

# **Analysis of Gender Stereotype in Chinese Textbooks for Learners Learning Chinese as a Foreign Language**

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DOI: 10.55662/AJMRR.2024.5103

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## **Abstract**

To cater to the needs of primary and middle school students overseas or those planning to take the YCT exam in learning Chinese as a foreign language, the Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) has designed a set of textbooks called the *YCT Standard Course*. The textbooks serve as a medium of learning and embody mainstream social values, greatly impacting learners' social identity and sense of responsibility. The aim of this study is to investigate gender identity in the YCT Standard Course, with a focus on gender stereotypes. The article employs both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods, using the perspective of gender roles, to systematically analyse the YCT Standard Course. The results indicate that the authors of the book have not given enough consideration to gender equality. Finally, several recommendations for improving gender equality in the textbook have been proposed.

**Keywords:** CFL textbooks; Gender stereotype; Gender equality; TCFL

## **Introduction**

As China's economy develops and its comprehensive strength improves, the international status and influence of the Chinese language continue to grow, making it increasingly popular abroad. The popularity of learning Chinese among foreigners is increasing, leading to a rise in Chinese language interest. To cater to the global demand for Chinese language education, China has established Confucius Institutes and Classes abroad. Additionally, the Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) has developed a textbook series called *YCT Standard Course*, which is a high-quality set of textbooks designed to prepare children for the Chinese language exam. It was created by the Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) and edited by Beijing Linguistic University. The textbook has a unique writing style, combining a scientific and entertaining approach to learning. A set of *YCT Standard Course* contains six volumes which is divided into YCT1, YCT2, YCT3, YCT4, YCT5 and YCT6. Taking YCT1 as an example, it consists of 12 lessons. Lessons 1-11 are teaching lessons while Lesson 12 is a revision lesson. Each of the lessons in Lesson 1 and Lesson 11 consists of Key sentences, Let's learn (new words), Let's read (texts), Activities and exercises, Songs, Mini stories and Model test page. After completing YCT1, students will be able to use simple Chinese words and sentences.

Textbooks are a crucial medium for teaching and learning, and they embody mainstream social values that can greatly impact learners' social identity and sense of responsibility. They are particularly important for shaping students' gender identity and promoting gender equality. Traditional Chinese culture has historically been patriarchal, with men traditionally focusing on their careers and women on family matters. This has resulted in women being confined to the private sphere, limiting their physical and mental freedom, and being relegated to reproductive roles to serve the needs of the patriarchy. It is essential that textbook authors critically discard any materials containing gender-biased or stereotypical content, such as illustrations that depict gender stereotypes or professional roles with implicit gender bias.

The aim of this article is to investigate gender identity in the *YCT Standard Course* which used in Confucius Institutes, Confucius Classrooms, primary schools, middle schools, and by candidates planning to take the YCT exam overseas. The investigation will employ both qualitative and quantitative analysis, with a focus on gender stereotypes and biases. Suggestions will also be made for future textbook development to reduce gender imbalances

in teaching materials.

## **Literature Review**

### ***The Role of Textbooks***

Teaching materials can be understood in two ways: broadly and narrowly. Broadly, teaching materials are defined as some activities that enhances people's knowledge, skills, and influences their thoughts and morals. Narrowly, teaching material is defined as a textbook that systematically reflects the content of a subject, prepared according to the syllabus or curriculum standards. A textbook is the main basis for the content of teaching and learning, an important tool for realizing a certain educational purpose, and the main material for the teaching and learning of teachers and students, as well as the main criterion for assessing the results of teaching (Ding, 2022). This article adopts the latter definition.

Textbooks play a crucial role in transmitting social culture, shaping social values, and fostering national consciousness. They serve the state's educational objectives, help students develop a sense of personal identity with the state and society, and facilitate their socialisation (Wei, 2006). Textbooks play a crucial role in achieving teaching goals and improving teaching activities for teachers, while serving as the primary source of information for students' learning.

They are also an important carrier of inherited culture and serve as official teaching materials that students come into contact with during their critical formative years. As such, textbooks often assume an important role in constructing students' values and leading young people towards healthy growth (Yi, 2019). In the course of studying textbooks, students may unconsciously adopt gender concepts and identities, forming psychological stereotypes (Xiong, 2017). When editing textbooks, editors should not only focus on encouraging learners to acquire language skills, but also pay attention to the cultural context behind the materials (Nicholas, 2015). Teachers should critically select teaching materials.

Textbooks serve as a means of transmitting and disseminating social culture, reflecting the prevailing values and culture of society. The impact of culture on student development is significant. It is important to note that cultural biases can have serious negative effects on

students. For example, textbooks that incorporate gender prejudices, discrimination, and stereotypes have the potential to subconsciously influence students to internalize the ideas that show with them. This can lead to the development of similar gender stereotypes and their manifestation in behaviour (Jia, Shi, & Dai, 2021). Indeed, Chinese textbooks serve as a bridge between teachers and students in the process of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. They not only develop students' language and life skills, but also transmit socio-cultural norms and socially conscious value patterns (Rahmah, 2022). If gender role differences exist in textbooks, they may reinforce students' perceptions of gender bias and stereotypes in society, and justify the situation (Wang, 2021). Johnson and Williams (2019) also highlighted the significance of textbooks in promoting gender equality education. By introducing equal roles and scenarios, textbooks are expected to challenge students' preconceived notions of gender and encourage them to be more inclusive.

