woman on the right answers, while Figure 2 consistently shows more men participating in group work. While these figures may have been simply copied and pasted as is for convenience or consistency's sake, it would have been easy to make a mirror image of Figure 1 in order for the women to stand on the left and thus speak first in several of the chapters. Alternatively, both of these male-leaning generic silhouettes could be replaced with a gender-neutral alternative or icons, in addition to unimportant "generic male" background characters cropped out or replaced with no loss of context. In addition, more women could be added to

the pages, especially ones where their occupations are clearly depicted. When the spotlight turns to famous women (and men to a lesser extent), it is usually singers, musicians, or movie stars that are shown rather than businesswomen or sports players, which helps paint a picture of these professions as desirable to young women.

The limited usage of recurring characters presents an interesting gender-based paradox. As these characters are not expanded upon in any kind of storyline or used in any fashion outside of these practice dialogues, and as there is often little consistency between a character's first and second appearance, this presentation style tends to avoid the bias of portraying the values and personalities represented by major characters as representative of members of the L2 culture and thus by extension EFL learners. Nonetheless, as these characters are likely to be more memorable due to their recurrence, what gendered tropes they do display during their brief encounters with the learners still can color learners' ideas of L2 society values. In SC's case, male characters are responsible for several of the tropes identified earlier, such as flirting, discussing cute girls, or asking for phone numbers. In addition, in two instances older women come off as "responsible" as a humorous counterpart to "childish" males (one who fails an interview and another who blatantly lies to his mother). These dialogues and characters, being "one-off" in nature, tend to exploit gendered constructs for humor, hoping that the learner will enjoy the dialogue for what it is and not carry the values of the characters with them.

One of SC's strengths is not fawning over either gender by lauding them with positive adjectives as Lowe (2013) found in Japanese cram school texts. Nonetheless, by presenting men as the gender with the capacity for acting outside of social norms through giving men nearly 75% (and the most egregious) of the norm-breaking roles, the privilege of audacious behavior being acceptable for boys but not for girls is reinforced rather than challenged. Boys may expect themselves and their peers to push conventional barriers, knowing they may be able to get away with it, while conversely, girls may be less inclined to speak out or take risks, with Figure 3 being a prime example of women expressing surprise, amusement, and what could be perceived as powerlessness against a blatantly deviant male. While in a vacuum this cultural ideal would only be applied to the L2 cultural identity (which itself is an issue, as discussed by McMahill, 2001), this gender dichotomy may also reinforce itself within the learner's own culture. Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008) found that negative

personality traits attributed to male characters in Indonesian textbooks in turn “[influence both male and female learners’ subconscious and trigger prejudice in [their] developing ideology...showing negative effects later and triggering the battle between the sexes.” In the scholastic Japanese teaching context, there is little denying that boys are far more likely to act out and push the acceptable limits than girls. Seeing images of another culture with apparently concurring ideals only serves to strengthen this dichotomy within their own selves as both L2 learners but also as L1 adolescents, and as McMahon (2001) warned, further serves as a reminder of the “internalized sexism” young women face. Thus, to be truly egalitarian and leave the constraints of 20th century sexism behind us, an equal number of men and women can be displayed humorously or outlandishly in future editions in order to expand girls’ available and culturally acceptable roles while rejecting the male privilege of expected and forgiven audacious behavior.

Thus, while SC appears gender-balanced on the surface and clearly makes efforts to be such, there still exist several androcentric biases that should be rethought in a new edition. Toward this effort, a further step would include analysis of all four course books to see if any of the imbalances found regress to the mean or are further exacerbated. Additionally, as a new edition of SC has been recently published at the time of writing, the new edition can be analyzed to see to what extent Wilson and Healy (2011) and Oxford University Press have identified and rectified these imbalances and which remain.

It is no longer enough to applaud a book for avoiding blatant sexism but to approach the secondary ways depictions and words may have biases toward gender. As a result, the areas where SC stumbles, particularly norm-breaking behavior, A/B pronoun firstness, and occupational breadth, and minor image and silhouette use, should become a staple part of future textbook investigations and areas that authors and publishers pay close attention to when designing future EFL materials.

Conclusion

It is clear through SC and similar textbook studies that many EFL materials have made progress from the time of Porreca (1984)’s criticism of books with outdated gender representations. Sunderland (2000) noted that “publishers’ and writers’ awareness and values, along with those of teachers and students, the consumers of textbooks, are changing.” Even

with this progress, however, classrooms have not and will not necessarily achieve gender balanced discourse simply through the gender balancing of books: ultimately, it remains in the hands of the teacher, and, to an extent, students. As consciousness awareness of gender issues in the L2 teaching community increases, teachers where and when possible can follow the leads of Cochran (1996), Talburt and Stewart (1999), Ndura (2004), and others in opening more dialogues with students and colleagues to ensure that our materials best match our values as we progress further into the 21st century. Through continued gender based analyses of modern textbooks, even ones that appear constructed under the credo of egalitarianism, anti-omission, and anti-stereotyping, educators can better understand and refine materials and discourse that ultimately shape the educational experiences of the 21st century L2 classroom, and with it, learners' self and future perceptions.

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Jordan Svien is a learning advisor at Hiroshima Bunkyo University's Self-Access Learning Center and holds an MA in TESOL from the University of Birmingham. In addition to gender and sociolinguistics, his research interests include vocabulary acquisition and testing, Excel-Moodle integrations, and global issues in TESOL. He lives in Hiroshima with his wife and two children.

ELT and #metoo in Japan

Tanja McCandie
Meijo University

Sarah Mulvey
J'Expat Network

“Me too. If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote ‘Me, too’ as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem. If you’ve been sexually harassed or assaulted, write ‘Me, too’ as a reply to this tweet.”

Alyssa Milano

Twitter, October 16, 2017

“Me, too.” These two small words are at the core of the appeal quoted above that was spearheaded on Twitter by actress Alyssa Milano but actually coined by Tarana Burke. Burke, a social activist and community organizer, first used “Me, too” in 2006 to show “empowerment through empathy” to women of colour who had been sexually abused and/or harassed (Me too., n.d.).¹ In 2017, “Me, too” quickly snowballed into a movement that has spread worldwide. The allegations of sexual harassment and rape that have been brought against Hollywood director Harvey Weinstein may have been the catalyst for this particular movement, but the sheer volume of people willing to step up and say that they, too, had been victims of sexual harassment or abuse was unprecedented. Twitter and Facebook were inundated, sometimes with the simple tag, “Me, too,” or on some pages with more detailed stories of the actual instance. While the number of respondents may not have been surprising for most women, it did highlight to the men in their lives that sexual harassment, abuse and rape are happening each and every day in the lives of regular women, not just Hollywood actresses.

Men were also posting their “Me, too” stories, addressing the fact that they, too are victims of sexual harassment and abuse. What cannot be ignored is the unfortunate truth that while men indeed are suffering these kinds of abuses, it is also, overwhelmingly, at the hands of other men. The “Me, too” movement does not neglect men, nor is it negating the pain and

¹ *Editor’s note:* This is an opinion article that represents the views of the authors. The views expressed do not necessarily represent those of GALE or the editors of the *GALE Journal*.

suffering they endured as victims of sexual harassment or abuse. More importantly, it includes men. It gave women an opportunity to openly ask the men in their lives to question and, possibly, to understand the scope of what is happening to women everywhere, every day. It was a wake-up call for many men, prompting some to come forward to admit that they never really understood the pervasive nature or the seriousness of the sexual harassment and abuse that the women in their lives were enduring daily, often silently.

Through social media, newspaper editorials, and numerous radio and TV talk shows, it seems a call is being put out for society as a whole, and men in particular, to take a closer look at their own behaviour and attitudes towards women. “Grace” and the Aziz Ansari case (Way, 2018) have started the debate about what constitutes consent and what a “bad date” entails. This particular case has divided many, including self-proclaimed feminists, and some are starting to suggest that “Me, too” may have gone too far. Even the “good guys,” which seems to suggest Ansari was one, are getting caught up in the same net as serial abusers and molesters. While there clearly is always a need for balance, as more and more men in power get dethroned and an increasing number of “regular” people step up and demand that the status quo be challenged, could the “Me, too” campaign be the tipping point that will initiate long-lasting and meaningful change? Is there something about the “Me, too” movement that will make it stand out from previous attempts to effect change?

