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**A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER REPRESENTATION IN
THE *I LOVE ENGLISH 7* TEXTBOOK**

MA thesis

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ABSTRACT

Previous studies on gender representation in language textbooks have found that a bias persists due to a hidden curriculum, despite national and international efforts to ensure a gender-fair society. Such studies are largely focused on the textual side of textbooks.

This thesis aims to investigate if and how a hidden curriculum might implicitly convey representations of gender in the images and related texts of the English language textbook *I Love English 7*. The image analysis is based on Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's grammar of visual design. The text analysis focuses on texts related to the images, with the purpose of examining the relations between images and text.

The thesis consists of an introduction, three core chapters, and a conclusion. The introduction presents the motivation for the study and the research problem. This is followed by a literature review, giving an overview of previous research on the representation of gender in textbooks, especially language textbooks, as well as an introduction of the structure of the textbook analysed and the methodology used. Next, the analysis and findings are given, followed by the conclusion.

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INTRODUCTION

In line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia (Riigi Teataja 1992), the fundamental values of Estonian general education schools include supporting the mental, physical, social, emotional, and ethical development of students (Riigi Teataja 2010a), ensuring the fair treatment of all people, regardless of nationality, race, gender, language, etc. (Riigi Teataja 1992). It is the function of secondary and upper secondary schools to provide students with the means necessary for becoming “creative, versatile, socially mature and trustworthy personalities” who treat others fairly and with respect (Riigi Teataja 2010b). Schools do so through the national curriculum, which among other things aims to develop students’ system of values and attitudes that form the basis for their successful co-existence with others in their personal life and society in general (Riigi Teataja 2011a, Riigi Teataja 2011b). Despite these efforts, research has shown that students can also adopt values and attitudes that are not taught intentionally but which are reinforced in them covertly, as part of a hidden curriculum (Cotton et al 2013, Jackson 1968, Lee 2018).

A hidden curriculum, the term originally coined by Philip Jackson (1968), refers to the differences between the official curriculum that schools have implemented in accordance with the national curriculum, that is, what students are taught deliberately, and a covert curriculum that conveys values and attitudes that are usually not desirable in a fair society, for example, the marginalisation of women, discrimination on the basis of race or religion, or other attitudes that are damaging to others (Cotton et al 2013, Lee 2018, Papp 2021). A hidden curriculum can be produced and maintained in several ways (Cotton et al 2013). Students might embrace convictions and attitudes that they see in their teachers, regardless of whether these are acknowledged by the latter or not, as well as values that they encounter in various structures of the education system, such as in learning materials (Aavik 2009,

Papp 2021). Attempts at portraying people in a textbook fairly can be thwarted by a hidden curriculum if, for example, a language textbook overtly focuses on language learning and communication but implicitly promotes some type of inequality. Gender aspects in learning materials, for example, the way that men and women are portrayed therein, can impact students' educational and social experiences and thereby what they deem possible for their future lives, including educational and career choices (Aavik 2009, Papp 2021, Richards 2002).

In order to tackle the problem of a hidden curriculum in textbooks, it is crucial to analyse their content multimodally, as meaning is realised differently depending on the mode of representation and no single mode can carry all the meaning (Kress 2003). Kress (2003) also emphasises that written texts and images are processed differently. While written texts are processed temporally and sequentially, as the reader is required to make sense of the words in a specific order, images are processed simultaneously and spatially, as the different elements of an image can be experienced at the same time and in relation to each other (Kress 2003). Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) also note how different modes might convey conflicting meanings. For example, a text might be promoting equality but the accompanying image might be doing the opposite, or vice versa. In order to get a comprehensive overview of the values and attitudes that might be (overtly or covertly) conveyed to students using the textbooks, it is necessary to investigate also the visual resources of a textbook, an aspect of textbook analysis that is sometimes deemed secondary to textual analysis.

The aim of this thesis is to investigate whether and how a hidden curriculum indirectly conveys gender in the images and related texts of the English language textbook *I Love English 7* (Kurm and Soolepp 2018) by analysing the grammar of visual design, a method proposed by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (2021), in the drawings and

photographs of the textbook, and by applying text analysis to the texts related to the images. A secondary goal is to determine if and how the textbook might reflect gender-based ideologies implicitly and/or explicitly present in Estonian society and among Estonian people. Kress and van Leeuwen's theory was chosen because one of its main focuses is on what kinds of patterns (i.e. visual grammar) can exist in a collection of media, as well as what kinds of inequalities or ideologies present in society those patterns might reflect. The *I Love English 7* textbook was chosen for analysis because it is written by Estonian authors and illustrated by Estonian illustrators, as well as widely used in Estonian general education schools. More specifically, the seventh book in the series was chosen because the content of previous textbooks has been analysed from the perspective of gender in two previous Master's theses by Lehiste (2013) and Talvik (2014).