### ***Gender Stereotypes in Language Textbooks***

According to W. Lippmann, stereotypes are 'fixed preconceptions' that play a decisive role in the formation of public opinion. Secord (1959) asserts that it refers to a categorical response, where membership in a particular category triggers judgments about an individual possessing all the attributes associated with that category. Lian (2003) defines a stereotype as a fixed impression of a person based on social categorisation by gender, race, age, or occupation. It is a set of ideas about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviours of a particular group or a cognitive representation of the characteristics or attributes associated with a social group and its members.

This article defines gender stereotypes as fixed perceptions or beliefs about males and females in terms of personality traits, role behaviours, occupations, and physical appearance, based on the independent dimensions of gender stereotypes proposed by Deaux and Lewis in 1983.

Gender stereotyping is a socio-cultural phenomenon that exists in a wide range of fields, including education. Textbooks, as important teaching materials for students' learning, not only reflect the transmission of knowledge, but also subtly shape students' gender perceptions. Therefore, it is important to avoid such portrayals and strive for gender-neutral language and content. Research has found that textbooks in Western countries often present traditional and stereotypical gender roles, perpetuating gender stereotypes. For example, the

portrayal of women in textbooks often centres around their role in the family, with a focus on their physical appearance and emotions. In contrast, men are often depicted as successful in their careers and as leaders (Smith and Jones, 2019). Several international studies have examined the potential impact of textbooks on students' academic performance and career paths. Research has shown that reinforcing traditional gender roles in textbooks can lead to a loss of interest in STEM fields among female students, while male students are more likely to choose traditional career paths (Johnson and Williams, 2020). Several studies have examined gender stereotypes in the grammar and vocabulary used in language textbooks. Chen and Johnson (2019) found that certain lexical and grammatical structures can strengthen gender stereotypes and impact learners' views on language and gender roles in society.

Chinese researchers have investigated whether traditional cultural beliefs perpetuate gender stereotypes in textbooks. (Wang, 2021) The study aims to determine whether textbooks promote the Confucian idea of male superiority and female inferiority, and how this affects students' perceptions of gender. Previous research has identified distinct gender stereotypes in language textbooks. For instance, gender stereotypes are prevalent in the portrayal of female and male characters, as females are often depicted as gentle, dependent, and family-oriented, while males are typically highlighted for their success in career and leadership roles (Li and Zhang, 2020). Researchers have also investigated gender stereotypes in language teaching materials as well as in other subject areas across various disciplines. For instance, whether gender stereotypes exist in subjects like maths and science has been a topic of research (Zhang and Zhou, 2008. Zheng and Hu, 2022). Numerous studies have examined the impact of gender stereotypes on students' perceptions. Research has shown that gender stereotypes that are too obvious can limit students' perceptions of their own roles and affect their acceptance of multiple gender concepts (Liu and Li, 2020). Practical strategies have been proposed by some researchers to promote gender equality education, such as introducing more egalitarian language expressions, literature with diverse gender roles, and other means to break gender stereotypes (Zhang and Li, 2019).

## **Analytical Framework**

Various organisations and researchers use different analytical frameworks, such as UNESCO's Guidelines for Analysing Booklets, the framework presented by Anna Obura in the Ukrainian UNESCO study, and the ABC of Gender Analysis framework from the Forum for African Women Educationalists. These three frameworks served as inspiration for the analytical framework used in this study. As the focus of this study is on gender stereotypes in illustrations and texts in YCT, rather than gender responsiveness, the above three analytical frameworks cannot be used directly. Therefore, adjustments to be made. This study will analyse the personality traits, role behaviour, occupations, and appearances of the characters appearing in the text and illustrations, based on Deaux and Lewis's four dimensions of gender stereotyping. The study will analyse the frequency of appearance of both genders in the text and illustrations, as this is a reflection of the importance of gender in the textbook. The analytical framework for this study is as follows:

### ***Frequency Analysis***

#### 1) In the pictures

- a. The frequency of appearance of both genders in the covers
- b. The frequency of occurrence of both genders in the primary illustrations
- c. The frequency of appearance of both genders in the secondary illustrations
- d. The frequency of occurrence of both genders in all characters

#### 2) In the text

- a. The frequency of both genders as protagonists
- b. The frequency of real names and fictional names of both genders as protagonists

#### 3) Dimensional Analysis

- a. Male and female role behaviour
- b. Occupation of adult male and female
- c. Personality traits of male and female

d. Appearance of male and female

### **Research Methodology**

A combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis is the method used for conducting gender research in this study. The study categorised the pictures in the YCT Standard Course into three main groups: covers, primary illustrations, and secondary illustrations. The term 'covers' refers to the outer layer of the textbooks. The 'main illustration' refers to the pictures in the YCT Standard Course for the 'Let's read' and 'Mini Story' sections, while the 'secondary illustration' refers to the pictures in the textbook other than the covers and primary illustrations. It is important to note that if a character appears more than once in any part of any lesson in the *YCT Standard Course* (e.g. 'Let's read'), the researcher counted the character only once and repeated the count in other cases. Characters with unclear gender were excluded from the count, and duplicate pictures were disregarded.