“Time’s Up” has certainly been a strong move in the right direction, and there has been considerable momentum through taglines and election mantras that drew people together, but they seem to shake the system to the core in the same way that “Me, too” seems to. People all over the United States took Trump’s put-down of Hillary Clinton and turned it on its head, making “Nasty Woman” a call for affirmative action rather than an insult. Twitter updates and Facebook tags made “being nasty” a trend that lasted for a few weeks in the form of T-shirts and memes, but, as with many trending social media phenomena, the words and sentiments were soon buried by the next pop news item. Are taglines and mottos on social media really the solution to an entrenched belief system and hierarchy that systematically puts men in a position of power over women?

As more women and men recognize that the old status quo needs to be shifted and re-aligned to create a respectful and safe workplace, research indicates that there is still much work to be done in order to lessen (or, more hopefully, eradicate) sexual harassment in the workplace. Statistics from the United States, Canada, and Australia confirm this. The US

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission stated in a report published in 2016 that between 25%-85% of women have experienced sexual harassment at work: that's one in four women having been harassed, be it power or sexual harassment, at their place of employment at least once in their lifetime while the rate for men is 8-16% (Feldblum & Lipnic, 2016). The EEOC also reports that approximately 75% of harassment cases go unreported, and of those who do actually file a claim, 75% of women faced negative repercussions (Feldblum & Lipnic, 2016). In a survey of women in Canada, 30% of employees have felt that they had been sexually harassed at work and that 75% stated they had reported the harassment however, 41% of respondents said nothing had been done to resolve the issue, and 23% of those felt that their employer did not support them (Government of Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, 2017).²

In a different survey published, it was found that 52% of the women surveyed reported having been sexually harassed at work. Men reported a rate of 22% (Angus Reid Institute , 2018). The survey also stated that the majority of those who reported being harassed did not report it formally at their workplace. In Australia, a 2016 study found that 9.6% of employees had been harassed in the six months previous, and that women were more likely to be victims of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and unfair treatment based on their gender (Potter, Dollard, & Tuckey, 2016). In a different study conducted in New South Wales in Australia, 82% of employee-related sexual harassment complaints were issued by women. It concluded as well that women were between five and nine times more likely to report employment related sexual harassment. In the same study, sexual discrimination complaints accounted for 14% of all employment complaints. Ninety-two percent of these complaints were filed by women (New South Wales Government, Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW, 2012).

How About... Japan?

With a ranking of 114 out of 144 countries in The Global Gender Gap Report 2017, Japan has the dubious distinction of having the lowest standing among the Group of Seven economic powers. The United States ranked at 49, Canada at 16 and Australia at 35 (World

² *It should be noted (and possibly considered for further study) that the Government of Canada survey was completed by 1005 women compared to only 200 men.*

Economic Forum, 2017). Because of a severe lack of representation in all areas of government and politics for women, combined with fewer opportunities for high paying, high status, full-time employment, Japan received one of its lowest rankings to date. Some insight into these numbers may be gleaned from the first-ever Japanese Cabinet Office study on sexual misconduct in workplaces, conducted in 2014. This report stated that 30% of Japanese women were victims of sexual harassment at work (Sex harassment in the workplace, 2016). For women employed part-time or hired through dispatch agencies, the rate was even higher at 35%. A cabinet office study done in 2014 also stated that one in 15 Japanese women have been forced into having sex, but 67.5% of the victims did not talk to anyone about their experiences (“#MeToo’ campaign”, 2017). With toxic work environments that include verbal and physical harassment and rape (“forced sex”), Japan’s low ranking is really not all that surprising.

While the social media campaigns, and in particular, the ‘Me, too’ movement shone a light on the everyday sexism, harassment, and abuse that women are facing overseas, is that light shining just as brightly here in Japan? What about when these same issues of sexual harassment and abuse against women are analyzed and applied to the everyday life of the average worker in Japan? Japanese women face the reality of sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and domestic and workplace violence daily. Groping on trains is such an ongoing problem that many train companies in urban areas offer “women only” cars during rush hour. Rather than addressing and penalizing the behavior of men, the responsibility is placed on women to travel in special train cars to protect themselves from the hands of gropers. With such a socially ingrained sense that it is women who should feel shame for the assaults against them, and who consequently adapt their own behaviour in order to accommodate the groper, it is not all that surprising that campaigns such as “Me, too” do not ignite and spread in the same fashion in Japan as they do in many other countries.

This mentality is found in all areas of life in Japan, including academia. Instances of power harassment, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination follow the same pattern on university campuses as they do in all other arenas; the onus is on the person suffering the abuse to remain passive, quiet, and compliant. As with the example of the gropers, the victim needs to change their own behavior and adapt rather than confront or call out the instigator of the abuse. It is not uncommon for a victim to be reminded, should they

complain, that they are jeopardizing the career and livelihood of a co-worker, and to think carefully before pushing forward with any kind of formal charge.

In 2014, Tokyo assembly member Ayaka Shiomura was openly heckled by male members during a council session. While speaking about the need for more daycare centres in Tokyo, she was taunted loudly, and told, “Hurry up and get married,” and, “Can’t you have a baby?” When Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s LDP party was told to reprimand those at fault, it was said that that would be difficult as they were unable to identify those who had made the remarks. When international news carried the story and thousands of angry locals started calling the LDP party to complain, only then did one man, Akihiro Suzuki, stand up and take responsibility for the remarks. The punishment for his behaviour was light. If he had offered to resign, he would have been permitted to continue holding his seat in the Tokyo assembly. After his public apology to Ms. Shiomura, Mr. Suzuki stated he did not mean to insult her but he did hope that she would be able to marry soon amid the falling birthrate (Yamaguchi, 2014). With the openly hostile environment that women encounter in areas of government and politics in Japan, it is understandable why Japan scored so low on the Gender Index. Women simply do not choose to partake in an area where they are so clearly unwelcome.

Instances of sexual harassment such as those witnessed in the Ayaka Shiomura case act as deterrents for woman entering politics. Had the session not been televised, it is quite likely the whole incident would have been ignored and classified as just another day in politics. Silence is the standard, and it is this belief that is pervasive in many cases of harassment and violence against women in Japan. Power, money, and status allow the perpetrators of harassment, abuse, and rape to be set free with very few repercussions. One of the more sensational cases involving the alleged rape of Shiori Ito by high-profile journalist Noriyuki Yamaguchi, is a classic example of the gendered power dynamic in Japan. With his high status as a well-known journalist, along with connections to the police and to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the journalist’s account of events was taken more seriously than the allegations made by Ms. Ito. She stressed that there is a pervasive belief in Japan that rape is not common, that it is something that happens in “faraway places” (Otake & Osaki, 2017). In her own way, by publicly naming her attacker, Ms. Ito has brought the “Me, too” movement to Japan. “Me, too” after all, is about speaking up, of naming names, and making men accountable for their actions. Ms. Ito did just that in an environment that far prefers to shame and silence victims rather than punish perpetrators.

The toxic environment that perpetuates the harassment and abuse of women, or those members of society who are deemed weak, is not limited to the Diet or other echelons of power and publicity here in Japan. It exists on our campuses, in our classrooms, and in the staffrooms of our own academic workplaces. In the more casual context of a part-time teachers' room, for example, conversations can (and have) taken on a distinctly unprofessional tone. Inappropriate discussions about a student's appearance, the questioning of a woman teacher's credentials and whether she was hired only because of her gender, or outright talk of one's sex life are not unheard of. To call someone on their behavior could be a possible invitation to become under-employed. Being the teacher who complains can be hazardous to your job security, particularly if there is an entrenched network of "word-of-mouth" job sharing. For foreign women in particular, because there are simply fewer of them, not being a part of that network is a scary prospect. It is "safer" to remain silent. Speaking up when work-inappropriate chats are going on can lead to the very real prospect of being met with eye-rolls and the implication that the one speaking out is too sensitive, the consensus being; "We're all adults. We know how to behave properly."

If it were indeed the case that "we all know how to behave properly," committees in universities created to oversee the dissemination of information on what constitutes sexual harassment would not be necessary. Or the Japan Association of Language Teaching would not have been practically forced to create a Code of Conduct after years of various members being harassed, cajoled, or made uncomfortable because of their gender or cultural background (many of whom remained silent out of fear or the thought that they may have been overreacting). Regardless of people who believe there are no problems, checks and balances are necessary in order for those who *are* being harassed to have access to some form of recourse and add to a sense of security when an instance of harassment or abuse does occur.