The thesis is divided into several sections. First, an overview of previous research on the topic of gender representation in school textbooks is given, focusing on language textbooks but including also other types of textbooks if the analysis is relevant to the Estonian context due to either cultural or geographical similarities, the Finnish context for example. Next, the contents of the textbook analysed are described. Following this, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021) theory of visual design, on which this thesis is based, is introduced along with the method of text analysis applied to the texts of the textbook. This is followed by the analysis of the textbook. Lastly, the thesis concludes with a discussion on how the results of this thesis relate to previous research, potential limitations of the research, as well as further avenues of research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

School textbooks are widely used and are therefore influential educational media. They have been studied extensively in different contexts and using a range of methods. This literature review will give an overview of the role and importance of textbooks in general and language textbooks more specifically in communicating gender-related values and attitudes to learners, previous research on the subject, as well as how and why it is important to consider the issue with regard to the Estonian context.

The importance of textbooks in language learning and teaching has long been understood and agreed on. As textbook-based activities make up the core of language lessons, also guiding and complementing teachers in their instruction, they can influence learners, who might (and often do) transfer the portrayed values into real life (Keles et al 2021, Lee 2016, Sunderland 2015, Weninger and Kiss 2013). The main goal of language textbooks is not to be an agent of social change and gender equality but to support language learning. For this reason, any potential “taken for granted” and essentialist gender representations, such as the implicit marginalisation of women, if present, might not be challenged by learners and teachers alike (Pakuła, Pawelczyk, and Sunderland 2015). Preconceptions and gender stereotypes present in education have historically often gone unacknowledged, so textbook authors and publishers might not be aware of biased attitudes in the textbook, as these can be a part of a hidden curriculum (Jackson 1968, Papp 2021). For example, a common rhetoric that restricts both boys and girls in the school environment entails the idea that boys are smart yet lazy while girls are obedient, hard-working, and tidy (Papp 2021). This, however, sets more expectations for girls to work hard and rely on others while boys are given more freedom to *just be boys* (Papp 2021). Researchers, such as Weninger (2020), Lee (2016), and Karvonen and Tainio (2015), largely agree that language textbooks can represent such existing socially dominant, yet implicit ideologies and power

relations, as well as communicate these ideologies to and reinforce them in learners, who are inadvertently influenced in their thinking and actions and may transfer these attitudes about various aspects, such as gender, to real life situations.

As textbooks are always created by someone(s), various social aspects have always been included “with a level of intentionality or at least consciousness” (Sunderland 2015). For example, every image, chosen from a pool of images or drawn from scratch, is the result of a choice or multiple choices made by those involved in the production of the textbook. Whatever the process, these choices can convey various ideologies or beliefs that the authors may or may not be acknowledging (Sunderland 2015). Therefore, despite aiming to be neutral, authors and illustrators of textbooks can “insert attitudinal content in the texts and visuals” (Oteíza and Pinto 2008 in Karvonen and Tainio 2015). Additionally, these ideologies can be specific to a certain region, such as Estonia, accepted globally, or any variation of the two (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021).

Textbooks have been studied extensively and numerous studies have demonstrated a gender bias in English language and other textbooks. It should be acknowledged that the majority of such studies has been carried out in and/or about developing regions, such as Indonesia (Elmiana 2019), Uganda (Barton and Sakwa 2012), Vietnam (Vu and Pham 2021), to name a few, where women are often marginalised due to various cultural and/or historical reasons. The listed researchers investigated a range of English language textbooks used in upper secondary, secondary, and lower secondary schools, respectively, studying both texts (except for Elmiana 2019) and images. A gender bias in favour of male persons was observed in all cases with regard to both the number of appearances and diversity of occupations and activities. For example, it was found that the majority (66% and 79.3%, respectively) of images illustrating the textbooks used in Indonesia (Elmiana 2019) and Uganda (Barton and Sakwa 2012) represented a male person. Male persons also dominated in texts and