When analysing the protagonists in the *YCT Standard Course*, the criteria for identifying the protagonists were based on Shi Jinghuan's statistical criteria, i.e., the gender of the characters who appeared in the first person as "I" in the narrative text, together with the gender of the characters in the illustrations. If the text is in the form of story, the protagonist is the main character in the text. If the text is in the form of dialogue, the protagonist is the central character in the dialogue. In the first two cases, there is only one protagonist, while in the latter case there may be more than one. If it cannot be determined who the protagonist is, it is not counted.

When quantifying the occupations of adult males and females in all texts (with illustrations) from YCT 1 to 6, it should be noted that if the same occupation appears multiple times in the same text, it is only counted once.

## Results and Discussion

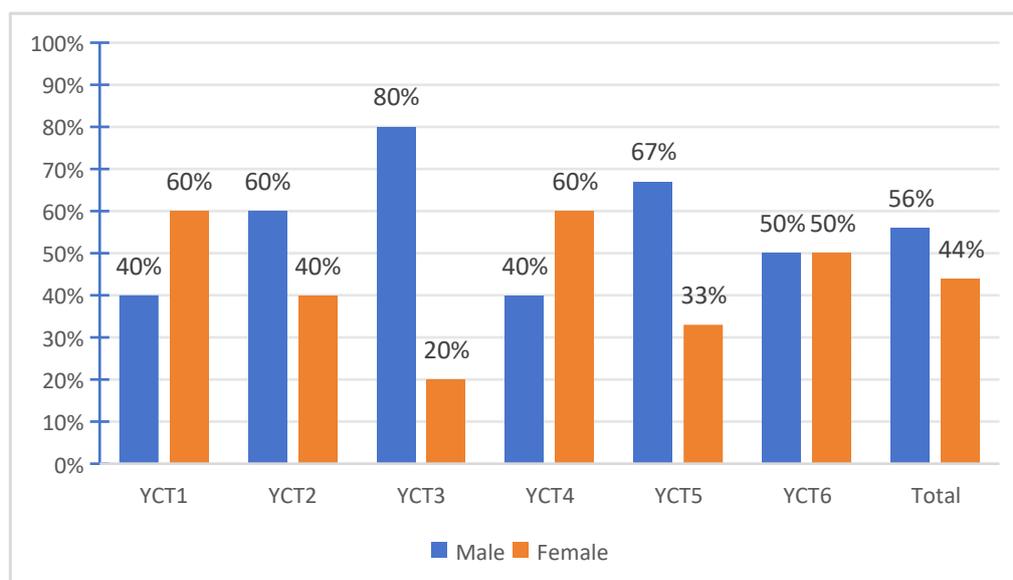
### 1) Frequency Analysis

**Table 1 The Number and Proportion of Male and Female Characters in YCT**

Pictures	Textbooks	Total No.	Male characters		Female characters	
			No.	%	No.	%
Covers	YCT1	5	2	40%	3	60%
	YCT2	5	3	60%	2	40%
	YCT3	5	4	80%	1	20%
	YCT4	5	2	40%	3	60%
	YCT5	3	2	67%	1	33%
	YCT6	4	2	50%	2	50%
<b>Total</b>		27	15	56%	12	44%
Primary illustrations	YCT1	95	48	51%	47	49%
	YCT2	70	35	50%	35	50%
	YCT3	67	35	52%	32	48%
	YCT4	40	24	60%	16	40%
	YCT5	66	39	59%	27	41%
	YCT6	53	29	55%	24	45%
<b>Total</b>		391	210	54%	181	46%
Secondary illustrations	YCT1	167	67	40%	100	60%
	YCT2	133	56	42%	77	58%
	YCT3	158	67	42%	91	58%
	YCT4	112	43	38%	69	62%
	YCT5	257	153	60%	104	40%
	YCT6	272	120	44%	152	56%
<b>Total</b>		1099	506	46%	593	54%
<b>The above three parts total</b>		1517	731	48%	786	52%

#### 1.1 In the pictures

Table 1 showed the number and proportion of male and female characters in YCT, which counted 1517 characters in the six volumes of YCT Standard Course, with 731 male characters and 786 female characters.