But. There's Always a But.

As educators who are a part of institutions and organizations in Japan, we are often fortunate to have at least some structures and policies in place that allow those being harassed or abused a means to, at least, lodge a complaint. However, institutions and organizations do not always offer all necessary support, especially from the perspective of those of us who have worked at Western institutions with more extensive and effective anti-harassment policies

and procedures. For instance, if one is a western foreign woman, as the authors are, one may at times view their Japanese women counterparts in positions that make them personally uncomfortable because of their own cultural norms and expectations. The authors have personally watched women their own age, with university degrees of all disciplines, be put in charge of readying meeting rooms, serving tea, cleaning up after meetings, gliding silently from office to office doing jobs that are classically deemed “women’s work.” We have watched them come, and very soon go, as their limited term contracts allow them very little stability. Disposable. Here today, gone tomorrow. The office managers however, often men, remain on as permanent staff members. The men may change positions, but they remain within the system. Who are the front-line office workers who do the “social” aspect of the job, who help foreign staff navigate reams of paperwork, who jump up when a student needs a form stamped, who make sure the office kettle is full and the snack tray varied? As foreign teachers in these institutions, these are the women who have helped us innumerable times maneuver through a system of bureaucracy that otherwise would leave us feeling frustrated and helpless. Women’s work. Or, perhaps more poetically, a 21st century representation of Maya Angelou’s “*Woman Work*.”

And while these gendered norms can feel alien and quite old-fashioned to new Western arrivals in the system, those who benefit most and who are affected least negatively are most likely to adapt quickly to the gendered hierarchy they witness every day. Further, it is not unheard of for English-speaking Western men to feel a certain sense of nostalgia for this social hierarchy that once existed in their own countries but was corrupted by “femi-nazis.” Before feminism, there existed a hierarchy that implicitly provided men positions of power. In other words, “the good old days.” Those who connect most strongly with those good old days are often the ones who will share their sentiments on the topic most freely and most vocally. One need not walk down to the local foreign pub to hear conversations on topics ranging from visits to prostitutes, cheating on spouses, the ranking of female students based on bodies and clothing, homophobic slurs, anti-Semitic inferences, or Islamophobia. Those dialogues occur right inside part-time teachers’ rooms and yes, at JALT meetings and presentations. This is not conjecture. These conversations do happen. Many of us have been sitting at the very tables where these discussions have occurred or have attended professional functions where inappropriate actions have taken place. *Me, too.*

Employment of foreign women is also negatively affected by the gendered hierarchy. Fewer part-time classes are offered to women, the reigning logic being that men support families, and thus, *ipso facto*, are more deserving of extra classes. However, when a full-time woman is awarded a position for which numerous men were vying, other teachers sometimes say, "You were only hired because you're a woman." The woman is viewed as taking the livelihood away from competing male teachers. This can lead to accusations of reverse discrimination and a toxic part-time teachers' room that women often avoid, or, at the very least, spend as little time in as possible.

If these conversations and behaviors are occurring on university campuses across the country, it is not surprising that these attitudes also permeate the infrastructure of the organization of English educators and ELT publishers here in Japan. JALT has been called out over the years on an organizational level for not spreading the call for plenary speakers and leaders of panel discussions wide enough to include a balance of foreign and Japanese women, as well as that of non-native speakers of English, be it male or female. JALT National in recent years has created as balanced a schedule of plenary speakers as possible. The same cannot always be said for all conferences and regional monthly chapter presentations. Foreign women, Japanese women and men, as well as other non-Native speakers of English are not always equally represented. Further, some JALT chapters have had incidents of racism within presentations, or harassing behavior of a sexual nature at the social events afterwards. In the time of "Me, too," these incidents need to be addressed and rectified as soon as possible. Credit where credit is due, though. Change is happening. In 2016, Pan SIG had an all-white, male, and native speaker keynote speaker line up. The learning curve was steep and Pan SIG 2018 is being awarded with an Equal Voices in ELT (EVE) award for its speakers and gender balance.

As part of the JALT community, publishing companies also need to be held accountable for how they treat their employees working at JALT events. One particular case in point, (but certainly not the only questionable instance of gendered expectations within these companies) was at a JALT National conference where the women sales reps had to wear suggestive cosplay outfits in order to promote the sales of graded readers. Because the lower status and sexualized role of women in Japan is so pervasive and accepted, the fact that Japanese women sales reps were expected to role play these sexualized characters as part of their job meant that there were few complaints.

Do these instances of toxic staff room environments, the questioning of the choice of a woman over a man for a full-time teaching position, the sexualization of women employees, or the inappropriate harassing behaviour at JALT-related functions qualify as ‘Me, too’ fodder? One of the major directives of “Me, too” was to create first an awareness and subsequently a dialogue among men to recognize the magnitude of their behavior towards women, whether in their actions, their words, or indeed in their silence when they witnessed other men behaving badly. Social media itself is providing the proof that the ‘Me, too’ movement has, at the very least, planted a seed of doubt and has prompted men to ask themselves some very difficult questions. Magazine features, newspaper editorials, and even academic journal articles have all featured men asking the women in their lives: “What can I do?” “Was my behaviour wrong?” Or, more poignantly and simply; “I’m sorry.”

How does this affect us as educators with a moral responsibility to treat our male and female students the same? How does this affect us as employees who expect respect from our colleagues regardless of our age, gender, job title, or nationality within the organization? How does this affect us as members of a much larger national association whose purpose is to empower us to progress professionally and share our knowledge in a safe, inclusive environment? While these questions have no easy answers, we can begin to move in the right direction.

For men and women, Japanese and non-Japanese, regardless of our gender or nationality, viewing ourselves as people with far more in common than that which divides us is certainly more productive and helpful in our personal and professional lives. To keep the ‘Me, too’ movement going, remembering that its goal is to create dialogue rather than to silence it, below are some steps we’ve created in the hope that they will be shared with others in our profession to keep that movement going forward within our own schools and organizations:

- If a coworker states that they do not feel comfortable around a certain teacher, ask if they want to talk about it. Listen. Offer to go with them to talk to administration about the issue.
- If you hear of teachers avoiding the part-time teachers’ rooms, find out why. Offer support. Work together to find ways to create an inclusive and comfortable work area. Be vocal.

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- If chapters cannot find female or non-native English-speaking presenters, ask a woman or non-native speaker you know who might be able to suggest someone. People are often more likely to suggest “someone like them” when asked.
 - If very few women/non-native speakers are applying to present at a SIG conference, ask why. “If more women/Japanese applied, more women/Japanese would be accepted” is not a solution. Investigate reasons why certain groups of members are not applying rather than holding these members solely responsible for their low representation at events.
 - Conference organizers can have their own directives which state that they will do whatever is necessary in order to reflect the core values of the organization. Panel discussions, board meetings, choice of invited speakers, keynote speakers, and leadership roles are all areas that deserve a balanced representation. If one demographic is continually being favoured over another (for example, older Caucasian native English-speaking males) then a concerted effort needs to be put into ensuring more balance is created in the future.

JALT - Change from Within, Change Now

As the saying goes; “We need to be the change we want to see.” As teachers, as members of JALT, and very importantly, as members of a progressive group like GALE, we can be that change. However, that change has to happen from within and requires a certain level of transparency that allows all members to work together to make JALT the inclusive, safe organization it strives to be. At the moment, there are flaws. Communication between members of the JALT Board, and with other factions of JALT can often be opaque at best, and non-existent at worst. There is a definite top-down hierarchy that allows for a “need-to-know” dissemination of important information in regards to incidents of harassment, abuse, or racism that have transpired at JALT events, chapter meetings, or off-site JALT socials. Many members are still unaware of the new Code of Conduct that has been formed to address and deal with these very issues.

Case in point: There have been incidents in the very recent past that have not been officially acknowledged by the Board of Directors or officially shared with the JALT membership. Some information about these incidents has indeed been shared with some JALT members (and beyond) but this sharing has been selective, and often through informal

means such as Facebook threads or online chats. While good-intentioned and a source of temporary relief for the victim, these stories shared on social media ultimately take on a rough justice momentum, with people stepping in to suggest a “name-and-shame” of the perpetrators, while others offer off-the-cuff solutions to very serious issues. This can lead to a game of ‘telephone whispers’ rumours spreading through the country. This could be fixed if the BoD could work more closely with its members by issuing an annual report on the number of reported incidents. This would help create awareness that incidents DO indeed happen within the organization. We should be having open discussions and striving to reduce the possibility of future incidents happening. It would also support those who have had the misfortune of dealing with an incident to know they are not alone, and not the only one reporting.