conversations in textbooks used in Uganda (Barton and Sakwa 2012) and Vietnam (Vu and Pham 2021). Male characters were additionally associated with a more diverse range of occupations and social roles, such as judge, doctor, police officer, and head teacher (Uganda; Barton and Sakwa 2012), as well as various experts in STEM, and school teacher; only the role of the father was from the private sphere of life (Vietnam; Vu and Pham 2021). Female characters, in contrast, were associated largely with domestic roles or traditionally gender-based occupations related to caregiving, such as babysitter, waitress, nurse (Uganda; Barton and Sakwa 2012), as well as mother, school teacher, museum guide (Vietnam; Vu and Pham 2021). As can be seen, some of the male and female roles coincided, with both being shown in the role of a parent, as well as in the school context, a common topic in language textbooks. Elmiana (2019) found that despite male characters having a wider scope of occupations, including, for example, actor, entrepreneur, inventor, and president (occupations available for female characters included teacher, fashion model, entrepreneur, to name a few), no significant differences were found in the activities performed by female and male characters, indicating a level of progress towards a more gender-balanced society in textbooks used in Indonesia.

Gender bias has also been observed in textbooks, including EFL and local language textbooks, used and/or produced in developed countries, such as Finland (Karvonen and Tainio 2015), Germany (Moser and Hannover 2014), the Netherlands (Koster 2020), Poland (Pakuła, Pawelczyk, and Sunderland 2015), and Sweden (Carlson and Kanci 2017). The most striking of these, as well as relevant to the Estonian context due to its proximity and similar cultural background, perhaps, is Finland. In their study of three different types of secondary education textbooks (Finnish language and literature, mathematics, and educational and vocational guidance) used in Finland, Karvonen and Tainio (2015) found that progress with regard to gender equality is evident mostly in the portrayal of a larger

number of intentionally androgynous-looking persons. However, they also noted that despite official Finnish National Board of Education recommendations for textbook publishers, the majority of images still depicted male persons. As a Nordic country, Sweden is hailed as a success story of gender equality (Carlson and Kanci 2017). However, researchers (Carlson and Kanci 2017) have found that women continue to be “noticeably absent as active subjects of the narratives in the [history] textbooks” (Carlson and Kanci 2017: 325), reinforcing the idea that women are passive bystanders and receivers of male action. For example, Carlson and Kanci (2017) found that the narrative of women’s suffrage in Sweden in the textbook was built on the activity of men, who gave Swedish women the right to vote, and not on women fighting for it themselves.

Pakuła, Pawelczyk, and Sunderland (2015: 45) carried out an extensive study of EFL textbooks used in primary, secondary, and upper secondary education in Poland, investigating the “social representation and construction of women and men, girls and boys”. Although both conservative and progressive depictions of men and women were found, the former dominated. For example, female characters were associated more with domestic roles and traditionally feminine contexts, such as shopping or fashion magazines, than men, who were related more with crime and sports (especially in secondary and upper secondary textbooks), which was also highlighted as a gendered topic by the researchers (Pakuła, Pawelczyk, and Sunderland 2015). It is important to note, however, that, similarly to the Finnish context, men and women were also depicted as experts in non-gender-conforming roles (Pakuła, Pawelczyk, and Sunderland 2015).

Similar results were achieved in the German and Dutch contexts by Moser and Hannover (2014) and Koster (2020), respectively, who investigated gender representation in German and Dutch language textbooks. Koster (2020: 890) concluded that women in Dutch language textbooks were backgrounded more due to “male-firstness”, as well as associated

more with gender-stereotypical roles, such as that of a nurse, while men were not. Moser and Hannover (2014) came to the conclusion that men and women in German language textbooks were represented in relatively equal terms, engaged in a similar range of activities, although they noted that men were more often introduced via their profession than women. Moser and Hannover's (2014: 389) study, in particular, stands out from the others for their additional focus on spatial arrangements in images, claiming that agentive persons, who are stereotypically men, are more likely to be placed on the left side while women, who are more likely to be perceived as "communal", are placed on the right side of the image. However, no gender bias was discovered in this regard by Moser and Hannover (2014).

