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**ASSESSMENT OF GENDER-FAIR LANGUAGE USE IN THE ENGLISH  
LEARNING MODULES FOR GRADE 10 STUDENTS**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study assessed the use of gender-fair language in the English learning modules for Grade 10 students. Specifically, it examined how gender fairness was mainstreamed in the portrayal of women, representation, stereotyping, and language; identified the Filipino gender role ideologies reflected in and/or challenged by the modules; and proposed a training design on gender-fair language to improve the current learning modules. The study used a qualitative research design with Critical Discourse Analysis to examine 23 Grade 10 English learning modules at Bukidnon National High School. The analysis focused on the lexical choices, syntactic patterns, semantic constructs, and larger cultural and ideological connotations buried in the texts. Findings revealed that the modules contain both gender-fair and gender-biased elements. Some texts continue to reflect traditional portrayals of women, stereotypical role assignments, male-centered language, and gendered assumptions. However, several module excerpts also challenge unequal gender norms by portraying women as decision-makers, leaders, rights-holders, professionals, and active social agents. The study further found that Filipino gender role ideologies, such as the Maria Clara archetype, colonial patriarchy, toxic masculinity, hiya, pakikisama, utang na loob, bahala na mentality, adult superiority bias, nationalist feminism, the Babaylan or decolonial lens, and the Catholic moral gender framework were reflected and/or challenged in the modules. The study recommended the development of a Gender-Fair Language and Gender-Responsive Module Training for educators, instructional material writers, and curriculum evaluators. The researcher advocates for the methodical evaluation and modification of educational resources to guarantee gender-responsive, inclusive, and equitable language in basic education.

**KEYWORDS:** *Gender-Fair Language, Critical Discourse Analysis, English Learning Modules, Gender Representation, Gender-Responsive Education*

## INTRODUCTION

The use of gender-neutral language (GFL) in instructional materials is inextricably linked to gender equality in education, as per current research. GFL endeavors to establish an inclusive educational environment that acknowledges and respects all genders by eliminating gender bias in language. Two common methods for promoting gender-neutral wording are to "feminize" or "neutralize" terms. One method by which feminization increases the visibility of female referents in language is by substituting "he" with "he or she." Alternatively, normalization eliminates discriminatory language by substituting it with more inclusive terms, such as "police officer" in place of "policeman." By using these methods in their lessons, teachers may be able to fight gender stereotypes and make the classroom a more welcoming place for all students. Using gender-neutral language shows a strong dedication to equal rights for men and women and recognizes the powerful impact language has on how people think and feel. (UNESCO, 2020).

More and more people are using gender-fair language (GFL) in contemporary English, especially in schools. It stresses the need to be courteous and inclusive when talking to others to stop unjust discrimination based on gender and promote equality and respect for all. This is particularly essential in schools since language impacts how teachers educate and how pupils get along with each other. Research shows that GFL is important for promoting diversity and inclusion in schools and extends beyond just choosing the right words (Sczesny et al., 2016).

Women are still lacking in many academic areas, especially STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). This is partly because of ingrained biases and the lack of gender-inclusive language in school materials. The National Center for Education Statistics (2020) says that more women than men finish college. However, there are still not enough women working in STEM fields. This is due to societal norms and attitudes that restrict them from getting these positions. School papers that do not use gender-sensitive language could make stereotypes stronger and make it harder for women to get ahead.

Additionally, research indicates that women are more likely to leave STEM disciplines when inclusive language and sufficient representation are lacking. The curriculum's lack of recognition of women's accomplishments in science and technology reinforces the idea that these fields are mostly controlled by men, which may discourage female students

from pursuing careers in these areas (Evagorou et al., 202). Using gender-neutral terminology and inclusive pedagogical approaches is critical for creating an equal educational environment that encourages women to participate in all fields. The evaluation of gender-neutral language in English instructional materials for Grade 10 students reveals ongoing gender biases. Studies have shown that women are often not portrayed fairly in training tools. They are often shown in traditional ways, such as through roles, pictures, and words. This can support unequal gender standards and slow down the progress of gender equality in education (Crawfurd et al., 2024; Para, 2024; UNESCO, 2020). Many teaching materials show that there are many more male characters than female ones, which discourages women from going into STEM fields (Para, 202). This difference supports traditional ideas about gender roles and slows down efforts to make schools more fair.

The inconsistent treatment of students in the classroom may be influenced by the lack of knowledge and training of educators regarding gender bias. Gender patterns in schools can change how students see their abilities, the jobs they want, and how involved they are (Einarsson & Granström, 2002; OECD, 2022; UNGEI, 2020). It has been found that teachers care more about boys than girls. This difference in how boys and girls talk to each other in the classroom can make female students feel less like they fit and less in control, which can make them less engaged and less likely to do well in school. Gendered classroom cues, fixed-ability beliefs, and stereotype-based threats have all been shown to hurt women's sense of belonging, motivation, and performance, particularly in male-stereotyped academic domains (Canning et al., 2021; Good et al., 2012; Master et al., 2020). Furthermore, uneven treatment reflects greater societal inequities that are present in educational environments. Addressing these concerns through targeted research is crucial for identifying particular gaps in teaching materials and devising techniques that promote fair treatment of all students.