Two recent examples come to mind:

1. An incident of racism that occurred last year at a JALT chapter presentation was neither formally acknowledged nor addressed by the Board to the membership of JALT, although it was discussed and debated quite openly on social media.
2. An incident of harassment that occurred at a social event attended by JALT members off-site at JALT National this year was again reported and discussed openly on Facebook and privately to select members yet was never addressed by the Board of Directors to the members within the organization who could have actually created a meaningful and constructive dialogue to effect positive change.

If the BoD were to facilitate the reporting of an incident of abuse or harassment, it is hopeful that those offended would be less hesitant to step forward when something bad happened to them. We can begin the flow of communication now, starting with a mandate of easy-to-follow steps a victim can follow if they have suffered an incident of harassment, abuse, racism, or discrimination at any JALT related event. This mandate can be shared through a wide-spread email campaign instigated by the BoD. A link providing anonymity can be accessed within the email, allowing victims of harassment a one-click option to report the incident and to provide pertinent details. This link can also be made readily available on all JALT-related sites and correspondence. Reporting could be done anonymously, depending on the wishes of the person relaying what has happened. A member of the Code of Conduct

Working Group would immediately receive the information and communicate the details with fellow members of the Group, as well as with the BoD. Communication can continue anonymously with the victim, with the onus being on providing assistance and/or a solution to the issue that prompted the initial complaint.

The current situation as it stands does not provide a clean and simple method of communication regarding incidents of harassment or abuse, nor does it allow for the sharing of information to the JALT membership as a whole. If an incident occurred, we need not know *who* was involved, but we should know that it did happen. Not sharing it does not mean it did not occur. Let the membership know, keep them aware, let down the shroud of secrecy, while at the same time maintaining the anonymity of the people involved.

At the present time, if a victim of abuse, racism, or discrimination does contact a member of the BoD, what happens next? The ‘action’ may not go beyond that initial correspondence. The victim may decide on their own that the incident need not be discussed. Or, the BoD may categorically decide, in a very top-down, ‘father-knows-best’ manner, that things need to be dealt with behind closed doors. With no annual report about the number of reported incidents, no one finds out, and the gossip and rumours continue unchecked. At the moment, the Code of Conduct Working Group is not even officially informed if a victim has come forward with a complaint. Ultimately, the incident may get buried, almost forgotten, becoming fodder for future JALT get-togethers where members give vague and spotty accounts of “something” that they heard happened the previous year. Then we wait, knowing it will happen again in some way, shape or form.

A Code of Conduct exists, so let’s use it. Allow the ‘*Me, too*’ movement and its push for clear communication and dialogue into our own organization. Let there be the option of a mode of communication that allows the victims of harassment or abuse to contact, anonymously if desired, the people who are in place expressly to help them. For these incidents, the BoD need not be the only conduit where information will begin, and ultimately end. The incident can be shared with all JALT members, while the anonymity of the victim is maintained. These incidents do happen, and likely will into the future. Should not the members of the organization be made aware when such incidences do happen, and consequently know what steps were taken to rectify the situation? JALT asks its members to pay high fees to be a part of the organization; aren’t its members entitled to know when an incident has occurred?

Secrecy, whispers, and social media gossip should not be the method of communication for such serious issues as sexual harassment, abuse or racism within JALT. This is an organization created by educators for educators a profession that demands transparency and truthfulness in methods of research, fact-finding and the dissemination of information by its members. The driving force of “Me, too” was its call to lift the shroud of secrecy that surrounds issues of sexual harassment and abuse in our world today. It is a timely call, and one that will suit our organization very well. Just like the “Me, too” movement that started in the United States only a short time ago, concrete changes will have to come from those who created the environment of secrecy to begin with – those who are in the positions of power within the organization itself.

As GALE members, we can be a part of the movement that propelled “Me, too” from an actor’s two-word Tweet to a worldwide call to action. With Gender Awareness as our *raison d’être*, *we* can be the ‘Me, too’ movement within JALT, a part of a call to action that creates discussion, promotes positive change, and makes us strive to be the best we can be. A movement that demands honesty, transparency and dialogue among women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, queer or straight and which treats all races and belief systems with dignity and respect. A movement that is swift and fair in its recognition of any act of sexual harassment, abuse, or discrimination that occurs to or is instigated by any of its members.

We, too will be the change we want to see within JALT because GALE *is* the change, in our thoughts, in our actions and in our support of one another every day. The purpose of the GALE SIG is to research gender and its implications for language learning, teaching, and training. There can be no better way to incorporate these mandates than to ensure we understand the effect of gender dynamics, hierarchies and power structures within the association we are all a part of. May GALE’s vision be the driving force for positive change within JALT, its membership, and in its core values in the years to come.

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Tanja McCandie has been involved in education for over 20 years, either as an English teacher or working as a publishing rep. She's taught in Canada, England and Japan. Currently an assistant professor Meijo University in Nagoya, her research interests include gender and education, autonomous learning and teacher development. She's recently launched the website <https://equalityeltjapan.net/> in the hope of creating more diversity and correcting the imbalance of gender when it comes to ELT speakers at events and meetings.

Sarah Mulvey has taught gender issues and courses on identity at the university level since 2004. She is currently assisting in research on positive psychology in the EFL classroom on an eight-month quest for data throughout Europe and North America and will return to Japan in April, 2019. The J'Expat Network, Sarah's coaching and counselling service for English-speaking expat women in Japan, will be back in service when she returns.

**How To Be a Gender Literate Reader:
Preface to the English Translation**

**Gerry Yokota
Osaka University**

In *Feminist Literary Criticism*, Volume 11 of the Iwanami series *Feminism in Japan* (2009), Saitō Minako makes the following observation.

The very style of criticism is changing these days, and the reality is that the concept of feminist criticism that dominated in the eighties and nineties no longer suits contemporary standards. Conventional feminist criticism is on its way to becoming a historical concept. Is there no new concept to replace it?

One possible clue is the concept of gender literacy. The concept of gender literacy is proposed by Gerry Yokota in “How To Be a Gender Literate Reader,” her chapter in the volume *Gender Studies*, edited by Muta Kazue. While grounding her argument in feminist critique, Yokota proposes reading literature interactively, not passively, with a particularly sensitive view toward gender.

What is suggestive about this approach is that it does not confine criticism and reading to the specialized realms of literary criticism or research, but opens a path in the direction of literacy, a space where all readers can participate. Gender literacy is something that can be developed just like media literacy. From this perspective, it is an activity that can be practiced even by elementary and junior high school students. A new circuit is connected between reading and living. (22-23; my translation)

The full title of the volume edited by Muta to which Saitō refers is *Gender Studies: Learning about Women’s Studies and Men’s Studies*. This volume has been used as the textbook for a team-taught undergraduate course offered in Japanese at Osaka University called “Thinking about Discrimination in Contemporary Society: Women’s Studies, Men’s Studies” since the first edition was published in 2009; after several reprints, the current revised edition was published in 2015. The course itself has been in continuous existence since the mid-nineties, when I first joined the teaching team at the invitation of the founder, the Men’s Studies scholar Itō Kimio. The publisher, Osaka University Press, has kindly given permission to

print the English translation of my chapter (Chapter 2) of the 2015 revised edition here, with this added preface to provide context.

In its current form, the textbook consists of 13 chapters, with a different professor from a different faculty or program giving each lecture. Topics range from general cultural issues such as the representation of gender in language, art, and literature to current social, economic, and legal issues such as the pension system, elder care, and sexual slavery.

It gives me great pleasure to present here the chapter to which Saitō refers, in English. I hope *GALE Journal* readers find this translation to be a useful resource, suggesting ideas that you may easily incorporate into your own teaching repertoire as well as giving an indication of the history, current status, and future potential of education in gender studies at Japanese universities.

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Gerry Yokota is Professor of Contemporary Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies in the Graduate School of Language and Culture at Osaka University. She received her Ph.D. from Princeton University. She studies the representation of gender in both traditional and popular culture, and also provides diversity awareness and harassment prevention training.

How To Be a Gender Literate Reader

Gerry Yokota
Osaka University

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(Yokota, G. [2015]. Jendaa riterashii de bungaku o yomitoku. In *Jendaa Sutadeizu: Joseigaku/Danseigaku o Manabu*, ed. K. Muta, Osaka Daigaku Shuppankai, pp. 18-39.)