A few recent studies could be found on the topic of gender representation in EFL textbooks used and/or produced in Estonia. Järviste (2002) investigated a sixth grade history textbook, the third edition of which was published in 2001. Järviste studied the roles of men and women in the texts and selected images and concluded that men dominated in both, with 80% of characters in texts being male and 20% female. Women were also depicted in less than 10% of the images. Järviste (2002) also found that women were mentioned more in the supplementary texts than in the main texts, which were not compulsory for students to read, tended to be anonymous while men were identified by name, and most of the depicted female characters were ancient goddesses, not real-life women (the reverse was true for male characters). Järviste (2002) concluded that this pointed to the exclusion of real-life women and their achievements from historical narratives. The depiction of women mostly as goddesses particularly reinforces the idea of women as the other. A closer content analysis revealed that men were represented in a larger variety of roles, including both gender-stereotypical, such as war, and non-gender-stereotypical roles, such as family life. However, she noted that in the latter case, the man was represented as a ruler of the family, reinforcing the stereotype of *man of the house*, and not in the role of caretaker (Järviste 2002). Men were

also portrayed as more active and engaged in a wider range of activities, including war-related activities, ruling, communicating, studying, etc. while the majority of women were not attributed any activity, conveying the idea that women are passive bystanders in historical narratives (Järviste 2002). Järviste's (2002) image analysis was, at least partly, based on Kress and van Leeuwen's theory of visual design (2021) and determined that the original illustrations created by illustrator Anneliis Aunapuu exhibited more gender bias than other visual historical resources, such as photographs of statues.

Richards (2002) compared two English language textbooks, *English Step 5* (Estonian author, 1997) and *TipTop 5* (English author, 1996) from the gender perspective, applying both qualitative and quantitative methods to the texts of the textbooks. She found that quantitatively male characters dominated in both, but *TipTop 5* offered "some progressive ideas and themes for discussion", for example, by inviting students and teachers to talk about stereotypes as well as in some portrayals of the family unit – although these lessened towards the end of the textbook –, while *Step 5* relied more on gender-stereotypical roles (Richards 2002: 238). Richards (2002: 242) additionally emphasised the construction of women as the other in *Step 5*, meaning that women were referred to "only in reference to another person, not as a person in her own right", while the same could not be said for men in either textbook. Richards (2002) attributed the different attitudes towards the roles of men and women in the two textbooks, published around the same time, to cross-cultural differences, due to the very different cultural contexts of Estonia and the UK at the time.

More recently, two previous master's theses have been written on the topic of gender in language textbooks. Lehiste (2013) investigated gender representation in the dialogues of *English Step by Step 5* (2008) and *I Love English 5* (2008). Talvik (2014) studied gender representation in the images and texts of the *Key English* series 7–9 (2008–2012), the production of which included several Estonian and Finnish authors. Both authors found that

although gender inequality had decreased in the investigated textbooks in comparison with older ones, some instances still remained. With regard to numbers, Lehiste (2013) showed that the *English Step by Step 5* textbook was biased against the female characters depicted in the textbook, while the reverse was true for *I Love English 5*, where gender-neutral and female characters dominated. Talvik (2014) found that gender-neutral characters, followed by male characters, dominated in the texts of the *Key English* textbooks while male characters, followed by female ones, dominated in the images. With regard to social roles, Talvik (2014: 56) noted that the imbalance was the greatest in the “category of famous and historic people”, where men significantly outnumbered women in the entire series, potentially reinforcing the idea that men’s achievements are “more important and influential” than those of women. Lehiste (2013) found no such significant differences in relation to social roles.

First studies on gender representation in textbooks focused largely on text and were generally quantitative in their methods (Sunderland 2015). However, young people today have to navigate an increasingly visual world, as the role of images has changed rapidly in the past 30 years with the development of various digital technologies. As a result, images and ideas are able to cross no longer stable “geographical and social spaces in ways that affect how young people learn and interact” (Jewitt 2008: 242). This inadvertently contributes to changes in textbook design, for example, in the use of images and the construction of increasingly dynamic reading paths. Thus learners are expected to acquire “new forms of ‘literacy’” (Bezemer and Kress 2010: 10), including visual literacy (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, Kress 2003 in Jewitt 2008). The majority of contemporary foreign-language textbooks are illustrated in one way or another, with drawings, photographs, cartoons, various online resources, etc. In this respect, multimodal investigation is essential, as it “extends past the traditional psychological and linguistic foundations of print literacy

to draw from anthropological, sociological, and discourse theory” (Jewitt 2008: 246). In addition to looking at how images are used in teaching a subject, researchers should ask why a certain image might have been used in the given context (Chen 2010).