The evaluation of gender-neutral language use in English learning modules for Grade 10 students is crucial since instructional materials typically perpetuate gender stereotypes. According to studies, many educational tools continue to utilize prejudiced language and visuals that do not sufficiently reflect both genders, impacting students' attitudes and goals (Para, 2024). Additionally, a lack of gender-neutral language may damage the gender-responsive education principles mandated by several laws by fostering an inclusive and egalitarian learning environment (UNGEI, 2020). Finding flaws in current courses and creating plans to guarantee fair representation for all students depends on research on this

subject. Teachers can provide a more equal learning environment for every student by reducing these disparities.

The Department of Education's Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy, as institutionalized by DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017 encourages nondiscrimination and gender equality in basic education. The policy is based on the 1987 Philippine Constitution, Republic Act No. 9710, or the Magna Carta of Women, Republic Act No. 10533, as well as the Philippines' international human-rights commitments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (DepEd, 2017). The Department of Education wants educational materials and interactions to be gender-sensitive and welcoming. The Manual of Style, which requires gender-neutral language, shows this dedication. These rules make it clear that schools need to fight gender bias and make sure all of their classrooms are safe, welcome, and fair for all students.

This study aims to answer several important questions about language use in Grade 10 English modules. First, it looks at how gender-neutral language is integrated into these educational materials across a variety of dimensions, including language, stereotyping, representation, and the portrayal of women. Second, it looks at how Filipino ideologies about gender roles are reflected and/or challenged in Grade 10 learning modules based on the findings. Finally, it suggests a training plan centered on gender-neutral language to improve the current learning modules for Grade 10 pupils. This study seeks to identify language use disparities while offering practical solutions for educators and others committed to promoting educational equity.

In light of this, the researcher is driven to carry out this study in order to advocate for immediate changes that give gender equality in education top priority. This study promotes gender-neutral terminology in learning modules in response to requests for curricula that represent a variety of viewpoints. The findings will not only improve students' understanding of gender issues but will also inform policy discussions at the local and national levels, resulting in a more inclusive educational environment.

### ***Framework of the Study***

Gender-neutral language in teaching tools is looked at using ideas that give a full picture of how language affects how gender is shown. In this group of theories are Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminist Linguistics, Gender Mainstreaming in Educational Materials, and the Four Dimensions of Development. Each of these viewpoints offers distinct insights into how

language functions in society and influences gender perceptions.

Gender-fair language (GFL) is an important linguistic strategy that seeks to reduce gender stereotypes and discrimination through deliberate language changes. Researchers have found that gender-neutral language (GFL) uses two main methods to fix language problems that hurt women: feminization (making female referents more visible) and neutralization (changing gender-specific words to gender-neutral ones) (Lindqvist et al., 2019; Sczesny et al., 2016). It makes female referents stand out more by using inclusive pronouns like she or he instead of the generic he. On the other hand, neutralization changes gender-specific language to gender-neutral language, like when "policeman" is changed to "police officer" (Lindqvist et al., 2019; Sczesny et al., 2016). According to research, more linguistic exposure to gender asymmetries is associated with more prominent sexist views and worse gender equality, implying that languages with grammatical gender may foster social gender inequality (Sczesny et al., 2016). In its Guidelines on the Use of Gender-Fair Language in the Judiciary and Gender-Fair Courtroom Etiquette, the Philippine Supreme Court recognized this issue. It stated that sexist language devalues one sex, usually women, and promotes gender inequality; therefore, the intentional use of gender-fair language is necessary to promote equality and respect.

A strong framework for examining how language is used to establish and uphold power, dominance, and inequality is provided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), often referred to as Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) by certain academics. Van Dijk (2015) claims that this method is mainly focused on how speech contributes to societal issues, particularly the perpetuation and enactment of power abuse. Similarly, Wodak and Meyer contend that discourse is a form of social practice in which power and ideology are embedded and contested. This point of view says that language is not just a neutral way to communicate, but a place where social actors are placed, identities are contested, and dominant interpretations are either supported or questioned in specific social contexts (van Dijk, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

A key foundation for comprehending how language produces and maintains gender inequality is offered by feminist linguistics. Bucholtz (2014) asserts that in order to comprehend and confront social injustices, feminist studies on language, gender, and sexuality depend on linguistic analysis. Scholars use this idea to look at how vocabulary gaps, male-default phrases, and linguistic stereotypes can be used to make women feel less important and set manhood as the standard through language (Pauwels, 2003). In this regard, gender-neutral language has been proposed as an important reform strategy because it may

help reduce gender stereotyping and discrimination by making linguistic reference more inclusive (Sczesny et al., 2016). This viewpoint is also consistent with moderate Whorfian beliefs that language influences how speakers perceive and categorize social reality, including gender.