**a. The frequency of appearance of both genders in the covers****Figure 1 The Frequency of Appearance of Male and Female in the Covers**

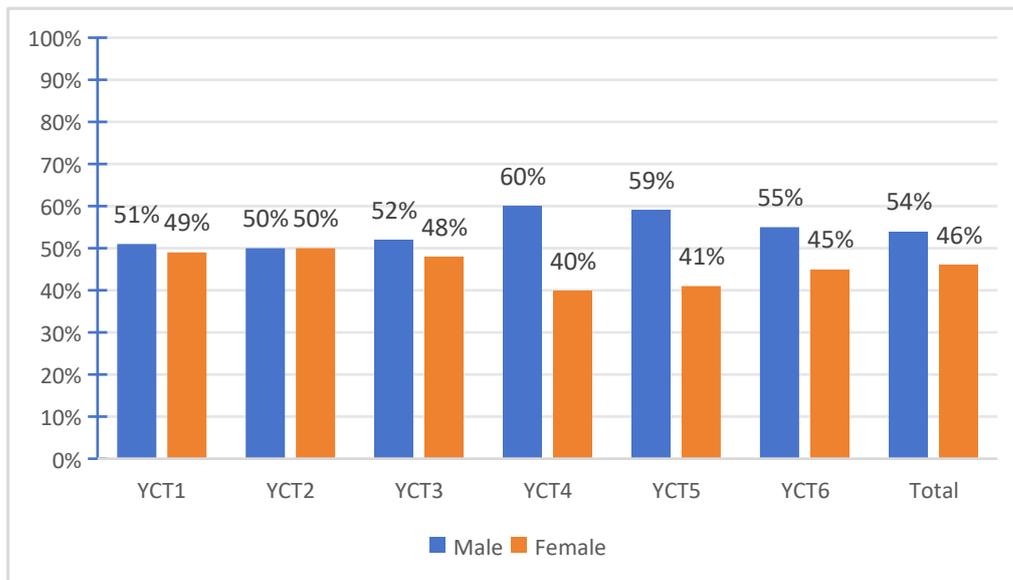
The cover of a textbook is its outer layer. It is the first thing students see when they receive a textbook, and the gender of the characters depicted on the cover can have a significant impact on students. When designing a textbook cover, authors consider various factors. Therefore, it is important to analyse the frequency of gender representation on textbook covers.

Figure 1 indicated that the frequency of appearance of male and female in the covers. The six volumes of the YCT Standard Course contain a total of 27 characters (Table 1), of which 15 are male (56%) and 12 are female (44%).

Females are more prevalent in YCT1 and YCT4, while males are more prevalent in YCT2, YCT3, and YCT5, with YCT3 having the highest proportion of males at 80%. YCT6 has an equal proportion of males and females, with 50 percent each.

This indicates that males and females are unequally represented in the YCT covers. Although the authors have achieved a balanced gender ratio in YCT6, the results obtained from other textbooks suggest that this balance may be accidental rather than intentional.

## b. The frequency of occurrence of both genders in the primary illustrations



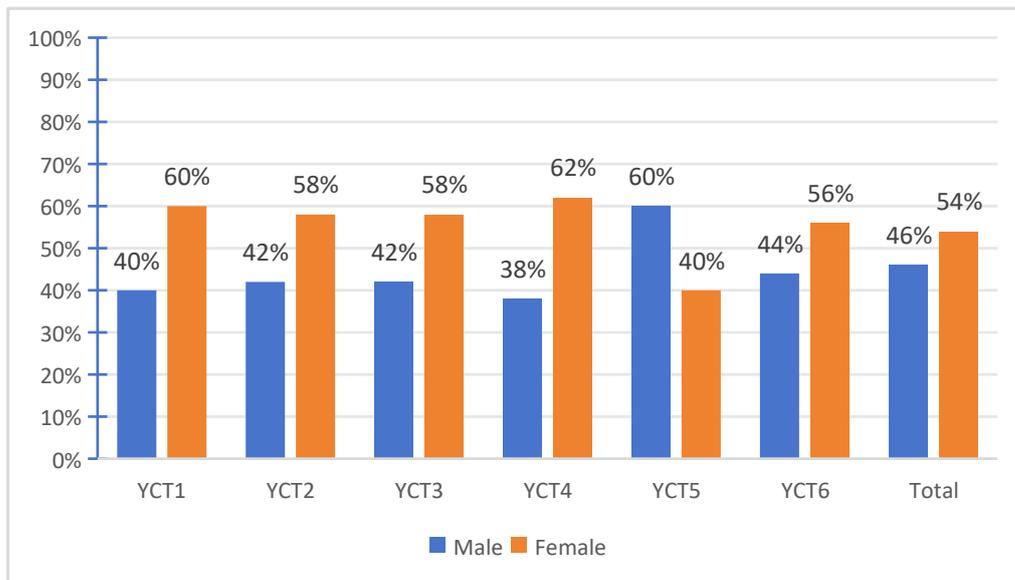
**Figure 2 The Frequency of Appearance of Male and Female in the Primary Illustrations**

Figure 2 revealed the frequency of appearance of male and female in the primary illustrations. 'Let's Read' and 'Mini Story' are two important components of YCT. 'Let's Read' contains the main text of YCT, while 'Mini Story' serves to showcase Chinese culture and educate students. Therefore, it is necessary to determine the frequency of pictures in these two sections for both males and females.

The entire YCT set consists of 391 characters, with 210 male characters, accounting for 54 percent, and 181 female characters, accounting for 46 percent. With the exception of YCT2, males have a higher rate than females in YCT1-6. The highest rate of 60 percent is observed in YCT4, which is 20 percent higher than that of females. Although there is little difference between the rates of males and females in YCT1-3, males have significantly higher rates in YCT4-6 than females, resulting in an overall higher rate for males.