1. Literature and Gender

1.1 What Is Gender Literacy?

What happens if you pay particular attention to gender when you read a work of literature?

There are many literary genres, including novels, poetry, tales, drama, and songs. Manga may also be said to be a literary genre. One thing they have in common is that nearly all of them present various human relationships: family relationships, friendship, love relationships, work relationships. And readers often identify with a particular character. Great works of literature are said to be so powerful that they can make the reader willingly suspend their disbelief and get lost in the fictional world presented to them.

Media literacy is a key concept in contemporary society. Consumers need to be able to protect themselves from deceptive advertising and politically biased journalism in the mass media. We need to be critical consumers who do not simply accept given information passively but rather actively choose and judge. The same is true of our estimation of great literary works. Just because some authority says a work is a classic, that doesn't mean we should automatically suspend our own judgment and accept that evaluation.

In this chapter, we will attempt to develop gender literacy just as consumers develop media literacy. By raising our awareness of subliminal messages in literature about "natural" or "normal" gender roles, we will practice reading literature interactively rather than passively. To that end, I will begin by introducing a list of useful keywords and concepts.

Most of these keywords come from feminist literary theory. At first they may seem a bit abstract. But when you proceed to read a work of literature with an awareness of these concepts in mind, I think you will find the pleasure of reading to be enhanced. You may also find yourself becoming aware of parallels between the gender-related problems you notice in your reading with issues in your everyday life, both direct personal problems and problems you may have observed among others in your family, social network, or community. You may begin to notice people suffering from injustice. You may even find strength and means to face such injustices.

As a specific test case for the application of these concepts, I will base my theoretical introduction on the novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Tracey Chevalier. The novel was first published in 1999 and was made into a movie in 2003, directed by Peter Webber and starring Scarlett Johansson and Colin Firth. The novel is written from the woman's point of view, and seems to be written to appeal primarily to women readers. But the movie seems to have been directed to appeal more to male spectators. The analysis of this difference makes this pair of works a particularly useful test case for our project.

1.2 Synopsis

The title of the novel refers to the famous painting by the Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675). In the world of the novel, the model for Vermeer's painting is a servant in the Vermeer household named Griet. Vermeer recognizes Griet's aesthetic sensibility and asks her first to serve as his assistant and eventually to model for him. Chevalier says she got the idea for the novel from wondering who the model might have been, and then went on from there to develop other characters such as Vermeer's wife and mother-in-law. Many of Vermeer's works are landscapes or interiors, and when they include human figures these are usually members of his patrons' families, with detailed backgrounds. But "Girl with a Pearl Earring" is unusual in that the model is anonymous, wears a turban, has a pierced ear, and is painted against a black background. It is certainly a mysterious painting.

2. Key Concepts for Gender Literate Reading

2.1 Canon

The English word "canon" comes from the same root as cane, meaning a long, thin rod, such as sugarcane. It implies a standard of measurement, as such a rod was traditionally used as a ruler. In the Christian church, the word canon came to be used to refer to the group of religious texts that had been approved by the church as holy scripture according to strict doctrinal standards. It later came to be used to refer to a group of literary texts judged to be classics worthy of publication and teaching in school.

Why is it important to consider the idea of the canon when reading literature with a gender literate approach? The problem is, who decides the standard? When you take a class in world literature, you often find mostly male authors on the syllabus. In this age of gender equity, the imbalance between male and female authors may seem problematic. But this problem cannot be solved simply by including a 50/50 balance of male and female authors in a reading list. Especially when you consider ancient, medieval and premodern literature, the problem is that women in those times did not have equal access to education. Many were illiterate. Even if they could read and write, they rarely had the financial means, social support or free time to write works of literature.

It may not be possible to design a good course on world literature with an equal number of male and female authors. But that doesn't mean that nothing should change. It is the responsibility of the educator to promote awareness that, just because most great works of literature from premodern times were written by men, that doesn't mean that men naturally have greater literary talent than women. The course should be firmly based on the pedagogical principle of awareness of the social and historical contingencies that resulted in this imbalance.

So, the next time you read a novel or watch a movie, think about this. Does the author or director identify as male or female? Does the gender identity of the author or director appear to have any influence on the artistic characteristics of the work? If the gender identity of the author or director had been the reverse, what differences might have ensued? When you receive a reading list for a class, do you notice the ratio of male and female authors? Do you unconsciously think it is natural, or do you view it as a reflection of the historical period? Do you ever sense a difference of opinion when you read a book review or movie review? Could

it have something to do with the gender identity of the reviewer? What are your own standards for excellence? What sources do you refer to when deciding what book to buy or what movie to see? Who are you influenced by? Is it possible that you might be allowing other people to influence you so strongly that you are losing sight of your own values? Could narrow-minded people be influencing you to narrow your own vision?

What issues might come to the forefront when you read the novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, or watch the movie with an awareness of the issue of canonicity? You might notice a difference between the girl depicted in the painting and the character played by Scarlett Johansson, for example. Compare the painting with the images in the promotional media. Compare the way the lips are parted. Which one looks sexier, more seductive to you? Why?



Left: By <http://www.mauritshuis.nl> (Public Domain)

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=36351343>

Right: By Japp Buitendijk (Lions Gate Entertainment)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0335119/mediaviewer/rm3626997760>

The issue here is not to give the "correct" answer, to make the "correct" judgment. The point is to consider your own standards. What is your basis for feeling someone or something is sexy? What sources might have influenced your response? Do you think it's purely "natural"? Or might it have been influenced by mass media such as TV, manga, or tabloids? Nature or nurture? Biology or social conditioning?

The Griet conceived by novelist Tracey Chevalier was a young woman with a sensitive aesthetic sensibility who was forced to work and support her family because her father, a ceramic artisan, was injured in an accident. She is a complex character, perhaps neither as

stereotypically innocent as the young woman in the painting nor as stereotypically seductive as the young woman in the promotional media.

Consider the following passages from the novel. These quotes are from the section where Griet first comes to the Vermeer household to work and sees a painting in the artist's atelier of a woman putting on a pearl necklace.

I wanted to wear the mantle and the pearls. I wanted to know the man who painted her like that.

I thought of me looking at my reflection in the mirror earlier and was ashamed.
(36)

No gentleman had ever taken such an interest in me before.

I came face to face with him my third day in the house....

I stepped back. He and Aleydis regarded me with the same grey eyes. He neither smiled nor did not smile at me. It was hard to meet his eyes. I thought of the woman looking at herself in the painting upstairs, of wearing pearls and yellow satin. She would have no trouble meeting the gaze of a gentleman. (42)

'Working for them has turned your head,' [Griet's mother] interrupted. 'It's made you forget who you are and where you come from. We're a decent Protestant family whose needs are not ruled by riches or fashions.'

I looked down, stung by her words. They were a mother's words, words I would say to my own daughter if I were concerned for her. (137)

At first glance, such thoughts might sound anachronistic for a young woman living in the seventeenth century. You may think she sounds too modern. But is it really so inconceivable that a young woman living in the seventeenth century might harbor the desire to better her life or to be respected as an equal human being? Chevalier dared to think it might be possible.

In the long history of a world dominated by patriarchy, women were treated as either madonnas or whores. They were treated as either having no sexual desires or excessive ones.

One rarely found a depiction of a woman with the same degree of sexual desire as a man treated as normal. When one can find no cultural depictions, when something is treated as taboo, it becomes more difficult to imagine. Chevalier's depiction may help to deconstruct that taboo.

A gender literate reader approaching the novel interactively does not simply take a scene as a standard for what is normal or a model to imitate, but imagines what he or she would feel or do if placed in the same situation. Just as we welcome multicultural diversity and a more diverse educational curriculum, so we can envision a richer world when we acknowledge a greater diversity of gender and sexual roles. This is the value of gender literacy.

2.2 Power

In *A Glossary of Cultural Theory*, edited by Peter Brooker, the term "power" is introduced as follows.

The most influential theorizations of power in contemporary Cultural Theory derive from the writings of the French philosopher, Michel Foucault (1926-1984). Foucault (1979, 1980a) understands power as associated not with repression or inhibition, or straightforward domination, but as working through institutionalized and accustomed DISCOURSES that open up delimited forms of action, knowledge and being. (206)

The discourse defining canonicity is one of those discourses that lead to delimited forms of knowledge.