Gender mainstreaming is an important strategy for evaluating educational systems because it incorporates gender perspectives into policies, programs, implementation processes, and monitoring mechanisms in order to promote gender equality. By incorporating gender problems throughout the system rather than addressing them as distinct issues, this educational approach seeks to address enduring gaps in access, participation, and results (APHRC, 2024; EIGE, n.d.; Philippine Commission on Women, n.d.).

Gender-neutral language in instructional materials changes the approach to content development. Gender perspectives can be incorporated into modular instruction by looking at gender-neutral language, teaching-learning and assessment activities, and learning accommodations that promote gender-fair practice (Domogen et al., 2022). Related study suggests that educational materials should be closely examined for language choices, stereotypical depictions, and visual representations since these components may either support or contradict current gender norms (Para, 2024).

The Gender and Development (GAD) framework provides a broad perspective on gender representation through four critical dimensions: Language reinforces gender stereotypes and inequalities through a variety of linguistic mechanisms, as discussed by Kintanar in *Gender-Fair Language: A Primer*. The generic masculine refers to all people, regardless of gender, by using masculine terms such as "man" or "mankind". Even though this method is meant to be open to everyone, it pushes women's ideas to the side by making men the standard in terms of words and intelligence. The term "mankind" implies the exclusion of women, hence reinforcing male-centric views. In instances of gender uncertainty, singular masculine pronouns such as "he," "his," and "him" are often used. Still, because they usually make people think of men instead of women, their widespread use supports the idea that men are the rule. The idea that "If a student wants to succeed, he must study hard" refers to a male student makes the image of women weak. Terms ending with "-man," such as "fireman" or "chairman," often signify roles accessible to persons of both genders. Still, the fact that these lines are skewed toward men makes it harder for women to be involved. Calling a female firefighter a "fireman" makes the job seem more male-dominated, which discourages women from going into the field. Terms like "chairman," which are culturally and linguistically limited to adult males, obstruct women and persons of other genders from achieving

leadership positions. This methodology limits inclusiveness and perpetuates gender disparity by suggesting that some jobs are inherently masculine.

The Gender and Development paradigm recognizes that language has a substantial influence on gender perspectives in three fundamental ways, as outlined by Kintanar and Tongson (2014): articulating consciousness, reflecting culture, and shaping socialization. Using words that don't depend on gender to encourage acceptance is a way of raising awareness. Raising awareness is the process of using language to share and change ideas about gender roles and unfair treatment. Language reflects traditional values and gender roles. For example, greetings and names that are used most often support the idea that men are superior. Affecting socialization describes how language influences the process by which people learn and internalize gender roles, such as children adopting gendered behaviors as a result of the language they hear in their families and schools. Together, these dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for examining how language shapes and is shaped by gender dynamics in society (Kintanar & Tongson, 2014).

The framework for understanding gender stereotyping in this study is based on research demonstrating that stereotypes operate through gendered role expectations, occupational segregation, personality attributions, and social representations. Gender stereotyping is the process of assigning men and women distinct roles, qualities, and expectations based on their gender, which typically limits opportunities and encourages uneven social interactions (OECD, 2022; OHCHR, n.d.). In the Philippines, PCW materials address stereotypical portrayals of men and women, as well as women's absence from media and public discourse, emphasizing that social representations play an important part in the preservation of gender stereotypes.

International frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognize that gender equality is closely linked with educational rights. By 2030, UN member states have committed to providing inclusive and high-quality education while ending all kinds of discrimination against women and girls.

Despite tremendous progress in narrowing educational gaps, ongoing obstacles remain. According to OECD statistics, gender discrepancies exist in skills, representation across educational disciplines, self-confidence, and attainment, emphasizing the need for more sustained and long-term initiatives to overcome these disparities.

According to research conducted in the Philippines, gender-fair notions are not commonly integrated into school curricula. A study on Grade 9 curriculum integration discovered that gender-neutral principles were not generally adopted in schools, highlighting the ongoing

need for comprehensive gender-sensitive educational approaches.

Furthermore, to combat gender bias and promote a more equitable learning environment, educational materials should use gender-neutral language. Nonetheless, an evaluation of English learning modules for Grade 10 students reveals a troubling deficiency in the incorporation of GAD concepts. This absence not only fails to address existing gender imbalances in the curriculum but also reinforces stereotypes that might make it harder for female students to participate and feel confident in their abilities. Women's ongoing underrepresentation and persistent beliefs lead to structural disadvantages that have long-term implications for adult employment opportunities. Therefore, using gender-fair language (GFL) to deal with these problems is important for creating a learning space that is open to everyone, gives all students authority, and makes them feel like they belong. By incorporating GAD principles into English learning modules, educators can help break down barriers and promote a more equitable educational experience for all students.