The analysis indicates that the 'Let's Read' and 'Mini Story' sections in YCT1-3 exhibit better gender balance. However, the authors did not give sufficient attention to the gender ratio in YCT4-6, resulting in a higher frequency of male characters.

## c. The frequency of appearance of both genders in the secondary illustrations



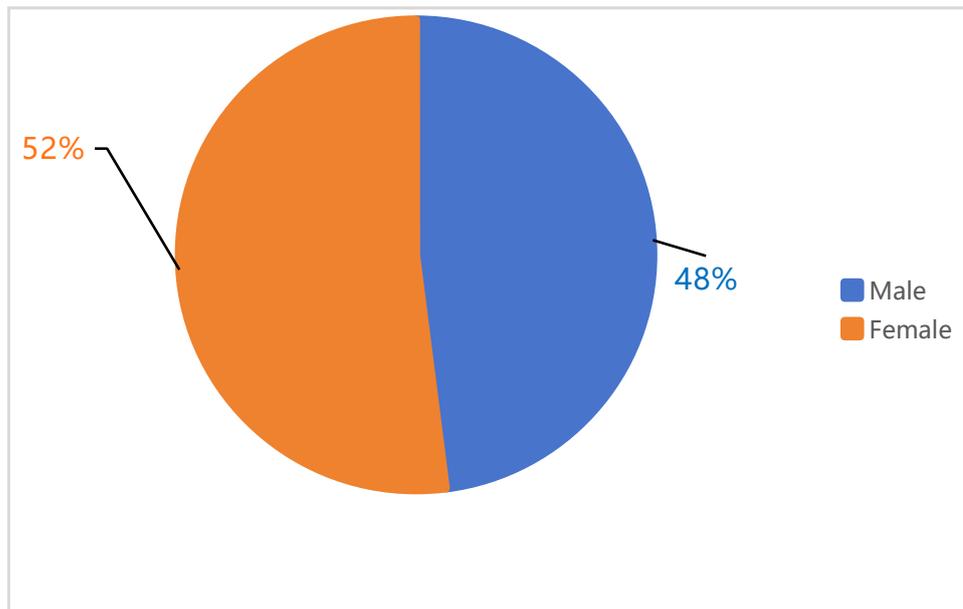
**Figure 3 The Frequency of Appearance of Male and Female in the Secondary Illustrations**

Figure 3 showed that there are 1,099 characters in the secondary illustrations (table 1), with 506 male characters (46%) and 593 female characters (54%).

Except for YCT5, the proportion of female characters is higher than that of males in YCT1-YCT6, by 12-20%. YCT1 has the highest proportion at 20%. The proportion of male characters in YCT5 is higher than that of females by 20%. Overall, females have higher proportions than males in the secondary illustrations.

The secondary illustrations section of YCT contains more female characters than male characters, a trend that persists throughout all five volumes. This may indicate a lack of awareness regarding gender equality on the part of the authors.

d. The frequency of occurrence of both genders in all characters



**Figure 4 The Frequency of Appearance of Male and Female in all Characters**

Figure 4 showed that a total of 1,517 characters appear in all YCT textbooks (table 1), with 731 (48%) being male and 786 (52%) being female.

This indicates a balanced representation of male and female characters throughout the YCT. However, based on the covers, primary and secondary illustrations, it is evident that the authors have not addressed the gender balance of males and females in these sections, which can significantly impact students' gender awareness.

1.2 In the text

a. The frequency of male and female as protagonists

This part mainly counts the gender distribution of the protagonists in the texts, covering the protagonists in "Let's Learn" and "Mini Story" in YCT1-6. In the YCT1-6 'Let's Learn' and 'Mini Story' texts, there are a total of 298 protagonists. Of these, 159 (53%) are male and 139 (47%) are female, with a slight predominance of male protagonists. Table 2 below shows the results. While the difference in the number of male and female protagonists is not significant in general, it is as high as 16% in YCT2, indicating an uneven distribution of numbers.

Book	Total Number	Male protagonists		Female protagonists	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
YCT1	68	35	51%	33	49%
YCT2	55	32	58%	23	42%
YCT3	46	22	48%	24	52%
YCT4	42	23	55%	19	45%
YCT5	39	22	56%	17	44%
YCT6	48	25	52%	23	48%
<b>Total</b>	298	159	53%	139	47%

**Table 2 Frequency of Both Male and Female as Protagonists**

b. The frequency of named person of both genders as protagonists

Of the protagonists in question, there are a total of 10 named characters, 8 of whom are male and 2 of whom are female. The number of named male protagonists far exceeds that of female protagonists by a factor of five. All named male protagonists are celebrities from various walks of life. The partial text mentions several famous individuals, including Jackie Chan, a film and television star, Yao Ming, a basketball player, Michael Jackson, an international superstar, Lu Xun, a renowned Chinese literary figure, and Kong Rong, a famous Chinese politician. Additionally, there are three male protagonists mentioned, two of whom are fictional characters with superpowers, namely the Monkey King and Superman. Among the named female protagonists, only one is a real person, Zhang Ziyi, while the other is a fictional character, Cinderella. It is important to note that this gender imbalance is not limited to a specific area. The textbook has a gender imbalance in the field of named protagonists, with male characters outnumbering female characters.