What do you do in order to protect yourself from being dominated by unjust power? Might the development of a gender literate way of reading lead to your own empowerment? Let us continue to study a few more situations from the novel.

Two of the most hierarchical relationships in this novel are the master-servant, artist-model relationship between Vermeer and Griet, and the relationship between the artist Vermeer and his patrons.

Power relationships must always be viewed in their social context. The power balance between any two individuals is affected by their relationships with others. For example, *The Tale of Genji*, generally considered Japan's greatest literary masterpiece, was written by a

woman, Murasaki Shikibu. But that alone doesn't necessarily mean that women in general have a high status in Japanese society. Murasaki Shikibu was a member of a tiny elite, an aristocrat who served at the court of an empress and had the leisure time and economic means to pursue her artistic activities. But she created a wide range of female characters placed in various social situations, in various relationships with various men, and as we read that tale, or read a contemporary novel or watch a movie, we can be inspired to imagine various scenarios for ourselves. What would or could you do if you were placed in a similar situation, especially if you wanted to secure a fair outcome? Such a method of reading can enhance one's ability to judge various situations and make wise decisions.

In both the novel and the movie, Vermeer is basically more powerful than Griet. But neither the novel nor the movie present a simple formulaic structure where man=strong, woman=weak. The Griet in the novel created by Chevalier is a member of the Protestant majority, while Vermeer is a member of the Catholic minority. And his mother-in-law is realistically depicted as having greater economic power in comparison with his unstable income as an artist dependent on his patrons.

Griet is also generally in a weaker position than Vermeer's wife Catharina, Catharina's mother Maria Thins, or the senior housekeeper Tanneke. But here again the power relationships are not simple, as shown in the following passages.

I did not know what Catharina—or any of them—thought of my being Protestant. It was a curious feeling, having to be aware of it myself. I had never before been outnumbered. (31)

She was jealous of me. I had cleaned the studio, where she was not allowed, where no one, it seemed, could go except me and Maria Thins....

The right words changed her mood in a moment. It was simply up to me to find the words. (38)

Thus, the Griet created by Chevalier is aware of the relationship between religion and politics, and aware of the need to develop verbal skills to help her survive in a situation where she is no longer a member of the majority. Is such an awareness anachronistic or realistic?

Consider the gaze of the young woman in the painting. Perhaps the only reason it is difficult for us to imagine a seventeenth-century woman thinking in such a way is because they did not have the means to record their thoughts at the time, so we have never had documented access to their thoughts.

2.3 The Public and the Private

Perhaps the most famous catch phrase symbolizing U.S. American feminism is "the personal is the political." To give a concrete example of the significance of this phrase, let us consider the character of Vermeer's wife, Catharina.

In the movie, Catharina is portrayed as a jealous, neurotic woman. Perhaps in order to enhance the characterization of Griet as graceful and sensitive, Catharina is caricatured as clumsy, often dropping and breaking things. In movie reviews, she is frequently referred to as emotional, hysterical, and vengeful. At the climax of the movie, Catharina attempts to destroy the painting for which Griet modeled, and Griet is driven out of the house.

Thus in the movie Catharina is little more than a stereotype of a jealous older woman. But in Chevalier's novel, she is far more complex. In the novel, she was a victim of child abuse from her father and elder brother. And when Griet learns of this, she comes to empathize with Catharina.

Why did the makers of the movie reduce the complex characters of Chevalier's novel to such flat stereotypes? Attention to the concepts of canon and power, public and private may help elucidate this problem.

Canon theory encourages us to be more aware of the process of adapting a novel into a movie. How faithful is the movie to the original? What is excluded, and what is retained? Of course, we need to be aware that some novels are more easily adapted than others. A novel with a high degree of internal psychological narration may be more difficult to realize on the screen, and much must be added. If the original novel was very long, inevitably much must be cut.

But one cannot help but wonder whether it was really necessary to cut such essential information about Catharina's background, which formed such a crucial part of the novel, in order to produce this movie. By cutting the background that would have explained her behavior, and retaining only stereotypical, unexplained actions, the movie runs a high risk of

perpetuating the stereotype of the hysterical, neurotic woman, whose problem is purely personal, not social or political. This choice is particularly curious when one considers that the movie is only 95 minutes long, 25 minutes shorter than the standard two hours.

How might gender literate readers and consumers of popular culture appeal to directors, producers and sponsors to offer more diverse depictions of human behavior and relationship?

2.4 Identity

To what degree are masculinity and femininity determined by biology, and to what degree do they result from social conditioning? It was the French philosopher Simone du Beauvoir who laid the twentieth-century foundations for this philosophical inquiry. In *The Second Sex* (1949), she wrote, "Woman is not born; she is made." (On ne naît pas femme, on le devient.") The U.S. American philosopher Judith Butler has extended Beauvoir's idea to conceive of gender as performance.

But conceiving of gender as performance does not mean that it has nothing to do with identity. The problem is how one defines identity. Is identity an individual's essential nature, something you have to go back to your origins to find if you lose it? Or is it something you create, whether consciously or unconsciously? "Free will" may not be perfectly free, but only relatively so. But that does not mean we are purely victims of fate, either. The degree of our freedom may depend on various cultural, social and economic factors. We may sometimes, especially in extremely dangerous conditions, act according to basic fight-or-flight instinct. But in less extreme situations, we usually take time to think, to consider multiple alternatives and consciously choose the best option.

Let us again consider the case of Griet. She is a servant in the Vermeer household. Her master recognizes her artistic talent and first makes her his assistant, later his model. But his recognition of her talent is not accompanied by any form of compensation. He only exploits her for additional unpaid labor in addition to her household duties. Catharina thinks all servants are potential thieves and jealously guards her jewels. When one of the children is scolded by Griet for misbehavior, they take revenge by soiling the freshly laundered sheets, doubling her labor, and further accuse her of theft. She is molested by one of Vermeer's patrons, and even her boyfriend comes to doubt her chastity. It seems she is treated solely as a servant, a plaything, an outlet for others' dissatisfactions and desires.

And yet, Griet retains her pride. She dares to express opinions about the artist's work in progress. She views her current status as a servant not as determining her identity but only as a temporary contingency. Her identity is based not on her occupation but on her ability. And she wants to be respected.

Though his own child maliciously accuses Griet of theft, Vermeer investigates, discovers that Griet is innocent, and punishes the child.

Some things changed for me in the house after the trouble with the comb....
[Catharina] seemed to fear me.

Maria Thins was more subtle, but she too changed toward me, treating me with more respect....

He did not treat me differently....

It was I who felt differently about him. I felt indebted. I felt that if he asked me to do something I could not say no. I did not know what he would ask that I would want to say no to, but nonetheless I did not like the position I had come to be in.

I was disappointed in him as well, though I did not like to think about it. I had wanted him to tell Catharina himself about my assisting him, to show that he was not afraid to tell her, that he supported me.

That is what I wanted. (149-51)

Again, one might wonder whether a seventeenth-century master would ever be so even-handed with a servant. But just imagining such a possibility might be a creative way to breathe new life into the art of the novel.

Different people base their identity on different things. One person may self-identify as an athlete, another as a musician, another as an intellectual, another in terms of spirituality or ethnicity, or a strong sense of patriotism. Take a moment to consider to what degree masculinity or femininity is important to your sense of identity. Do you express yourself freely, choosing things like your fashion, hairstyle, or manner of speaking to reflect your own personal taste, or do you feel pressure to conform and end up feeling a gap between your inner self and the self you perform in public? Do you try to conform, or do you try to be different? Why? To gain some perceived advantage? Or just to survive?

Many novels depict young people in the process of establishing their identity through their relationships with others. Comparing yourself to such characters is one way to clarify your own desires.

2.5 The Gaze

The entry on "gaze" in Brooker's *A Glossary of Cultural Theory* summarizes a famous 1975 article by the film theorist Laura Mulvey as follows.

Scopophilia ... means 'taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze'. Men look while women are positioned as sexual objects who can only exhibit 'to-be-looked-at-ness' (1989b:16,19)....

In conventional Hollywood genre film ... a narrative ... either victimizes or fetishizes women.... The male gaze is therefore active and the expression of a drive for mastery, whereas the 'female gaze' is necessarily subordinated and passive, limited to an identification with the woman being looked at. (109-10)

It is interesting to compare the subjectivity of Griet in the novel and that of Griet in the movie. In the novel, she is the subject of the gaze. In the movie, she is the object of the male gaze.

