Linguistic Sexism in Introduction to History and Philosophy of Science, University of Port Harcourt General Studies Course Manual

IKWOR IBE AFIAUWA[1], IFEANYICHUKWU AMEME[2]

[1]Department of English Studies University of Port Harcourt Port Harcourt, Nigeria
[2]Department of English Studies School of Graduate Studies University of Port Harcourt Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Abstract- Linguistic sexism is language asymmetry or discrimination on the basis of gender. It is a form of language inequality which reveals an aspect of our social structure—a system which has always relegated the image of women to the background of societal affairs. Most often, linguistic sexism manifests in the choice of words of our everyday language. And most often, second language (L2) speakers of English unconsciously acquire sexist language from sources such as textbooks written in the English language. This study, therefore, investigated linguistic sexism in Introduction to History and Philosophy of Science, a course manual of University of Port Harcourt General Studies (GES) unit, and how sexist language influences the life of students who use such textbooks. Benjamin Lee Whorf's Linguistic Relativism provided a theoretical framework upon which this study was carried out. The study adopted qualitative design which utilized scientific inquiry that underscored linguistic sexism in the available data. The population of this study consists of forty-three (43) excerpts from the textbook. The findings revealed that the textbook demonstrates some degree of gender inclusivity with sporadic use of the phrases like "he/she," "his or her," and references to both men and women. However, these instances are inconsistent and insufficient when weighed against the dominant use of gender-biased terms. We recommend that authors and editors should review all instances of man, mankind, and similar male-default terms with inclusive alternatives such as human, person, individual, or humanity in order to help establish gender inclusivity in our education texts.

Index Terms- Linguistic Sexism, Asymmetry, General Study Course, Linguistic Relativism, and Gender Bias

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a means of communication, a gift that sets humans apart from the lower animals. With language, humans express their feelings, trade information, give instructions, make demands and wield power and control over others. The human language is such a complex system with a string of rules that govern its use. For instance, syntax weaves the structure of a sentence; semantics governs the study of meaning, and pragmatics adds the spark of context that enables us to manage and share our thoughts from fleeting dreams to solid plans and from creepy emotions to bold intentions. And as robust as it has become, science has not been able to provide clear-cut answers to the question of the origin of human language. Hence, there are many postulations regarding the origin of human language. While some scholars argued that language grew gradually from the simple sounds and primate gestures, which slowly evolved into the rich and intricate forms we use today, others argue that it burst onto the scene in a flash, sparked by a sudden leap in how our brains worked, like a lightbulb flipping on in the human mind (Tomasello, 2008). Both ideas have their supporters, and they are backed by fascinating clues: while comparative linguistics investigates the etymology of ancient words, neuroscience goes beyond the search of the origin of words to peek into the brain's wiring to uncover how humans gained the mastery of language.

Linguists, anthropologies and psychologists among others have tried their best to shed light on the thrilling nature of language. For example, the Theory of Universal Grammar (UG), propounded by Noam Chomsky postulates that humans are born with a kind of in-built language blueprint. This suggests that children are born with preset brain waves to pick up any language available to them. It means their brains are preloaded with the basic rules of how words and sentences should be structured to work (Chomsky,

1965). This indicates that humans have a flair for language unlike other animal. Recent studies support this assertion, which proves that some parts of the brain, like Broca's and Wernicke's areas seem wired specifically to handle the task of the activities of language almost like they are custom-built for chatting, storytelling, or arguing (Berwick & Chomsky, 2016). Consequently, the human brain can be ascribed as a ready-made language machine designed to start humming as soon as one or two right words are keyed in.

On the other hand, there is a different perspective championed by Skinner (1957); it suggests that language is not something we are born with but something we learn through the world around us. Skinner's view is that children pick up language by copying what they hear and getting rewards, like smiles or praise from parents, when they make the right sounds. Some scholars have pointed out that this idea does not fully account for why kids can create brand-new sentences or grasp tricky grammar rules they have never heard before. Nonetheless, some researches agree with Skinner's view, which suggests that the environment plays an important role in how language develops (MacWhinney, 2018). For instance, when caregivers cheer on a baby's babbles or mimic their coos, it can nudge those early steps towards the formation of real words, thereby helping to shape the path from gurgles to full-blown sentences.