### ***Framework of the Study on Filipino Ideologies***

The portrayal of men and women in Grade 10 English learning modules, the roles assigned to them, and the values embedded in the texts all have the potential to reinforce or contradict mainstream gender beliefs in the Philippines. According to the attached ideology notes for this study, some of the recurring frames through which gender is culturally imagined in the Philippines include the Maria Clara archetype, colonial patriarchy, state feminism, nationalist feminism, the Babaylan or decolonial lens, and the Catholic moral gender framework. These ideologies reflect Filipino society's historically complex attitudes toward power, morality, citizenship, femininity, and masculinity.

The current research employs an adapted Filipino gender ideology framework to examine how gendered meanings are reflected, normalized, and challenged in educational materials. This adapted framework is based on gender system theory, social role theory, Philippine gender and development policy, and Sikolohiyang Pilipino. Ridgeway and Correll (2004) describe gender as a social structure that organizes expectations, status beliefs, and patterns of interaction between men and women. Similarly, social role theory believes that gender stereotypes originate and endure as a result of women and men being regularly associated with distinct social roles, activities, and levels of power. Gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive education policies in the Philippines need the inclusion of gender equality and nondiscrimination in curricula, learning resources, and educational practice. At the same time, Sikolohiyang Pilipino offers a culturally grounded perspective on how these gender

meanings are interpreted in the context of Filipino social experience and cultural values (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). According to this viewpoint, gender ideology in educational materials is communicated not only through explicit statements but also through representations of who speaks, leads, nurtures, obeys, decides, or remains silent.

The study's paradigm is based on patriarchal-colonial gender dynamics. This group includes ideas on what it means to be a man based on power, leadership, duty to the public, and emotional strength. The main things that set women apart are their domesticity, submissiveness, moral purity, and lower social standing. The study's ideological guide says that the Maria Clara archetype is a perfect female figure who is noted for her domestic virtue, meekness, and humility. Colonial patriarchy refers to the historical convergence of colonial power and patriarchal societal frameworks, which sustained gender hierarchies and restricted women's autonomy. The book emphasizes the importance of the Catholic moral gender paradigm in the Philippines, where women are traditionally seen as wives, mothers, and caregivers within morally conservative family structures. These principles are critical to the current study because many of the module extracts in the data support or refute the notion that women must be quiet, selfless, and dependable.

The second domain is the Filipino relational-cultural value system, which demonstrates how gender ideology is underpinned by social norms governing harmony, appropriateness, indebtedness, reverence, and direct dominance. The data collected shows that ideologies like *hiya*, *pakikisama*, *utang na loob*, obedience to authority, and *bahala na* are important interpretive categories in the modules. Although these concepts are not intrinsically gendered, they become gender significant when they encourage obedience, silence, perseverance, or acquiescence, especially in situations involving bullying, abuse, or uneven power. According to a recent UP CIDS study, conversations concerning Filipino values have typically centered on *hiya*, *utang na loob*, and *pakikisama*. Simultaneously, *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* came to see them as superficial ideals that should be understood within larger relational frameworks, such as *kapwa*. These values are analytically crucial in the current study since several texts in the courses encourage self-assertion, speaking up, and addressing stillness, all of which challenge cultural dispositions that may indirectly perpetuate gender inequity.

The third domain is counter-hegemonic feminist and decolonial ideology, which focuses on women's agency, equality, leadership, and voice while challenging established gender hierarchies. According to the accompanying ideology paper, the Philippine government formally advocates women's rights and gender equality through state feminism, as seen by the Magna Carta for Women. This is congruent with Republic Act No. 9710, which

acknowledges the Magna Carta of Women as a comprehensive human rights law for women with the goal of eliminating discrimination and promoting Filipino women's rights. The manifesto also includes the Babaylan/decolonial viewpoint, which seeks to reclaim precolonial and indigenous forms of female leadership that have been destroyed by colonial control, as well as nationalist feminism, which links women's empowerment to greater efforts for social justice and national welfare. The study data vividly reflect module snippets depicting women as leaders, public speakers, rights-bearers, athletes, advocates, and decision-makers, as opposed to passive or dependent subjects.