## 2) Dimensional Analysis

a. Male and female role behaviours

The YCT textbook presents various character role behaviours. For statistical and analytical purposes, this text will focus on gender differences between males and females.

	Labour-related role behaviour	Interpersonal interaction-related role behaviour	Art-related role behaviour	Sport-related role behaviour	Personal behaviour
<b>Male</b>	Going to work, doing	Parent-child	Singing,	Playing	Finding things,

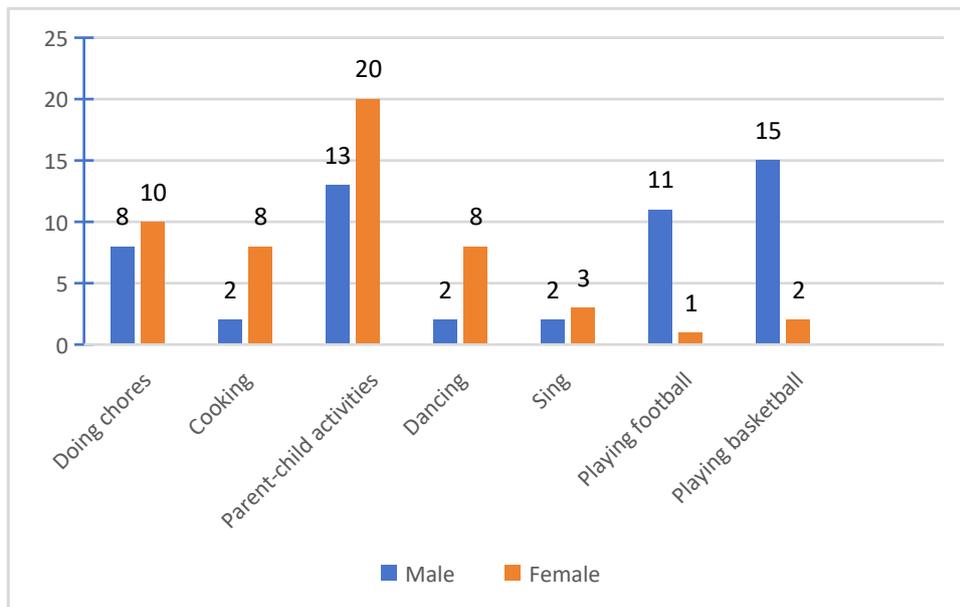
	farm work, mowing the lawn, making deliveries, selling stuff, doing housework, providing medical services.	activities, teaching students, eating with students, going to the cinema, buying flour, giving seats to pregnant women, sharing pears.	dancing, painting, playing Go.	football, basketball, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, baseball. Running, walking, swimming, hiking, biking.	losing things, buying flowers, crying, stealing, hiding, camping, exploring.
<b>Female</b>	Doing chores, selling stuff, providing medical services.	Parenting activities, shopping, taking care of husband's meals, waking husband up, helping son, husband find things, taking kids to the zoo, taking care of sister, comforting brother, visiting friends, going to prom.	Singing, dancing, painting, playing the piano, taking photos, playing chess.	Playing football, basketball, tennis, volleyball. Running, walking, swimming, hiking, horse riding.	Washing hands, brushing teeth, washing fruit, skincare, polishing hair, applying make-up, cuddling dolls, petting cats, bathing dogs, selling flowers, thinking, crying.

**Table 3 Classification Graph of Male and Female Role Behaviours**

Table 3 revealed that males exhibit more labour-related role behaviours than females. Additionally, males are more likely to engage in heavy labour while females tend to engage in light labour. Most interpersonal behaviours in which males engage occur outside the home, while most interpersonal behaviours in which females engage occur within the home. Moreover, more males than females engage in sports-related behaviours, while females tend to engage in art-related behaviours more than males. Males tend to exhibit more exploratory and adventurous behaviour, while females tend to exhibit more caring and emotional behaviour.

Figure 5 and Further analysis revealed that although there is not a significant difference between the number of chores performed by men and women, adult males do not participate in household chores, while the majority of adult females take on this responsibility. In terms of

cooking, females greatly outnumber males, who generally do not spend time on this task. Additionally, females are more involved in parent-child activities than males. Parent-child activities tend to be gendered, with males more likely to pass on skills such as teaching sports and riding a bicycle, while females focus more on companionship, caring, taking their children to the doctor, comforting them, and feeding them. In arts-related roles, such as dancing and singing, both genders participate in a wide variety of activities. However, men tend to participate more in team sports, such as basketball and football, compared to women. This indicates the presence of gender stereotypes in YCT Standard Course.