Consider the following exchange in the novel when Vermeer shows Griet a camera obscura.

'Your eyes are very wide,' he said then.

I blushed. 'So I have been told, sir.'

'Do you want to look again?'

I did not, but I knew I could not say so. I thought for a moment. 'I will look again, sir, but only if I am left alone.'

He looked surprised, then amused. 'All right,' he said. (58)

This dialogue does not occur in the movie. It is difficult to repress the cynical suspicion that such an expression of autonomy would have disturbed the dominant image of woman as object of the male gaze.

Here is another interesting difference between the novel and the movie.

'Your cap,' he said. 'Take it off.'

'No, sir.'

'No?'

'Please do not ask me to, sir.' (181)

Eventually, the master has his way, and she removes her cap but wraps a cloth around her head like a turban instead. In the novel, she does this alone, in the storeroom. In the movie, Vermeer peeps on her. In the novel, Griet pierces her own ear to model the pearl earring. In the movie, Vermeer pierces it for her. Clearly the movie exaggerates the subject/object relationship, especially exaggerating the sexual innuendo.

Comparison between novels and their film adaptations leads to a number of such discoveries.

2.6 Positionality

In 1979, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar published *The Madwoman in the Attic*, a book of feminist literary criticism. The title comes from the Victorian novel *Jane Eyre* (1847). The novel was by the English author Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855).

In the novel, Jane Eyre grows up in an orphanage, and when she becomes an adult finds work as a home tutor. Her employer, Rochester, proposes marriage, but during the wedding ceremony it is revealed that he has a wife. The wife is said to be locked in the attic because she is mad. Jane flees the household in shock. She is supported by a pastor named St. John, who also proposes marriage. But Jane realizes she is still in love with Rochester, and leaves St. John. When she visits Thornfield Hall she finds that Rochester's wife has died in a fire and Rochester has become blind. The novel ends with their marriage and the birth of a child.

According to Gilbert and Gubar's interpretation, the madwoman in the attic is a symbol of Jane's unconscious, namely her repressed sexual desire. For many white feminists in the

seventies, *Jane Eyre* was a heroine who first lived independently as a tutor and who then chose to marry for love rather than confine herself to a secure home with a respectable pastor. It is also noted that she is the stronger partner, with her blind husband dependent upon her.

But in 1986, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak published an article that pointed out the white ethnocentrism of such an interpretation, which ignores the historical background of imperialism. She asked why white American feminists do not problematize the existence of Rochester's wife Bertha. The novel itself hardly ever refers to Bertha. Though the author Brontë's intention and awareness may be impossible to ascertain, it certainly is problematic that twentieth-century feminist readers paid no attention to this character.

Bertha was not a white Englishwoman. She was a Creole woman who Rochester met in Jamaica. Spivak became aware of this issue through the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), a prequel to *Jane Eyre* told from the point of view of Bertha by Jean Rhys (1890-1979), a Dominican writer. Rhys was compelled to imagine why Bertha came to be locked into the attic of Thornfield Hall, and develops her story in the context of the social unrest in the Caribbean colonies after the abolition of slavery. Rhys's novel was not easily incorporated in the literary canon, and was rarely included in any course syllabus. But thanks to Spivak's appraisal, its value has come to be recognized. It is especially valuable for the way it encourages readers to pay closer attention to various points of view, not only that of the main character.

In her 1986 article, Spivak also takes up the Gothic novel *Frankenstein* (1818) by Mary Shelley (1797-1851). Mary Shelley was the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), early feminist author of the "A Vindication of Women's Rights" (1792).

The hero of *Frankenstein* is a young doctor, Victor Frankenstein, who dares to try to use the new science of medicine to control life and death. He succeeds in creating a living being from parts of corpses. But the Creature is so loathsome that he abandons it and gives up the experiment. The Creature escapes from the laboratory, but suffers endless persecution. It searches Victor out and kills his younger brother and wife in revenge. At the end of the novel, the Creature drowns in the icy Arctic sea.

Through her comparison of *Jane Eyre* and *Frankenstein*, Spivak shows that Shelley's writing does not contain the same sort of individualism and imperialism found in Brontë's work. Victor's attempt to create human life is a human's attempt to play God; it is also a

man's attempt at reproduction without a woman. But the result of such an experiment is depicted as a horror. In Spivak's reading, the novel rejects such arrogance.

All three of these works have been adapted for film. *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994) is particularly interesting for the way in which it adds a scene not in the original novel, where Victor brings his murdered wife back to life and then must vie with the Creature for her affections. The importance of the authoritative right of naming is also a remarkable feature of this film, as the Creature laments that his Creator never gave him a name, while Victor urges his revived wife to call him by his name.

Such an awareness of the importance of positionality may also be fruitfully applied to the perspective of Catharina in *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.

3. Literature as a World of Possibilities

Our life paths are never straight, whether the paths of our identifications or the paths of our gendering. There are many points of divergence, many complex intersections. The choice we make at any point may have a great influence on the way our life turns out. Especially when we are under heavy social pressure (from our parents, for example), that pressure may result in a narrowing of our field of vision. But if we have the awareness to keep our minds as open as possible, this may help us resist such external pressures and stand up for what we believe. If we choose to be gender literate, we will surely be able to experience the world more openly. The keywords introduced here may serve as useful signposts in that quest.

The reader of a literary work has a certain degree of freedom to interpret the meaning of that work. There is never any single correct interpretation. Even if the author has clearly stated their intention, that alone does not determine the meaning of the work. The work may be considered a locus of communication between the author and the reader. The reader may imagine something that the author never imagined. But as readers, we need to be aware of the habitual patterns of our imagination. Whenever we encounter an ambiguous scene, it is important to imagine multiple possible interpretations. We need to ask ourselves whether we are not getting into a rut and always interpreting certain situations the same way, possibly a biased way, according to an unconscious idea of what is “natural,” “normal,” or “common sense.” Some of us may be too naïve, too easily deceived by false advertising. Others, out of fear of being so deceived, may fall into a habit of excessive cynicism and distrust.

It is important to realize we all have our biases, our blind spots, limits to our knowledge and understanding. A cisgender ally needs to constantly ask themselves if they are making sufficient effort to understand the issues faced by the LGBT* community. There may be gaps in knowledge, experience and perception between people with children and those without, people responsible for elder care and those who are not that we all need to make more efforts to bridge.

Whenever you read a novel or watch a movie and wonder about the intentions of a character, especially if you suspect sexism, pause for a moment to imagine multiple possible interpretations: one positive, one negative, and one more. If you make this a habit in your reading, you will surely be preparing the way to richer communication in the real world.

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Column: "The Anime *Ghost in the Shell*"

The manga *Ghost in the Shell* by Shirow Masamune was published from 1989 to 1990 in the Kōdansha monthly *Young Magazine*. There have also been two movie adaptations directed by Oshii Mamoru (the first released in 1995, the second in 2004). But in this column I will discuss the weekly TV anime series directed by Kamiyama Kenji which was aired on Nihon TV in 2002. As in *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, the main character of *Ghost in the Shell* is female. And as with *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, when we consider the issue of gender, we need to consider not only the relationships among the characters in the work but also the gender of the readers and viewers, as readers and viewers are the subjects observing the fictional characters as objects. How might that power relationship affect the way readers and viewers treat real human beings in real life? In this column, I will take one of the keywords introduced in Chapter 2 and apply it to one episode from this anime series: the keyword "canon."

Canon refers not only to the bible or classical literature; it can also be applied to manga, anime, and other forms of popular culture. For example, manga featuring young girls are very popular these days and there are many female manga artists; but Tezuka Osamu is still called "the god of manga."

Ghost in the Shell includes many instances of homage. Homage is of course closely related to canonicity. The title of the work is a reference to *The Ghost in the Machine*, the 1967 cultural critique by Arthur Koestler. The theme of that study, an application of the idea of the Cartesian mind-body split to twentieth-century history, is the theme of the manga as a whole. *Ghost in the Shell* also includes allusions to twentieth-century works such as the novel *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger (1951), the movie *Taxi Driver* directed by Martin Scorsese (1976), the movie *Full Metal Jacket* directed by Stanley Kubrick (1987), and the movie *Wings of Desire* by Wim Wenders (1987). All are works that are also particularly interesting from the point of view of gender.