However, Cognitive Theory by (Piaget, 1952), which tied language to the bigger picture of how children's minds develop, advances the notion that, as children learn to think about the world, figuring out how things work or as they begin to solve little puzzles, their ability to talk begins to grow too. Recent studies advanced this theory, pointing out that a child's everyday cognitive skills such as retaining a few ideas in their head at once or focusing on one thing while ignoring distractions, play a big role in their picking up new language signals (Baddeley, 2012). For example, a child who can remember a string of words long enough to repeat them is better equipped to learn what those words mean. Furthermore, researchers have noticed something special about how children use their imaginations. Children start connecting what they see, hear, or touch, like the

softness of a blanket, to the words they use to describe it. This aptitude for symbolic behaviour acts like a bridge, which turns raw experiences into the language that enables them to share their world with people around them. The above theories and postulations by different scholars hold forth that human language is a remarkable gift, full of special traits that allow man to communicate in ways no other species can (Hockett, 1960). Language does not just help us talk; it is woven into the heart of our cultures and relationships. Thus, Sapir (1921) reckons that the way we speak shapes the way we perceive the world around us.

Language is not only an intricate tool of communication; it builds who we are (Gee, 2011). The way we talk or the way we write can give a hint of our social identity. It can reveal whether we are part of a particular group/class or not. Language can equally reflect the power dynamics of a group or society, like who gets to speak and who listens. For this reason, language shapes the rules and the social structure of our communities. Language is, therefore, both a mirror and a sculptor; it reflects our culture while carving out new norms and ideas. Consequently, it equally reinforces gender perception and dominance in every society (Cameron, 1992). This happens when there are too many expressions that downplay women's voice. In other words, language can be evoked to impose a culture of silence against women; this happens when attention is focused on their gender rather than their abilities. From the foregoing, it becomes obvious that language is not just a tool for trading information or a tool for expressing our feeling; it is a force that can uphold or challenge the way our society works. Therefore, by paying attention to how we speak, we can begin to shift these patterns of power dynamics, and make room for fairer and more inclusive ways of connecting with one another in spite of our gender differences.

In recent years, gender and language asymmetry has captured the interest of many scholars. This is because gendered language redefines the relationship that exists between men and their females counterparts. For this reason, Spender (1980) argues that language is not some neutral tool we all use equally. She opines that it is basically shaped by men,

who project ideas and standards that denigrate the position of women the society. This is revealed in the choice of words used by men, the way their sentences are constructed, or even in the missing gaps their in language, such as a lack of terms that fully capture women's status and experiences. When language uplifts one gender and denigrates or stereotypes another, it is labelled as sexist and in a subtle manner it reinforces the old ideas about who holds or wields power and who bends to the whim and caprice of power. In Nigerian schools, the way textbooks and classroom discourses project gender inequality often reflects deep-rooted cultural ideas that favour men as leaders and women as followers. This contributes in making it difficult to challenge the status quo.

It is against this background that this study was carried out to investigate the use of sexist language in *Introduction to History and Philosphy of Science*, University of Port Harcourt General Studies Course manual with a view to identify instances of the use of generic man to refer to both genders, instances where the textbook is not gender inclusive, and the impact gender bias language would have on the students. This study, therefore, would sensitize writers, students and other readers on the need to avoid gender bias language and the advocacy for gender inclusive writing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Linguistic Relativity
Linguistic Relativity is a theory that explains the relationship between language and the thought. The earliest proponents of this theory are Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, an American linguist; hence, it also referred to as Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. The theory advocates that people's perception of the world around them is influenced by the language they speak. In the words of Whorf (1956, p. 212-214):

We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native language. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscope flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds—and this means largely by the linguistic systems of our minds. We cut nature up, organize it

into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way—an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language [...] all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated

This supposes that our interpretation or understanding of the social and physical surrounding: the way we view our world largely depends on the structure and nature of the linguistic code we use as a people. This assertion is supported by Lucy (1997, p. 294) who emphasizes that "language embodies an interpretation of reality and language can influence thought about that reality. The interpretation arises from the selection of substantive aspects of experience and their formal arrangement in the verbal code." Every action is as a result of the perceived meaning of what was said or deduced from what was read. However, Lucy (1997) goes further to warn that firstly, Linguistic Relativity is the same thing as linguistic diversity. What this means is that if the different languages we speak make us see our worlds differently without being related to thought more generally, and then linguistic relativity simply becomes linguistic diversity. Secondly, linguistic relativity is not necessarily the same as any influence of language on thought. Therefore, without the relation to variations among languages, we only have a shared psychological mechanism. Thirdly, linguistic relativity is not the same as cultural relativity, which incorporates a wide range of patterned and historically differences transmitted from generation to another. The tenets of Linguistic Relativity underscore a distinctive role for language structure in inferring experience and influencing thought.

This theory is usually broken down into two: weak Linguistic Relativism and strong Linguistic Relativism. Weak Linguistic Relativism posits that language influences habitual thought and perception, but does not strictly determine them. People can still think beyond their language; however, the structure and usage of language make certain thoughts more accessible than others. Lucy (1997) and Boroditsky (2011) are of the view that

empirical studies increasingly support weak Linguistic Relativism, especially in areas such as colour perception, spatial cognition, emotion labeling, and numerical reasoning. Some characteristics of weak Linguistic Relativism are that language nudges thought in culturally specific directions, cognitive differences are capable of being proven, not absolute, and that language affects habitual thinking, memory, and attention. On the other hand, strong Linguistic Relativism is usually associated with linguistic determinism, which advocates that language determines thought. This, therefore, means that thoughts that cannot be encoded in language cannot be conceptualized reality. In other words language limits thought. This theory is important in this study, because it provides us a foundation for the understanding of how sexist language shapes gendered thought. This is because since it has been established that language influences thought, then using male-centric or biased language can reinforce gendered power dynamics and limit our perception of gender roles.

Sexism and the English Language

English is a sexist language; it provides a way of speaking or writing that unfairly leans toward one gender, often denigrating the positions of, most especially, women and denying them some rights and privileges (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams, 2007). Most often, it is not just about words, but the attitudes imbedded in those words, which reinforce unfair or untrue ideas about what a particular gender is capable of or worth. Language does not exist in a vacuum; it is deeply tied to how people think and feel in the society. When we use words that convey bias, we are not just communicating; we are shaping perceptions, sometimes in ways that harm or belittle others. A lot of research has focused on how language can reflect and spread negative views about women. For example, studies have pointed out how certain words or phrases subtly paint women in a bad light, often tying their value to certain stereotypes. This is not just a matter of being "politically correct"—it is about recognizing how language can chip away at someone's dignity or worth (Umera-Okeke, 2015).

Sexist language is common; whether in casual conversation, media, or even textbooks, it makes unfair attitudes seem normal. For example a young person, who grows up with these terms: *master* and *mistress* might not understand the reason the semantic import of *master* is noble, while that of *mistress* is partly disdainful. The young person might absorb the idea that men and women are inherently different in ways that justify unequal treatment. This is common in schools and workplaces where language shapes expectations. A teacher using gendered terms without a consideration of its implications, or a company memo that casually uses biased language, can send a message that certain roles or behaviors are appropriate for one gender but not the other. What is frightening is how deeply rooted this is in most cultures around the globe. Language evolves with the society; however, its evolution is interrupted when a society begins to experience some changes. Even as more people push for equality, words such as *mistress* and *courtesan* still bear their old, biased labels. And it is not just about those specific examples. Everyday English terms such as calling a group of people *guys* or describing a strong woman as *bossy,* while a man is referred to as *confident*, can portray the same kind of situation. These small choices add up in reinforcing ideas that hold women back or pigeonhole them into roles that do not reflect their full potentials.