**Figure 5 Male and Female Role Behaviour Scale**

b. Occupation of adult male and female

Book	Male roles		Female roles	
	Occupation	Number	Occupation	Number
YCT1-6	Boss	1	Boss	1
	Salesperson	2	Salesperson	2
	Doctor	13	Doctor	4
	Driver	1	Driver	2
	Chef	2	Chef	1
	Conductor	1	Conductor	2
	Police	1	Police	1

	Teacher	5	Teacher	27
	Office staff	3	Office staff	1
	Administrative staff	1	Waitress	3
	Public servant	2	Nurse	4
	Programmer	2		
	Athlete	3		
	Journalist	1		
	Actor	1		
	Postal workers	1		
Total	16	39	11	46

**Table 4 Adult Male and Female Role Occupation Scale**

Table 4 showed that the adult male and female role occupation scale.

The textbooks list 39 male professions and 46 female professions. The most frequently mentioned female profession is teacher, with 27 occurrences, while the most frequently mentioned male profession is doctor, with 13 occurrences. The statistics show that there are 16 different types of male occupations, including civil servant, doctor, chef, and athlete, and 11 female occupations, including teacher, boss, clerk, and waitress. There are six professions that are predominantly male: public servant, recruiter, athlete, programmer, postal worker and journalist. Conversely, there are only two professions that are predominantly female: nurse and waitress.

Among the occupations that are shared by both sexes, women outnumbered men in only three: teacher, nurse and driver. Of these, 27 are female teachers, which is more than five times the number of male teachers. Female teachers primarily teach in the classroom and provide constructive feedback to students. These scenes highlight the nurturing qualities of female teachers. Additionally, when women take on the role of driver, they are typically transporting children to school, which aligns with traditional gender roles of women as caretakers. Among professions shared by both genders, men outnumber women in doctors by a factor of three. It is important to note that doctors hold a high status in society and are respected by many.

Among the occupations exclusive to men and women. The female-only professions are nurses

and waitresses. Nurses are at the bottom of the hospital hierarchy, basically providing some life services to patients and lacking much skill compared to doctors. Waitresses also do jobs such as delivering food. These occupations show that women have a lower status in society and do simpler jobs. The male-only professions are civil servants, recruiters, athletes, programmers, postal workers and journalists. Civil servants are government workers who hold a lot of power and have a lot of say. Programmers do the work of developing computer programs, which requires a great deal of technical learning and is basically a job for highly educated people with higher salaries. This suggests that men hold the power and resources in society and have a higher social status.

The analysis above indicates that YCT exhibits significant gender stereotyping in relation to occupation.

c. Personality traits of male and female.

(1) Positive personality traits

1) Positive male personality traits

Helpful

In the 'Let's play' part of Lesson 1 in YCT2, an adult male gives up his seat on a bus to a pregnant woman.

Courteous

In the 'Let's Read' section of Lesson 1 in YCT2, a male pupil makes a polite enquiry to a female pupil

Concerned

In the 'Let's Read' section of Lesson 9 in YCT2, the father asks his son what he has done today.

Filial

In the 'Let's Read' section of Lesson 7 in YCT3, Sister and Brother prepare a birthday present for Mum.

### Capable

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 2 in YCT4, the Monkey King and Superman can fly in the sky.

### Hard-working

In the 'Let's Read' section of Lesson 10 in YCT4, Mum says that the reason Dad doesn't take breaks is because he's too busy.

### Intelligent

In the 'Short Speech' section of Lesson 11 in YCT6, the boy learnt to ride a bicycle in two hours.

### Unselfish

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 12 in YCT6, Kong Rong gives two pears to his elder and younger brothers and keeps the smallest one for himself.

## 2) Positive female personality traits

### Courteous

A female student greets the teacher in the 'Let's Play' section of Lesson 1 in YCT2

### Independent

In the first lesson of YCT2, 'Mini Story', Cinderella thinks of many ways to make her wish to go to the ball come true through her own efforts.

### Concerned

In the 'Let's Read' section of Lesson 9 in YCT2, Mum asks her daughter if she has eaten any fruit today.

### Filial

In the 'Let's Read' section of Lesson 7 in YCT3, Sister and Brother prepare a birthday present for Mum.

(2) Negative personality traits

1) Negative male personality traits

Careless

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 3 in YCT2, the father is looking for his wallet and the son is looking for his pencil.

Naughty

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 10 in YCT4, a child is hiding and his mum and dad call the police to find him.

Janus-faced

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 2 in YCT5, Lord Ye says that he particularly likes dragons, but when they come to him, he is afraid.

Slothful

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 3 in YCT6, a man was working in the field when a rabbit hit a tree. Then he stopped working and waited for the rabbit.

Foolish

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 8 in YCT6, a man goes to steal a bell, thinking that if he covers his ears, no one else will hear it ring.

Larcenous

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 8 in YCT6, a man goes to steal a bell.

Smart-aleck

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 11 in YCT6, one person drew a snake with its feet.

2) Negative female personality traits

Evil-minded

In the first 'Mini Story' section of YCT2, Cinderella's stepmother uses a ruse to prevent her

from going to the ball.

**Self-contemptuous**

In the 'Mini Story' section of Lesson 7 in YCT2, the heroine is sad because she is not smart or pretty.