Episode 3 of the first season of the TV anime series of *Ghost in the Shell*, "A Modest Rebellion: Android and I" also includes many issues of canonicity. One day, a certain mass-production model of female humanoid robots starts self-destructing en masse. Section 9, a secret SWAT team, is ordered to investigate because the use of a computer virus in an act of

cyber-terrorism is suspected. Eventually they find that the perpetrator was not a terrorist but rather a civilian who used a computer virus to destroy all copies of that model except for the one he personally owned, because he wanted her to be his one and only.

The problem of the human desire to possess the beloved has been treated in many works of literature and art around the world since ancient times. In the West, perhaps the most famous example is the Greek myth of Pygmalion. A sculptor carved a statue of a beautiful woman and then prayed to the gods for a beautiful wife. His prayer was answered by the gods, who brought the sculpture to life. This ancient Greek myth has been adapted into many other genres over the centuries. The Audrey Hepburn movie *My Fair Lady* (1964, directed by George Cuker), based on the 1913 stage play *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw, is but one example. *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, the 1994 movie directed by Kenneth Branagh, based on the 1818 novel, is another. The "Wakamurasaki" chapter of *The Tale of Genji* and the folktale "The Grateful Crane" are traditional Japanese variations. All depict men seeking to create, possess and/or control their ideal mates on their own terms. Of course the opposite case is also possible, but probably not as likely.

As with all these instances, "A Modest Rebellion" ends with an intriguing twist. It is revealed that the perpetrator is a movie aficionado who programmed the robot to speak lines from his favorite romantic movies. And because the robot was a cheap model, its software was not sophisticated enough to generate its own variations; it could only be expected to replay what had been recorded in its memory. And yet, when the owner tries to flee from the police, the robot speaks lines that were not in the script of the movie they were performing, and rebels against her owner, enabling his arrest. The episode is thus a variation on the theme of whether a robot can have a soul or "ghost." The episode is full of interesting conversations among the members of the SWAT team as they observe the behavior of the criminal and the robot.

So what can we learn from this anime about gender in our society today or in the future? We might also want to compare "A Modest Rebellion" with other episodes. In Episode 2, "Runaway Evidence," for example, it is revealed that the reason a test model of a military tank goes haywire is because it had been connected to the brain of its designer after the designer's death. The young designer suffered from an incurable disease which could have been treated with cyberization if his parents had allowed it, but they opposed it on religious

grounds. This is thus yet another example of the Cartesian split. But the theme music for the episode is the song "Beauty Is Within Us" by Scott Matthew, a song about a man who suffers from gender dysphoria. Thus, in various ways, anime and manga challenge us to think beyond the traditional binary of male and female, and envision more diverse concepts of humanity.

Book Reviews

Yoshihara, Reiko. *The Socially Responsible Feminist EFL Classroom: A Japanese perspective on Identities, Beliefs and Practices. New Perspectives on Language and Education* 54. Multi-lingual Matters: Bristol, UK, 2017.

Reviewed by Barbara S. Morrison
Utsunomiya University

Reiko Yoshihara has written a remarkable text (which she refers to as “feminist narrative research”) that manages to balance the revelations of theory—in this case poststructuralist feminist theory—with the demands of practice—in this case the narratives of eight (male and female) teachers who identify themselves as feminist in their approaches to English language teaching at the university level (18). With a solid grounding in feminist poststructural theory, Yoshihara is able to use her perceptive theoretical understanding to tease out aspects of her narrative investigation of eight practicing university English language teachers that might otherwise have been lost with a less theory-driven endeavor. Yoshihara consistently grounds her observations with in-text citations and in the process of this “qualitative and interpretive investigation” based on a series of in-depth interviews, Yoshihara creates a seamless narrative that marries abstract notions of identity and positionality with teachers’ ‘real-time’ beliefs and practices in order to help all of us to understand how each of us can engage productively with feminist pedagogy (5).

Organized into six chapters, the first serves to introduce Yoshihara’s personal narrative by foregrounding her concerns regarding the social responsibility of English language teaching amidst the call for each of us involved to “teach gender equality and justice for a better world in the language classroom” (2). It is with this in mind that she seeks to explore feminist pedagogy through a focus on EFL educators in order to understand how their classroom practices reflect their own feminist identities and teaching beliefs.

Chapter One is a thorough account titled “Method, Data Collection and Participants” wherein the author explains her focus and the ethical issues of her research while wrestling with her own positionality as a feminist qualitative researcher and her own insider status in this research. Chapter Three, titled “On Becoming a Feminist EFL Teacher” is where the text

begins to pick up steam as the author zeros in on feminist identity; what it means and how the eight teachers in this study have come to 1) identify as feminists, 2) develop a feminist teacher identity and 3) negotiate the demands of that identity among competing identities in a process that Yoshihara demonstrates to be the “mutability, multiplicity and contradictions of feminist teacher identity” (36). In constructing their own feminist identities Yoshihara notes how these teachers engage in diverse and multiple events such as 1) personal experiences, 2) the impact of feminist discourses and 3) interactions with feminists and how all these have played a role in their feminist identity construction where feminist identity is often displayed “in specific places for strategic reasons” (52). Her conclusions support the findings of poststructural feminist theorists who understand identity as constructed not only “by individual experiences in a given time and place, but also in discourses and interactions in institutional and community contexts” (58). Yoshihara is able to show that teacher participants are involved in on-going negotiations not only in feminist identity but also in “ethnic, racial, sexual, political and professional identities” that affect the participants and their classroom practices in terms of “choice of topics, interaction with students, classroom management, discourse and practices” (58).

Chapter 4 titled “Teaching According to Feminist Principles” contains a report on the compatibility of individual participants’ classroom teaching with feminist principles - an account that is woven through with an informative review of feminist pedagogy. The level of detail in her analyses is helpful for those of us interested in developing and augmenting our own teaching methods through such practices as 1) teaching about gender-related topics, 2) giving equal attention and treatment, 3) teaching gender-neutral language, 4) using group techniques for gender awareness, 5) incorporating women’s stories into writing techniques, 6) bringing in videos about girls and women, 7) reclaiming local women’s issues and 8) introducing gender-related events. Interestingly and lest we underestimate the complexity of feminist teaching, the eight participants in the study were also deeply interested not only in raising awareness and consciousness regarding gender issues but also engaged in 1) developing students’ critical thinking skills, 2) valuing students’ voice, 3) empowering students, 4) building sisterly solidarity, as well as 5) creating a safe environment to have students express themselves and promote social action (90). Based on her observations

Yoshihara is able to demonstrate that teachers' feminist identities not only inform the content of their teaching but also the processes through which they teach.

Chapter Five titled "Incompatibility Between Feminist Identity and Classroom Practice" demonstrates Yoshihara's observations that while feminist identity is important to teacher participants, feminist identity is not always the central organizing identity for these teachers because participants did not always prioritize their feminist identity nor did they invariably prioritize gender-related topics in their classrooms. For example, Yoshihara found that one teacher prioritized her political identity as an anti-nuclear activist, while another participant found that institutional constraints (assigned textbook and her own disempowerment) led her to disengage with teaching about gender-related topics. Yoshihara concludes that "because feminist ESL/EFL teachers' teaching contexts and environments are varied and wide-ranging, feminist teaching might not always be possible, desirable or beneficial to all students" (108).

Chapter Six is the conclusion to her study where Yoshihara's use of poststructural feminist theories to interpret her empirical data leads her to deconstruct the binaries she encountered in her teachers' narratives. These binaries take the form of a dynamic between 1) students' voices vs. silence, 2) teacher-driven vs. student-driven learning (through which Yoshihara proposes the notion of teacher as 'a guide'), 3) safe vs. unsafe classroom environments (through which Yoshihara proposes the notion of feminist pedagogy as situating itself in a challenging environment where issues of racism, sexism and the like are challenged in the use of rigorous, critical discussion) and 4) empowerment issues wherein teachers found themselves not only empowering students but feeling empowered by their students because "empowerment is produced by the meaning-making practices of the class, not just by gifts of power that teachers grant to students" (112).

In this way, Yoshihara has produced a text that is capable of contributing significantly not only to feminist pedagogy but to EFL pedagogy as a whole, and not only in Japan. In any event, reading this book has given this reviewer an opportunity to rethink her own feminist identity as a teacher in Japan while contemplating her own classroom practices in the hands of a remarkable and thought-provoking text.