



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Teacher mediation and the gendered hidden curriculum

MGEMS International project **Making Gender Equality Matters in Schools: Teaching for Gender Equality in Vietnam**

Project Launch Event, organised by London South Bank University, School of Law and Social Sciences/Education Department

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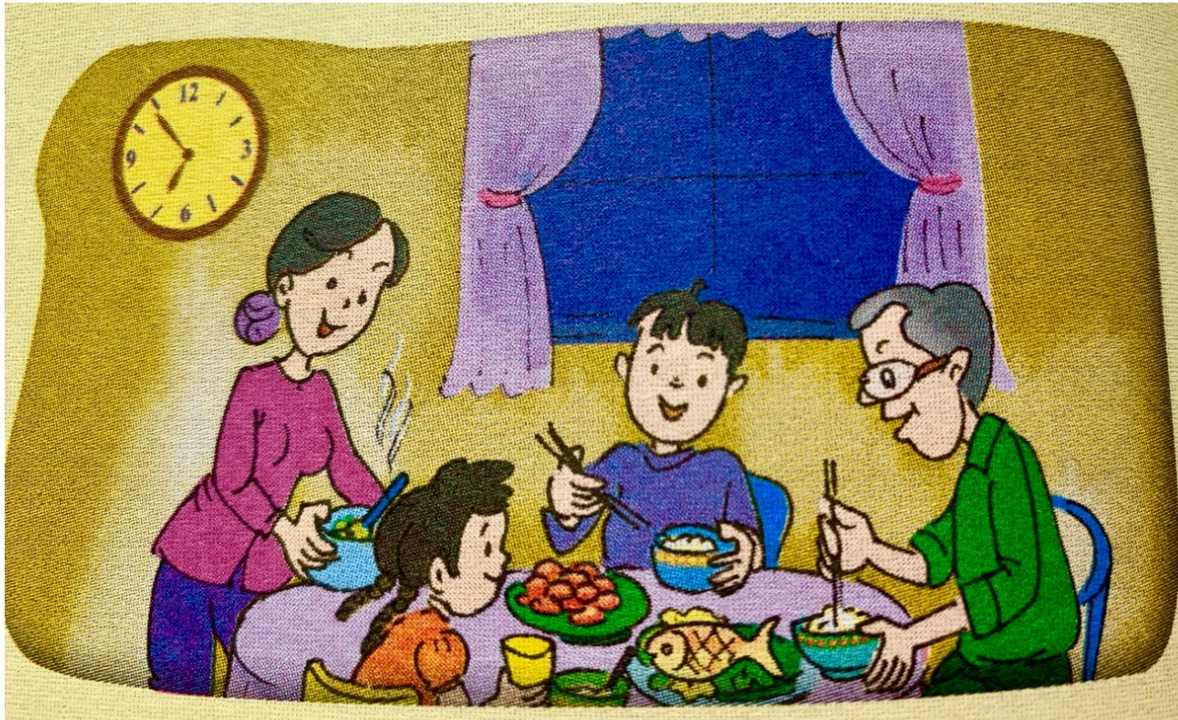


Illustration *English 6, Unit 1*

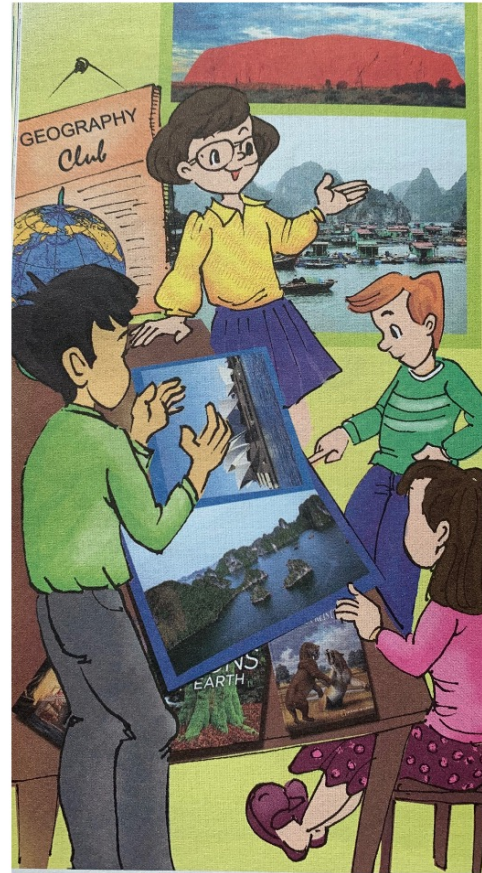


Illustration Getting Started *English 6, Unit 5*

Vy: Hello, welcome to Geography Club.

...