**Strict**

In the 'Short Speech' section of Lesson 8 in YCT6, the teacher criticised students who had not finished their homework.

Based on the analysis above, the author describes the qualities of a 'good man' as helpful, courteous, concerned, filial, capable, hard-working, intelligent, and unselfish. The qualities of a 'good woman' are courteous, independent, concerned, and filial. On the other hand, the qualities of a 'bad man' are careless, slothful, foolish, larcenous, and being smart-aleck. Finally, the qualities of a 'bad woman' are being evil-minded, self-contemptuous and strict. Although some personality traits are depicted similarly for both sexes, such as being courteous, caring, and obedient to parents, the author generally presents different descriptions for specific genders. The textbook exhibits significant gender stereotypes in the portrayal of character traits, with a richer portrayal of male traits and a more monotonous portrayal of female traits.

**d. Appearance of male and female.**

Clothing		Accessories	Appearance and Hair
<b>Upper Garments</b>	Long-sleeved T-shirt, short-sleeved T-shirt, short-sleeved inch shirt, jacket, sweater, vest, hooded sweatshirt, cotton coat, Zhong shan suit, Tang suit, traditional Han Chinese dress, folk clothing, suits, tracksuits, trench coats, white coats, chef's uniforms.	Cold hats, hip-hop hats, newsboy hats, swim caps, ties, lavalier, scarves, aprons, walking stick, belt, watch, glasses, earmuffs, backpack.	Short hair, curly hair, gray hair, bald head, beard.
<b>Bottoms</b>	Five-quarter length trousers, seven-quarter		

	length trousers, shorts,jeans,backless trousers, cotton trousers, swimming trunks, long socks, mid-calf socks.		
<b>Shoes</b>	Sports shoes, casual shoes, leather shoes, sneakers, rain boots, flip-flops, cotton slippers		

**Table 6 Classification Table for Male Appearance in YCT Pictures**

Table 6 and 7 showed the classification table for male and female appearance in YCT Pictures and lead to the following conclusions.

As shown, there are more females than males in the YCT pictures wearing different types of clothing and accessories. Moreover, women's clothing is more diverse than men's clothing, with over a dozen types of dresses and a wide variety of shoe styles. Noticeably, there is a noticeable difference between the accessories worn by men and women, with women generally accessorising more. Additionally, the portrayal of male and female characters in YCT textbooks focuses more on male beards and female hairstyles. To sum up, the analyses presented above demonstrate a clear gender bias in the depiction of appearance in YCT.

Clothing		Accessories	Appearance and Hair
<b>Upper Garments</b>	Short-sleeved inch shirt, lapel inch shirt, scarf inch shirt, sailor's shirt, round neck short-sleeved T-shirt, long-sleeved T-shirt, knitwear, straight dress, v-neck dress, sheath dress, fishtail dress, maternity dress, strappy dress, baby doll dress, princess dress, inch dress, one-inch dress, ballet dress, swim dress, Tang Suit, wedding dress, nurse's clothes, cotton clothes, cheongsam, ethnic clothes, bathrobe.	Chef hat, nurse hat, hollow top hat, cold hat, garden hat, swimming hat, kettle hat, witch hat, tote bag, messenger bag, shoulder bag, biker bag, small square bag, hair wraps, hair bands, elasticated hair bands, hair scrunchies, hair bundles, bow tie, shawls, ear muffs, studs, ear chains, earrings, aprons, necklaces, glasses, lavalieres, handkerchiefs, gloves, sunglasses.	Long hair, short hair, curly hair, two braids, one braid, pill hair, gray hair.
<b>Bottoms</b>	Seven-quarter length trousers, pant, jeans, half		

	trousers,pyjamas,cotton-padded trousers,ruffle skirt, X-skirt, A-line skirt, halter skirt, denim skirt, JK,long socks, short socks, mid-calf socks, one-piece socks.		
<b>Shoes</b>	High heels, low heels, horseshoe heels, sports shoes, sneakers, casual shoes, cloth shoes, Mary Jane, single shoes, boots, flat sandals, slippers, cotton boots.		

**Table 7 Classification Table for Female Appearance in YCT Pictures**

### Conclusion and Reflection

An analysis of gender stereotypes in the six YCT volumes reveals that while the total number of males and females in the YCT pictures is similar, there is an imbalance in the proportion of males and females in the covers, main illustrations, and secondary illustrations. Additionally, there is a gender imbalance in the representation of protagonists in YCT texts, with male characters outnumbering female characters. Moreover, male characters are more prevalent in a wider range of areas than female characters as well as the characters in YCT texts are also subject to gender stereotypes in terms of their behaviour, occupation, appearance, and personality trait. Therefore, it can be included that YCT promotes the reinforcement of gender stereotypes in students.

To reduce the occurrence of gender stereotypes in textbooks, authors should first be aware of gender equality and consciously select gender stereotype-free content when editing. Second, authors should strive for gender balance when including content that involves both genders. Finally, authors should make an effort to overcome the influence of their own cultural traditions and avoid unconsciously including gender-stereotyped content in textbooks.

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