The good news is that language can change, just as society does. People are more aware now of how words can make or mar social structures, and there is a growing effort to use language that is fairer and more inclusive. This means weighing our choice of words and their semantic imports before using them. It is another way of challenging phrases that seem harmless but destroy the other gender. And it means teaching the next generation, whether in classrooms or at home, to recognize and question biased language whenever it is used. If we want a world where people are judged for their actions and abilities, not their gender, we have to start with the words we use to describe such a world. Umera-Okeke's work is a reminder that language is not just a tool for communication; it is a mirror of our core value system, and a template for our future. When we allow sexist language manifest, we allow those old, unfair attitudes to dwell in our society. But when we choose words that mark equality between opposite genders, we take a step towards a world that is fair for all.

The bias in English reflects how we describe our achievements. Men's successes are often described with words like *masterful* or *commanding*: In a sexist world, this is a mark of authority. Women, on the other hand, might be called *charming* or *graceful*; these words shift the focus to personality or appearance rather than skill. It is not that these words are inherently bad, but they are used in ways that subtly undermine women accomplishments. A male CEO might dominate a boardroom engagement, while a female CEO navigates through it. This demonstrates some difference in wording, but one that implies *he* is in charge while *she* is just getting by. These choices contribute in shaping how we perceive competence and who we think belongs in positions of power (Hudson, 2003). If a woman is swept off a ship into the water, the cry is *man overboard*. If she is killed by a hit-and-run driver, the charge is *manslaughter*. If she is injured on the job, the coverage is *workman's* compensation. But if she arrives at the threshold marked *men only*, she knows the warning sign is not intended to bar animals or plants or inanimate objects. It is meant for her.

The impact of this linguistic bias found in the English language stretches far beyond individual conversations. In schools, where English is the medium of instruction, the language of textbooks and that of teachers, sexism reinforces these stereotypes. A student reading about *mankind* or *the common man* may not consciously notice or experience male preference, yet the idea that men are, by default, the standard reigns supreme. Workplaces, job descriptions or performance reviews that use gendered language can influence hiring and promotions, often without anyone realizing it. And in the media, news, movies, books, metaphors and labels used for women versus men keep these biases alive, and this language pattern is used a good number of people on daily basis. However, Umera-Okeke (2015) has made a wakeup call for English speakers (especially L2 speakers) to pay attention, to notice how the English language, for all its beauty, can encapsulate a sting for women. It is a reminder that if we want a world where everyone is judged for their actions and abilities, we need to begin with the words we use to describe such a world. Changing this is not easy. It means being intentional, questioning habits, and sometimes feeling awkward as we try new ways of speaking. But it is worth it. If we can shift the metaphors and grammar of English to be fairer, we are not just changing language, we are changing the way people see each other. And that's a step toward a world where women are not held back by the very words we use to talk about them.

Furthermore, Bonvillain (1998) points out that English being both covert and overt in demeaning women is especially striking. The overt stuff is easier to spot, like slurs or blatantly sexist phrases that most people would recognize as wrong today. But the covert part is trickier. It is in the subtle choices, like using "he" as a default pronoun for a generic person, which quietly suggests men are the standard. Or it is in job titles like "stewardess" versus "pilot," where one feels trivial and the other commands respect. These sneaky biases are harder to call out because they are so ingrained, but they do just as much harm, slipping into our minds without us questioning them. The cultural weight of language also shows up in how we talk about activities or ideas. For example when cooking is associated with women, it is often framed as *homely* or *nurturing*, maybe even a little mundane. However, when it is associated with men, suddenly it becomes *culinary artistry* or *chef-level skill*. The same profession is described in ways that elevate men and denigrate women, reflecting a culture that values male contributions more. These linguistic patterns found in English are deliberate; they are a product of a society where even though women work, their efforts are not perceived as a part of significant work force.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative text-based research design to investigate how sexist language negatively influences the life of University of Port Harcourt students who use the selected General Studies Course Manual. The data for this study were obtained from *Introduction to History and philosophy of Science* used at University of Port Harcourt. A total of forty-three (43) excerpts were randomly selected from *Introduction to History and Philosophy of Science*. And finally the data were analysed descriptively to reveal the extent to which sexist language exist in this English-based textbook and how the language of the

textbook is likely to negatively influence the social
and professional life of the students, who use it.   Data Presentation