Vy: ...Today I'm going to introduce some natural wonders of the world to you...

...

Vy: Well, that's Ayres Rock. It's in the middle of Australia. Local people call it Uluru.

...

Vy: Well done Nick, that's right. What else do you know?

...

Vy: Yes, it is! There are many islands there. This picture shows Tuan Chau...

(English 6, Unit 5)

3 Read about two astronauts. Write the correct headlines. Use the headlines in the space shuttle.

- A spacewalk with another woman
- Almost a month in space
- A role model for young people
- New eating experiences
- It was a long wait
- A unique record
- A tool is circling round the Earth
- A Scandinavian astronaut
- More than half a year in space



3 _____
Fuglesang's mission was to repair the International Space Station – ISS. He spent ten days in space and made three spacewalks. During one of the walks he lost a tool from his repair kit. It is now circling round the Earth – and will do so for a very, very long time.

4 _____
'It is a funny feeling to eat in weightlessness,' says Fuglesang. 'The food is packed in little plastic bags and we use spoons or straws to eat it. For breakfast we usually eat dried fruit, energy bars and juice. Lunch can be chicken and vegetables.'

5 _____
In 2008, Fuglesang was chosen for a new trip to the ISS, and in September 2009, he made two more spacewalks. Some of the equipment was getting old and therefore he installed two, new GPS antennas. Altogether, Fuglesang spent twenty-six days and seventeen hours in space.

1 _____
Christer Fuglesang was born in Stockholm to a Swedish mother and a Norwegian father.

2 _____
A friend of his saw an advert in a newspaper that the European Space Agency were looking for astronauts. Fuglesang got the job in 1992. He began his training as Sweden's first astronaut when he was thirty-five years old.

3 _____
He trained with two Russian cosmonauts between 1993 and 1996. He was now a member of the backup crew for a mission together with the two Russians, but he had to wait for ten years, until December 2006 before he took off in the shuttle, Discovery.

6 _____
Christer Fuglesang hopes that he will inspire young people in Sweden to study science. 'I hope they will see the adventure and the future of space,' he says.

7 _____
Perhaps not everybody knows that Fuglesang once was a Frisbee champion. He took one of his frisbees to the ISS and set a new 'World Record'. His frisbee was spinning for twenty seconds inside the space station which means that Fuglesang has 'the Galactic Record'.

8 _____
In September 2019, a shuttle took off with the second Swedish astronaut Jessica Meir, who is both Swedish and American.

9 _____
On 18th October, Jessica Meir was the first woman to do a spacewalk, together with Christina Koch, an American astronaut.

10 _____
Jessica Meir spent 205 days on board the International Space Station and carried out about three hundred experiments to find out what happens to the human body during nearly seven months in space.



4 The alien SiMoon saw the first moon landing in 1969. What did he tell Moonique, his best friend? Write a dialogue between the two aliens.

You can start like this:

SiMoon It's unbelievable. You can't guess what I saw today.
Moonique What did you see?



Göransson, M., Hjälm, A., Widlund, K., & Cowle, A. (2020). *New What's Up 6 Workbook*. Sanoma utbildning.

Bias

(Consciously and unconsciously)
(mostly) (unintentionally) influences
behaviour/actions

Gender bias

A hidden curriculum as an invisible obstacle
to gender equality

Diagnosing bias  designing solutions

Our Project (supported by the National Geographic Society)

Gender bias in English textbooks in Vietnam: Textbook representations, teacher perspectives, and classroom practices

- Study 1: Multi-modal Critical Textbook analysis (Vu & Pham, 2021)
- Study 2: Teacher classroom practices and perspectives (Vu & Pham, 2022)

Vu, M. T. & Pham, T. T. T. (2021). Still in the shadow of Confucianism? Gender bias in contemporary English textbooks in Vietnam. *Pedagogy, Culture, and Society*, 31 (3), 477-497.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2021.1924239>

Vu, M. T. & Pham, T. T. T. (2022). Gender, critical pedagogy, and textbooks: Understanding teachers' (lack of) mediation of the hidden curriculum in the EFL classroom. *Language Teaching Research*.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168822113>

Study 1

- To explore genderedness produced by language and discourse (Sunderland, 2004; Jule, 2018)
- Multi-modal critical analysis (Ledin & Machin, 2018)
- Findings: "Traditional" (dominated) and "Progressive" gender representations
Culturally/Ideologically rooted (patriarchal Confucian norms)

But...

- English Language Teaching, Critical Pedagogy & Transformative Education (Freire 1970/2005; Giroux, 2010; Kramsch, 2020; Crookes, 2020, 2021; Leaver, Davidson, & Campbell, 2021)
- Gender Agency: challenging and *subverting* inequalities (Butler, 1990)
- Teacher Agency (e.g. Tao & Gao, 2021): the role power of the teacher

Study 2

- To what extent are teachers aware of gender contents in EFL textbooks?
- How do teachers respond to these contents in the classroom discourse?
- What underpins teachers' pedagogical decisions?