The adapted Filipino Gender Ideology Framework for the current study is divided into three domains. The framework assumes that English learning modules serve as spaces for gender ideologies to be conveyed, negotiated, and occasionally resisted through characterization, interaction, social roles, thematic focus, and language selection. As a result, the researcher is able to go beyond determining whether the modules are superficially gender-neutral or biased. More importantly, it allows the researchers to determine whether Filipino gender role theories are represented, accepted, or contested in the modules. By providing an interpretive lens for understanding how textual portrayals interact with broader Filipino views on gender, masculinity, family, morality, social harmony, and women's public participation, the framework directly supports Statement of the Problem No. 2. Finally, this framework improves the analytical perspectives of the investigation. The adapted Filipino Gender Ideology Framework highlights the culturally based belief systems that underpin these discourses in the Philippine context. In contrast, feminist linguistics and critical discourse analysis show how prejudice and ideology are integrated into conversation. Therefore, the framework is both theoretical and contextual. It is theoretical because it takes into account different perspectives on social roles and gender systems. However, because it is grounded in Philippine gender history, Filipino relational norms, and regionally identifiable ideological formations, it is also contextual. It is thus especially important for assessing instructional materials designed for Filipino students, whose gender perceptions are influenced by deeply ingrained cultural and historical practices, as well as international discourses on equality.

### ***Significance of the Study***

The researcher believes that the findings of this investigation will benefit the following stakeholders: students, educators, administrators, and prospective researchers.

The research creates an inclusive learning space for K-12 high school students by helping them acquire and understand gender-neutral terminology. This makes them feel better about

themselves and more interested in classroom discussions.

The study's results will help high school English instructors by showing them how to use language in ways that reduce gender bias in the classroom and make it a more equitable place to learn.

Instructional Materials (IM) Developers may use the findings to gain guidance on creating gender-sensitive educational resources that reflect contemporary values of inclusivity and equality, thereby contributing to the development of a more just curriculum.

In order to ensure that educational materials are in line with national equality goals, the Department of Education believes that the research findings will be used to enhance curricular standards and policy-making to promote gender justice.

This research introduces a novel approach for incorporating gender-neutral linguistic concepts into educational practices, therefore improving the quality of English instruction and encouraging inclusive teaching approaches that advance student equality.

By highlighting the significance of language in maintaining or dispelling gender stereotypes, this study contributes to the discussion about gender equality. It highlights how crucial it is to provide instructional materials that fairly depict a variety of gender identities in order to foster an inclusive and courteous society.

This study aims to establish a foundation for future research on the impact of language on gender perceptions and educational equity, contributing to ongoing academic discourse in this important area.

This study contributes to the growing interest in gender-fair language and gender research.

### ***Definition of Terms***

The vocabulary used in this study has been operationalized to assist readers in comprehending the primary ideas.

Gender Fair Language (GFL) is a way of using language that is purposeful and uses vocabulary that is inclusive, neutral, and not discriminating. This is done to make sure that all gender identities are fairly represented in English learning materials, to remove stereotypes, and to eliminate hierarchies based on gender.

Instructional materials. Comprehensive educational resources, such as textbooks, learning modules, visual aids, and additional teaching materials, are specifically created to assist Grade 10 English language learners.

### *The Methodology*

The study employed a qualitative research design using Critical Discourse Analysis. It analyzed 23 Grade 10 English learning modules used at Bukidnon National High School. The modules were examined to determine how gender-fair language appeared in terms of portrayal of women, representation, stereotyping, and language use.

The analysis focused on lexical choices, syntactic patterns, semantic constructions, and broader cultural and ideological meanings embedded in the texts. The researcher also used thematic coding to identify recurring gendered and gender-fair patterns across the selected modules. The coding process examined whether the language and representations in the modules supported inclusive gender representation or reinforced gender stereotypes.

The data source consisted of Grade 10 English learning modules from Quarters 1 to 4. The study examined different reading texts and literary selections, including articles, essays, news reports, speeches, stories, songs, and other module-based texts. The coding and analysis were guided by gender-fair language principles, gender-responsive instructional material standards, Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminist Linguistics, Gender Mainstreaming in Instructional Materials, Gender and Development dimensions, and an Adapted Filipino Gender Ideology Framework.

### *Research Locale*

The study was conducted in one of the national high schools in one of the divisions in Bukidnon Province. The school is being administered by a Principal IV and an Assistant Principal. It has an approximate population of 8,373 students. Out of the total population, 2,635 are male Junior High School and 1,356 are male Senior High School students. The female populace is composed of 2,925 from the Junior High School and 1,457 from the Senior High School. To sum it up, 3,991 are males, and 4,382 are females. The school normally has bigger number of females over males, simply because in the entire population, females got the greater number than the males. Mostly in every class, females lead in terms of quantity.

Bukidnon National High School (BNHS) is a public secondary institution that has fully adopted and implemented the K–12 basic education curriculum mandated by the Department of Education (Philippines). The school follows the standard structure of Junior High School (Grades 7–10) and Senior High School (Grades 11–12), providing a continuum of learning that prepares students for higher education and employment. Its curriculum implementation

reflects the principles of spiral progression, particularly in Science and Mathematics, where key concepts are introduced early and revisited with increasing complexity to ensure deeper understanding.

Instruction in BNHS is learner-centered and contextualized, integrating local culture and real-life applications to make learning more meaningful and relevant to students in Bukidnon. In support of this, teachers make extensive use of learning materials provided by the Department of Education, such as official textbooks, teacher's guides, self-learning modules (SLMs), and digital resources from the Learning Resource Portal, ensuring that instruction remains aligned with the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) and national standards.