Table 1c: identification of Instances of Generic "Man" in A.I. Heart (2016) Introduction to History and Philosophy of Science Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt

S/N	PAGE NUMBER	Instances of Generic "Man" in A.I. Heart (2016) *Introduction to History* and *Philosophy of Science* Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt.
1	28	• As if the scientist needed the philosopher of science to explain to him the meaning of scientific concepts. Either the scientist does understand a concept that he uses, … or he does not, in which case he must inquire into… no one would claim that each time a scientist conducts such an inquiry he is practicing philosophy of science.
2.	36	• A scientist does not hold tenaciously to his own ideas. He has to be open-minded. Scientists strike as much as possible to be honest, careful and objective in what he says or does. This is done not only because he will be criticized by others but to permit others to ascertain the validity of his findings.
3.	39	MAN, HIS ORINGIN AND NATURE.
5.	39	Many societies have stories about how man…
6.	45	• Homo habilis also known as man with ability. • Homo Erectus also known as the upright man. • Homo Sapiens also known as the thinking man. • The scientist that proposed the existence of man on earth by evolution through the mechanism of natural selection was… • The two divergent views about the existence of man on earth are … The reason for the reaction against the theory of evolution of man by the religious sects was…
7	46	• One major quality of man that makes him unique among other animals is… • Man and other creatures originated from microscopic organism is the theory of … • Man's ability to adapt to different environmental conditions is known as …which of the explanations on the origin of man do you consider to be true and why? • When we say man is unique it means? Give two characteristics of man that make him different from other animals.
8.	47	• Man's cosmic environment. • …challenged mental perspicacity of man hence the rapid increase in scientific thinking … and development have jointly sharpened the focus of attention on man and heavenly bodies and environs. Man's cosmic environment is worth … so man's cosmic environment/ structure need to explore which include the planets, moon, and star. Man constantly interact with cosmic environment… the survival of man solely depends on the cosmic environment. Understanding the human cosmic environment involved in-depth study of the structure

		and functions of the universal environment but this topic will focus little on man in relation to the solar system.
9	50	Man is always conscious of the apparent movement of the sun… and little he realizes that earth on which he stands is constantly in motion. …when the sun disappears, he says that the sun sets and when it emerges, he says that the sun rises. He is not the least aware that the sun. …
10	61	• An individual who posses this character does not dump to a conclusion, his judgement is based on. … Humanity: a scientist does not religiously cling to his idea. He recognizes his own limitations, accepts responsibility for his actions and realizes how. …
11	64	Chapter Five: man and his resources
12	67	A lot of pollutants and by-products are emitted in the process of burning petroleum products and these affects man and his environment negatively.
13	73	… clothes, automobiles, electrical and electronic equipment as well as improved health has made man to increase his agricultural, industrial. … and several other men utilizes chemical.
14	93	Artificial or man-made hazards are so many which are caused by human activities
15.	94	Chemical are said to be hazardous if they pose physical or health hazard to man or other organizations…. Chemicals could harm man
16.	99	• Socio-economic and cultural conditions that influence the life of man or a community. ... any building or structure, machine or other devices or things made by man. • Any solid, liquid, gas, odour, heat, sound, vibration or radiations resulting directly or indirectly from the activities of man Man is dependent on the abundant resources of the earth for his survival. Man alters the natural environment, thereby causing …
17.	124	• List two ways water is important to man? • Man-made oil pipeline blowout is done because of. … list two man-made causes of air pollution.
18.	135	The models of science interpret the natural world while technological invention enable man to extend his capabilities
20.	137	Science and technology had produced a lot of services and benefits to man in the society. … have helped in the development of the society and the service of man in the areas of agriculture. It has affected ways of life of man. It has increased human life, added to leisure time. … enabled man to travel fast and communicate readily anywhere.
21.	139	• Science and technology had produced a lot of services that had benefited man in the society. Science and technology have served man in the society in the following ways. • Man's Comfort: Man's life is made more comfortable through the use of …

		Genetic engineering and human cloning, poverty, waste disposal Problem
22	142	• There is the recognition that the man-made world around us today is based on science and technology. Science and technology have had profound influence on man's social, economic, and cultural life. At the same time, it has negative effects which have brought sorrow and hostility to man and the environment. It is therefore necessary for man to work out a balance between the benefits and the negative effects such that man can really appreciate.