Methodology

- Classroom Discourse Observations & Teacher interviews: 12 Teachers in 4 upper secondary schools, 18 lesson observations, 12 follow-up interviews
- Natural occurring data (Sunderland, 2006; Spada, 2019)
- *Gender critical points & Gender triggered points* (Sunderland et al., 2001; Pakuła, Pawelczyk, & Sunderland, 2015)

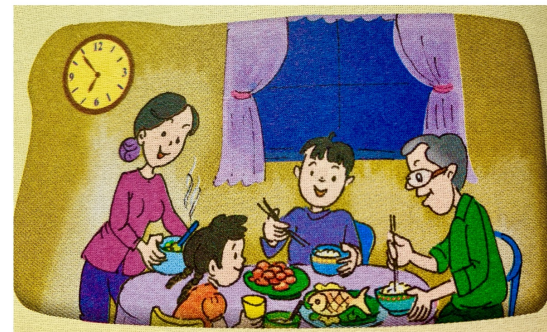


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(English 6, Unit 5)

Illustration Getting Started *English 6, Unit 5*

Gender and the English classroom

- The gender classroom discourse: instrumentalist/transactional teaching, textbooks as scripts, and the absence of gender
- Teachers' reasoning: low awareness/sensitivity of gender, sometimes affected by own gender bias
- Gender as performativity & Gender in the classroom as situated practices: social practices existing *outside* the classroom (Sunderland, 2004)
- Teachers' beliefs, values, perceptions; awareness and competence of critical pedagogy; external factors, most notably the curriculum and syllabus, as well as resources
- But possibilities to become agent of change

- 'I don't have any comments about the books' content. I'm only concerned about their length – if it's too long, I'll cut it down. I don't notice if the characters' names are male or female, or if there are more males or females.'
- 'I think gender is a new issue so it hasn't been included in the textbooks.'
- '[Boys] have stronger characters, play harder, are better at sports, and are more active' Girls are 'quieter, and shyer, but more hard-working than boys and learn better'
- Boys who do not like football 'special', and girls who like football 'having masculine traits'.
- This [Mum the only person who stands and serves the family], completely 'normal', 'not unusual', 'it's like that in every home', a part of everyday life, according to the Vietnamese culture
- 'The viewpoint of the Vietnamese people is deeply rooted. In our mind, the mother is still the one who takes care of the family. Mother cooks. Unless there is no mother, the mother is dead, then the father cooks.'
- 'Dad cooking instead of Mum? Seeing Dad in an apron? In Vietnam, students will be surprised. They will probably ask the teacher "Oh Miss, why is Dad cooking the meal?"', 'Then I think the students will surely react, like "Oh, how comes Daddy has to stand serving dinner?"'
- 'Why does the mother always have to serve? Family roles need to be changed. This is very traditional'; 'Traditional means inequality'.

- 'We should change the norms, because this will encourage boys to do the same. Boys often copy their father. If the father does housework, he's a role model for the son.'
- 'Even if textbooks explicitly challenge gender bias, students will not notice it immediately and change immediately. But the teacher has to be the person who sparks their thinking – they need to ask students what they think. Then the change is possible.'
- 'Just like the teacher, students don't notice gender issues. But if there is an Alice in the textbook who likes football, I would ask students: Do the girls in our class also like football? Have you ever tried playing football? If yes, how did it feel? If no, what position would you like to play?'
- 'The teacher needs to construct gender from small details, to notice, and bring it to discussion. They also need to speak their opinions. All of these affect the way students' opinions and thoughts are formed.'
- 'I didn't think much about gender before. But now I do. I will make some changes when I teach the textbooks. For example, for the dinner picture, I will tell students: This is just an example of one family. But you can imagine pictures of other families [with] other members helping out. It could be Dad, it could be the children.'
- 'I think I will change. I will be more observant. Because when we don't take interest in it [gender], we just teach the books automatically (as a habit). But once we are more aware, we will plan it into the lesson.'

Enacting Gender Agency

- Gender agency: teachers questioning gender issues 'out there', but also reflecting on their own values (and bias); increasing understanding of the workings of symbolic power
- Teachers equipped with transformative pedagogical tools; then communicate gender contents to, and with, their students, in consideration with local cultures
- CPD and Initial Teacher Education: *Choice architecture*
- A process, various actors
- Gender mainstreaming: textbooks, other policies
- Gender (anti-)bias education and training for people at schools (principals and parents), and in the community

Thank you!