### ***Data Gathering Procedure***

As a mandatory step prior to data gathering, the researcher subjected the revised paper for Research Ethics Committee review to adhere to research ethic protocol of the university. After the paper was given the certificate of exemption, the researcher proceeded with the permission request to conduct the study.

The researcher requested a written communication from the Dean of the College of Education Graduate Program of Bukidnon State University and a permission letter to conduct the study from the Schools Division Superintendent of Malaybalay City. When the permission was granted, the researcher approached the Secondary School Principal of Bukidnon National High School, where the study was conducted. The researcher provided notification about the purpose of the study.

In the data gathering procedure, the selected learning modules were subjected to close textual examination in order to identify linguistic forms, expressions, and representational patterns that are relevant to gender-fair language. Guided by CDA, the researcher examined how lexical choices, grammatical structures, and recurring discursive patterns may encode social meanings about gender, authority, and legitimacy. This method fits with the main idea behind critical discourse studies, which says that we need to look at discourse in the context of the societal and cultural settings in which it is made and understood (Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

This approach enabled the research to collect data on both the superficial aspects of language usage and the underlying discursive patterns that may normalize, replicate, or challenge gender stereotypes in educational materials. Thus, CDA provides a suitable and rigorous methodological framework for the systematic collection and interpretation of textual evidence related to gender-fair language in the selected modules (van Dijk, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

The study followed a systematic qualitative procedure anchored in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This approach is appropriate because CDA examines discourse as a form of social practice and investigates how language reflects, reproduces, and at times resists relations of power, dominance, and inequality (van Dijk, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). In the present study, CDA was used to examine how gender is represented in Grade 10 English learning modules and how linguistic choices may sustain or challenge gendered assumptions embedded in educational discourse.

The data gathering procedure began with the identification and selection of the learning modules that meet the established inclusion criteria. When the data texts have been finalized, each module was subjected to close reading in order to identify linguistic and representational patterns relevant to gender-fair language. According to critical discourse studies, this method is correct because textual analysis should be understood in the context of the larger institutional and social settings in which discourse is made and used (van Dijk, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

The researcher proceeded in taking a closer look at word choices, sentence structures, meaning patterns, and ways of representing things that might show gender bias or acceptance of both genders. The researcher coded recurrent expressions, descriptions, and portrayals that either reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes. Particular attention was given to forms of language that make one gender more visible or normative than another, as well as to textual and visual patterns that position women and men differently in terms of roles, authority, and legitimacy. Through this process, the study seeks to uncover the discursive mechanisms by which gendered meanings are normalized, reproduced, or contested in the selected materials (van Dijk, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

An important part of the process was contextual analysis. The language results were not examined in isolation; instead, they were understood in light of larger social values, institutional standards, and gender-sensitive teaching principles. UNESCO states that achieving gender equality in education is about more than just access. It is also about the content, the settings, and the ways that people learn. To do this, gender-responsive education resources need to be created and evaluated using a gender lens (UNESCO, 2022; UNESCO, n.d.). Thus, the present analysis related the identified discourse patterns to larger educational and social structures that shape gender representation in learning materials.

Then the researcher subjected the coded modules to an intercoding reliability process. The process involved two experts who also coded the same data texts to see whether similar codes and thematic interpretations would emerge independently. Prior to the activity, the experts

were given the instructions via formal letter on the study's objectives, coding framework, and were given the code guide to ensure a shared understanding of the coding scheme.

Each expert was provided with identical data sets and instructed to code them separately without consultation with the researcher or with each other. After the independent coding was completed, the results were compared to determine the level of agreement across coders. Points of convergence indicated consistency in the application of codes, while discrepancies highlighted areas requiring further clarification.

In the last step of the process, the results were interpreted, and a suggested solution were made based on the gaps found in the modules. In particular, the researcher came up with a plan for a Gender-Fair Language Workshop for school staff who make teaching tools. The goal of this suggested workshop is to help people better understand gender-fair language principles, help fix biased content, and encourage more inclusive practices when making future teaching materials. The UNESCO and UNGEI guidelines for this part stress how important it is to give teachers and people who make courses more training in gender-responsive education, lesson planning, language use, and reviewing teaching-learning materials (UNESCO, 2022; UNGEI, 2020). The suggested workshop included practical sessions on identifying gendered language, revising existing module content, and applying inclusive strategies in instructional material development.

### ***Data Analysis Procedure***

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used as the main analytical method for the study's data analysis process, which examined how gender is represented in Grade 10 English learning courses. CDA is a good fit for this study because it looks at discourse as a social practice and how language can create, maintain, justify, or fight power and inequality (van Dijk, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). In the context of the present study, this approach enables the researcher to investigate how linguistic and representational choices in instructional materials may sustain or challenge gendered assumptions embedded in educational discourse.