Table 2c: identification of instances gender sensitivity in Introduction to History and Philosophy of Science

S/N	PAGE NUMBER	Introduction to History and Philosophy Of Science
1	1	• Some scholars trace the origins of natural science as far back as pre-literate human society. People observed and built-up knowledge
2	2	Basic facts about human physiology were known…
3	36	Humankind is imbued with an intense curiosity and a consuming passion to seek for rational knowledge.
4	36	They did not abandon a project simply because of repeated failure. They have deep faith that somehow solutions will be found in a given scientific problem.
5	39	• What human being (man) is… the universality of human being A human being is a unique animal. Yet he or she possesses a certain question.
6	43	A human being is sometimes thought to be only animal with culture. … the hands of human being are not meant to support or aid him or her in walking
7	44	Because one human being differs from another, every human being has his/her own biological identity.
8	45	Form instance, human beings are more efficient in the African tropical forest. …
9	46	What are the differences between human beings and other primates.
10	47	Understanding the human cosmic environment involved in-depth study of the structure and functions of the universal environment but this topic will focus little on …
11	61	Open-mindedness: is an attitude in which an individual does not reject any knowledge that conflicts with his or her ideas. His or her mind is free from any prejudice and is not bias.
12	62	He/she tends to interpret these data prior to the actual observation.
13	64	Natural resources are resources that exist without the actions of humans.
14	65	From human perspective, resources are non-renewable when the rate of consumption exceeds …
15	75	• Dead Animals: This class of waste results from the death of large animals (such as cows, horses, donkeys, human beings etc.) … Blooded cotton, plasters, bandages, human and animal body parts.
16	76	Improper solid waste has adverse effects on the environment and human health.
17	93	Artificial or man-made hazards are so many which are caused by human activities.

18	101	Land and water that may or will harmfully affect human life or that of others
19	102	• It irritates human lungs and creates more problems for asthmatic and bronchitis. • Increased amount of the above gases resulting from human activities heat up the earth's atmosphere. Global warming leads to the rise in sea level as oceans warm and glaciers melt hereby threatening agricultural productivity and human settlements.
20	124	• Social science use the scientific method to study human behaviour. • Humanities- discipline that study the human condition • Anthropology- The study of the origin, behaviour, the physical, social and cultural development of humans. Archaeology- The study of past human lives by examining material evidence.
21	139	Genetic engineering and human cloning, poverty, waste disposal problem …

Data Analysis

Research Question 1: To what extent is generic "man" used in the GES textbook under review?

This study examined the presence and extent of generic masculine language in General Studies (GES) textbooks used in University of Port Harcourt: *Introduction to History and Philosophy of Science* by A.I. Heart (2016). The data from the two Tables represent a comprehensive identification of instances where the terms "man," "he," "his," or "himself" were used in a generic or universal sense to represent humanity. In Table 1c, over 20 instances were recorded where "man" or "he" was used to generalize and refer to the human experiences. For example, discussions about scientific development refer to "man's origin," "man and his environment," and "man-made hazards," demonstrating a continued reliance on gendered language even in empirical contexts.

The language choices suggest a normative assumption of the male as the default human subject. While some of these usages may reflect historical traditions or inherited philosophical expressions, their continued use without commentary or adaptation reinforces an exclusive and outdated linguistic framework. The analysis indicates that the GES textbook does not conform to contemporary standards of gender-inclusive language. Their use of generic "man" and male pronouns to denote all of humanity contributes to a male-centered epistemology in education. This practice obscures the visibility and contributions of women. And it perpetuates linguistic bias that can shape learners' subconscious and the associations between gender and authority, intellect, or competence.

Research Question 2: In what ways is the GES textbook, under study, gender sensitive?