The need to include images in textbook analysis has been noted by several researchers (Sunderland 2015, Elmiana 2019, Weninger 2020, Jewitt 2008, Chen 2010, for example), as images play a significant supportive role in “the effectiveness of teaching materials” by utilising the depicted characters, places, and situations to show learners “what the real world can look like, and provide students with opportunities to cultivate their understanding of the target language, culture, and worldview” (Elmiana 2019: 614). One might argue that this role is no longer just supportive but serves a purpose by and of itself. It has now been widely accepted, for instance, that the representation of individuals similar to oneself is essential for knowing what one can achieve and how to relate to one’s surroundings (see Aavik 2009 or Papp 2021, for example). Yet, not enough “is understood about the semiotic potentials of [...] image” (Jewitt 2008: 246). Together with the understanding that linguistic and visual meaning-making result in different meanings, it is imperative to investigate what images and texts – separately and in combination – in textbooks might implicitly be saying to students and teachers alike (Jewitt 2008, Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). Furthermore, images in textbooks can realise meanings that are contradictory to what is being said linguistically or the other way around (Jewitt 2008, Kress 2003). For example, a text might promote gender-fair attitudes and values while the accompanying image might convey gender-biased attitudes.

Teacher mediation of textbook content is also significant, as students are heavily guided in using textbooks (Weninger and Kiss 2013). Teachers rely heavily on textbooks (Blumberg 2007, Luukka et al 2008, Nygård Larsson 2011, and Hickmann and Portfilio 2012 in Karvonen and Tainio 2015). According to Luukka et al (2008), cited in Karvonen and

Tainio (2015), 76% of “mother-tongue teachers and 98% of second- or foreign-language teachers report using textbooks often or very often”. As figures of authority, teachers can influence students’ beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours by communicating information regarding what can be considered appropriate and possible for female and male students (Doornkamp et al 2022: 5). Quenneville et al (2022: 445) similarly highlight the ease with which young people and children can be indirectly exposed to “gendered language,” which can further affect and elicit “gender-typed behaviours”. It is also likely, as put by Sunderland (2015), that in teaching a class with the help of a textbook, the students and the teacher will “engage in some form of ‘talk around the text’, which may involve talk about some aspect of the textbook’s representation of gender specifically”. Should any biased notions be or become apparent in the content of the textbook, the teacher can, as put by Sunderland (2015), “rescue” the text by encouraging students to look at the text from different perspectives. From this, it could be inferred that textbooks, as media potentially depicting dominant societal values, can also be used by teachers to prompt learners to acknowledge and confront “some of the taken-for-granted cultural beliefs,” including those about gender roles (Weninger and Kiss 2013: 695). Although teachers have generally little control over the content of textbooks that they use in class, they are able to use them critically in order to encourage tolerance among their students. This is especially important if the textbook in use exhibits inequality, intentionally or unintentionally (Keles et al 2021). Teacher mediation of textbooks and the values in them is an aspect that is not within the scope of this thesis, but warrants further research elsewhere.

Textbook analysis is a common research topic; analysing the gender aspect in general and the gender aspect multimodally more specifically less so. That especially applies to developed countries where it is assumed that the problem has been solved with the implementation of legislation to promote gender equality (Riigi Teataja 2004, for example).

In Estonia, in particular, the issue has not received much coverage, as only a few recent studies could be found on the topic of gender representation in EFL textbooks used and/or produced in Estonia. The same applies to other neighbouring countries, such as Finland and Sweden. As shown above, the studies that have been conducted have achieved contradictory results, indicating a lack of information on the topic and warranting further investigation into the area of gender representation in EFL textbooks used in Estonia.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

This thesis analyses the multimodal representation of gender in the images, both drawings and photographs, and the related texts of the English language textbook *I Love English 7* (Kurm and Soolepp 2018). It is a widely used textbook in Estonian schools that was written by Estonian authors for Estonian learners and, more importantly, was illustrated by Estonian illustrators. As indicated by Kress and van Leeuwen, adult “sign-makers”, for example, illustrators of a textbook, are most always constrained by the pressure to conform to historically and culturally established conventions (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 14). It is also noted that people as social agents use culturally established symbols as resources to either reproduce or challenge gender differences (Roosalu et al 2014: 18). Therefore, gender ideologies specific to Estonia might implicitly be present in the content of this textbook. It is also possible that the sign-makers referred to by Kress and van Leeuwen are aware of these conventions and aim to challenge them. This can be determined by a thorough investigation.