The first stage of the analysis involved a close textual examination of the selected modules. At this stage, the researcher conducted a line-by-line reading of the texts in order to identify lexical choices, grammatical structures, semantic patterns, and recurring expressions that may indicate gender bias or gender inclusivity. This procedure is consistent with CDA, which requires close attention to the linguistic features of texts as part of understanding how discourse constructs social meaning (van Dijk, 2015).

In the second stage, the recognized speech was interpreted in light of larger verbal and social contexts. According to critical discourse studies, the study will not just look at the text. It will also look at how the classes fit into bigger social, cultural, and intellectual frameworks that have to do with how gender is portrayed in schools (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). At this stage, the researcher examined at how the classes' rhetoric may reflect, accept, or challenge existing gender roles and social structures.

In the last stage, the recurring patterns found in the writings were coded, categorized, and interpreted. In this step, the researcher sorted the verbal and symbolic traits into groups based on whether they support gender norms or question them. This way of interpreting fits with Fairclough's three-dimensional approach to discourse analysis, which connects textual analysis with discursive practice and broader sociocultural practice. This lets the researcher link how language is used in the modules to bigger patterns of power and ideology.

### ***Coding and Inter-coding Procedure***

The first step in the coding process is making a codebook with the categories that will be used to look at gender-neutral language in the chosen Grade 10 English learning courses. According to MacQueen et al. (1998), creating an organized codebook is important for qualitative analysis because it gives a stable framework for the careful study of written data and helps make the use of codes more consistent. The gender-fair language literature was used to create the codebook. It includes gender-neutral language, feminization, gender stereotypes, and masculine generics. This is because these are important parts of research on linguistic bias and inclusive reform (Lindqvist et al., 2019; Sczesny et al., 2016). There are operating description and some examples for each code to help with the analysis and make the coding process clearer.

Through a close study of the modules, the researcher did the first coding. The researcher used the codebook to find words, sentences, descriptions, and patterns of expression that show either gender-neutral or gender-biased language use. This method is in line with qualitative coding methods that stress finding patterns in written data in a planned way (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Through this stage, the study generated an initial set of coded instances that will serve as the basis for subsequent refinement and interpretation.

After the initial coding phase, an intercoding procedure was undertaken to strengthen the reliability of the analysis. Campbell et al. (2013) state that intercoder confidence is higher when coding schemes are better by checking them over and over, making coding units clearer, and talking about differences. In this study, the researcher and a second qualified

coder also used the codebook to look over certain parts of the data text, compare their coding choices, and talk about areas where they do not agree until they do. This process is intended not only to improve reliability but also to refine the codebook by clarifying overlapping categories or identifying additional patterns that emerge from the data (Campbell et al., 2013; MacQueen et al., 1998).

The process of coding included analyzing the context. The coded language features were not read in isolation; instead, they were examined in the context of larger social norms, institutional practices, and gender-responsive education principles. According to the research on gender-responsive education, teaching and learning materials should be looked at with a gender view because they can support or contradict gender stereotypes and unfair portrayals (UNESCO, 2022; UNGEI, 2020). Thus, the coding process examined not only to isolated lexical items but also to the wider discursive patterns through which gender meanings are constructed in the modules.

The final stage of the coding and intercoding procedure involved the interpretation of the coded data and the identification of themes that explain how the modules construct, normalize, or challenge gender representations. In this phase, the researcher synthesized the coded patterns in order to determine recurrent strengths, problematic tendencies, and areas for revision in relation to gender-fair language. On the basis of these findings, the study proposed a Gender-Fair Workshop on language for school personnel who make teaching tools. The suggested meeting is backed by advice from UNESCO and UNGEI, which stresses building people's skills in making curriculums that are gender-sensitive, using language correctly, and reviewing teaching and learning materials (UNESCO, 2022; UNGEI, 2020). The workshop focused on practical strategies for revising biased content and developing more inclusive educational resources.

### ***Intercoders***

For the research to be more reliable, the study used an intercoding method that involves two experts whose areas of knowledge are different from each other. One of the intercoders of this study is a Gender and development advocate of a who have been designated and the other will teach a language. This arrangement is good because it lets people who are good at both gender-sensitivity and language or teaching skills help with the coding process. This leads to a more balanced and accurate understanding of how gender is shown in the courses. In qualitative research, team-based analysis is strengthened when the coding process draws on multiple perspectives within a clearly defined codebook structure (MacQueen et al., 1998).