The degree and manner in which gender sensitivity is reflected in the General Education Studies (GES) textbook under review: *Introduction to History and Philosophy of Science* by A.I. Heart (2016). The textbook exhibit some level of gender sensitivity through its adoption of gender-inclusive language. This is primarily observed in the balanced use of pronouns such as "his or her," "he/she," and references to both "man and woman," which work to avoid exclusionary male-centric phrasing. For instance, in *the text*, gender sensitivity appears through inclusive forms like *"he or she possesses…"* (Table 2c, pg. 39), *his or her mind…* (pg. 61) and *human being* or *humankind* used in place of the generic *man*. These instances reveal a shift toward neutral, equitable language that embraces all genders.

In Table 2, the text particularly leans heavily on "human being(s)" and "human activity" (pgs. 1, 36, 39, 43, 46, 102) and avoids male-default assumptions even in discussions involving biology and evolution, where such slippage is common in older literature. This challenges traditional gender roles by equally attributing business acumen and innovative capability to both sexes. The analysis demonstrates that the text under study reveals moderate but meaningful gender sensitivity. This is achieved through the use of inclusive pronouns, gender-neutral terms, and recognition of both male and female capabilities in various academic and professional contexts. While there are occasional inconsistencies, the overall trajectory suggests an awareness of and effort toward equitable gender representation in educational content.

Research Question 3: To what degree does gender-biased language found in the textbook affect students?

At this juncture, we explore how the presence of gender-biased and gender-sensitive language in the textbook under study may impact student learning, perception, and identity formation. As shown in Tables 1, the text contains multiple instances of generic "man", male pronouns, and androcentric constructions (e.g., "his," "he," "man," "mankind") used in reference to people in general. In Table 1, pages 93 and 139 respectively, there are biased constructions like *man-made hazards…* and *Man's life is made more comfortable….* This type of language subtly centers on the male experience as normative, reinforcing outdated gender hierarchies in academic content. When male terms are used generically, it can create cognitive bias in students—particularly female students—by suggesting that men are the default actors in intellectual, scientific, or entrepreneurial domains. This exclusionary language is likely to impair female students' sense of identity, and reduce their interest and identification with the subject matter. This may mar their participation in the course in which the textbook is based on.

The data in Table 2 shows efforts toward gender inclusivity—such as the use of "his or her," "he/she," and make reference to both men and women. This juxtaposition of inclusive and exclusive language sends mixed messages to students. On the one hand,

it affirms gender equality; on the other, it reaffirms male-centered norms. Students encountering these inconsistencies may experience confusion or perceive the inclusive efforts as superficial rather than meaningful. This limits the potential transformative effect of inclusive language. The degree of harm caused by gender-biased language is particularly significant for female and non-binary students. When male pronouns or generic "man" are the dominant references, these students may feel marginalized, invisible, or less capable in academic and professional roles described in the textbooks. This can erode academic self-efficacy, lower engagement, and reduce interest in traditionally male-dominated fields such as science, and technology.

Furthermore, male students may internalize these linguistic patterns as natural or correct, perpetuating subconscious biases regarding gender roles. The repeated association of leadership, intellect, and rationality with male actors can reinforce gender stereotypes and limit openness to gender diversity in future interactions and social engagements. Despite some of the cases of gender-sensitive language inclusion, the textbook appears not to explicitly challenge gender stereotypes or critically engage with issues of gender inequality in society.

IV. CONCLUSION

It has been established that the English language is a sexist language which contain gender-biased phrase, words and expressions against women. Even though there are several ways in which the observed gender biased words and phrases can be toned down to create a balanced gender inclusivity, the authors of some school instructional manuals have not shown a considerable interest in a language pattern that would create this needed balance This weighty reliance on male-focused language in school instructional materials makes negative impacts in the life of students. It shapes how both the male and female students perceive their own identity, establish their professional and social roles and interpret the power dynamics of their society. Addressing this issue requires more than occasional nods to inclusivity; it calls for a thorough rethinking of how language is used in educational materials. By prioritizing gender-neutral terms, such as "people" instead of "man," or

consistently using "they" for unknown individuals, textbooks can present a more equitable view of the world and highlight women's contributions across all fields of live.

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