When researchers look at data through different but complementary interpretive lenses, working as a team has been shown to improve dependability and trustworthiness. Consensus discussions help bring to light implicit assumptions and improve the analytic framework (Cascio et al., 2019; MacQueen et al., 1998). This means that the intercoding process helped provide a more in-depth look at how language and portrayal in Grade 10 English lessons may support or contradict gender norms

Adding a GAD expert is also in line with the UN Women Training Center's gender-equality capacity-building principles. These principles stress the importance of training and institutional learning as ways to support gender equality and women's development. In this situation, having a gender-informed inter-coder helps make sure that the researcher stays aware of problems of bias, exclusion, and representation. The language teacher also brings knowledge about how to understand texts and how to teach them (UN Women Training Centre, 2016/2017). These arrangements should make the code process more true, reliable, and sensitive to gender when put together.

### *Findings*

Based on the analysis, the following findings were established:

- a. In terms of the portrayal of women, the most frequent categories identified were relational roles (48) and secondary or supportive positioning (36). These were followed by infantilization (17), appearance over competence (14), and sexual objectification (9). These results indicate that women in the modules are still often positioned in relation to others and are frequently depicted in limited or subordinate roles.
- b. In terms of representation, the modules most frequently reflected articulating consciousness (47), reflecting culture (39), affecting socialization (35), and social awareness (29). These findings suggest that the modules do not merely transmit information but also participate in shaping learners' understanding of social roles, values, and gender expectations.
- c. In terms of stereotyping, the most recurring forms were character attributes (55), role assignment (42), social representation (33), and occupational limitation (21). This finding shows that gender stereotypes remain embedded in the modules through patterned descriptions of behavior, expected social functions, and restricted visions of what women and men can do.
- d. In terms of language, masculine generics (31) and singular masculine pronouns (28) appeared most frequently, followed by gender-polarized adjectives (19) and disparaging

language (11). These findings demonstrate that gender bias persists not only at the level of content and characterization but also in the linguistic structures through which meaning is conveyed. This observation is supported by research showing that masculine generics and other asymmetrical language forms contribute to gender stereotyping and discrimination, while gender-fair alternatives promote more inclusive meaning-making .

2. With respect to Filipino gender ideologies, the study found that the modules reflect and/or challenge the Maria Clara archetype, colonial patriarchy, toxic masculinity, hiya, pakikisama, utang na loob or deference to authority, bahala na mentality, adult superiority bias, nationalist feminism, the Babaylan or decolonial lens, and the Catholic moral gender framework. However, the dominant pattern across the data was not passive reproduction but critical challenge.

3. A training plan is proposed based on the findings of the study. It is a 3-day training following a three- layered approach involving the following layers - Language Level – correcting biased and androcentric expressions; Representation Level – examining roles, visibility, and positioning; Ideology & Discourse Level – analyzing how texts construct gender norms and identities. The training design is anchored on the gender-related issues identified in the learning material.

## ***CONCLUSIONS***

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Given the gender-related issues and gender responsive discourses found in the Grade 10 English learning modules at the same time, therefore one can say that it not wholly gender-biased, but neither are they fully gender-fair. Rather, they contain a mixed discursive pattern in which gender-responsive and gender-biased elements coexist.
2. Moreover, the study concludes that the modules serve as important sites where Filipino gender ideologies are both reflected and contested. At the same time, the repeated challenge to these ideologies shows that the modules also carry the potential to disrupt unequal gender norms and promote more critical and emancipatory understandings of identity, power, and participation.
3. Finally, the study concludes that a focused training program on gender-fair language and gender-responsive module development is a necessary and appropriate response to the results.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Instructional materials developers and English teachers should systematically review Grade 10 modules to identify and revise gender-biased portrayals, stereotypical role assignments, and male-centered linguistic forms. Particular attention should be given to recurring patterns such as relational framing of women, secondary positioning, occupational limitation, masculine generics, and singular masculine pronouns. This recommendation is in line with evidence that gender-fair and gender-sensitive language can help reduce stereotyping and support more equal representation.
2. Schools and curriculum supervisors should adopt the proposed Gender-Fair Language and Gender-Responsive Module Development Training for those involved in the preparation, evaluation, and use of Grade 10 English learning resources. The training may serve as a practical mechanism for strengthening institutional capacity to develop more inclusive and gender-responsive materials, consistent with DepEd's gender-responsive education mandate.
3. Learning resource evaluators, department heads, and master teachers should integrate gender-fair language criteria into module assessment and quality assurance processes. Evaluation should extend beyond surface-level inclusivity and also examine deeper ideological patterns embedded in texts, images, examples, and classroom activities.
4. Future module development should intentionally include more texts and learning tasks that portray women as leaders, decision-makers, knowledge producers, and agents of social change, while also representing boys and men in ways that do not rely on dominance, emotional restriction, or other harmful gender norms. In this way, learning materials may better support a more transformative approach to gender equality in and through education .
5. Future researchers may expand the present study by examining modules from other grade levels, subject areas, schools, divisions, or regions, and by exploring how learners and teachers actually interpret and respond to gendered messages in instructional materials. Such studies may provide a broader empirical basis for strengthening gender-responsive curriculum development and implementation.

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