The *I Love English 7* textbook consists of 20 units, 16 of which cover different topics, from *crime*, *life in the past*, *robots* to *theatre*, *wildlife*, and *career*, and four of which are intended for revision, titled *Show what you know*. In total, the textbook includes a little over 200 images of human or human-like figures (for example, robots which were included in the analysis due to their human-like features in the illustrations). Most of these images appear together with some text, either in the form of a dialogue, a story (included in most units), or some type of exercise, such as a cloze exercise. In the images, the textbook includes about 132 identifiable male characters and about 104 identifiable female characters. These figures exclude the characters depicted on the cover (two male and one female character).

Both drawings and photographs are included in the analysis to get a comprehensive overview. The text analysis focuses on texts that are related to the analysed images to determine if any correlations or contradictions with regard to gender representation are observed. All modes of representation, as said by Kress and van Leeuwen (2021: 40), have their own “specific social valuations in particular social contexts” and therefore, “different potentials for meaning-making”. For example, an image of a child reading a book can have a different meaning, depending on whether it is shown in a textbook (educational purpose) or in an advertisement (selling a product). The meaning might also depend on whether or not the image includes captions. In addition, one mode might be found to be more or less fair in its representation of men and women than the other (Sunderland 2015). This thesis does not consider images that do not represent either humans or human-like beings, nor characters whose gender could not be determined based on either appearance or context.

Methods

The visual analysis of the textbook is based on the grammar of visual design, proposed by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (2021). The term *grammar* refers to regularities of image elements in various media – in this case, images – and to the ways in which these elements are used to create meaning and ways of interpretation by positioning them in certain ways that have become conventional and common sense in Western visual semiotics (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 1–2). It should be kept in mind that Kress and van Leeuwen’s theory is general and can be applied to a wide range of media, from advertising posters to fine art to educational materials, such as textbooks (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 4). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2021: 15–16), “education is a key field of application” for the grammar of visual design, as the content of learning materials is becoming increasingly

visual, and images of any kind can function as means for articulating ideological positions. For example, a book on Australian society intended to introduce young children to Aboriginal culture can explicitly promote ideas of inclusion and acceptance but implicitly also uphold colonialist ideas of exclusion in the way that Aboriginal people are depicted visually (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). As “formal education is shaped by ideological positions”, it is relevant to analyse how different texts circulating in formal education might convey these ideological positions, explicitly or implicitly (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 120).

Kress and van Leeuwen’s theory of visual design is based largely on the theory of social semiotics, as it aims to describe how resources are used in meaning-making and interpretation (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). It also relies on Michael Halliday’s functional grammar, specifically the ideational, interpersonal, and textual function, reinterpreting these in the context of images (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). It focuses on three major functions of images: representational, interactive, and compositional (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, Elmiana 2019). The representational function deals with how different participants are positioned in the image, independently and in relation to each other (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) divide this function into two sub-functions: narrative and conceptual. Narrative representation depicts different narrative processes that can be shown to be occurring in an image, while conceptual representation is used to refer to images that represent a participant with regard to their basic characteristics (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 76). Narrative structures are dynamic, showing the unfolding of events and processes or changes in spatial arrangements with the use of vectors, for example, the pointing of a hand in a certain direction (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 55). Conceptual structures, in contrast, are static, relating participants to each other based on classification, that is, belonging to the same sub-category of some overarching main category (Kress and van

Leeuwen 2021: 55). For example, an image showing the pursuing of Australian Aboriginals by British colonisers in a visually dramatic landscape would qualify as a narrative structure representing the events of British colonisation of Australia, whereas an image of tools used by Australian Aboriginals, structured on a blank page as a sort of taxonomy, without showing their users, would be an example of a conceptual structure in the terms provided by Kress and van Leeuwen (for the image, see Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 45). In essence, the representational function aims to represent “narrative and conceptual relations between the people, places, and things depicted in images”, i.e. represented participants (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 113).

The interactive function, in turn, focuses on three types of interaction: between participants represented in the image, between interactive and represented participants, that is, how the viewer of an image interacts with or interprets the participants represented in the image, and between interactive participants, meaning “the things interactive participants do to or for each other through images” (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 113). Interactive function between represented and interactive participants, a focus of this thesis, can be realised by gaze or lack thereof, gesture (pointing or beckoning), distance (that is, size of the frame) or perspective (for indicating subjectivity). For example, a represented participant looking and/or pointing directly at the viewer can be interpreted as directly addressing the viewer or as demanding that the viewer do something, address the represented participant for example. In this sense, the viewer is placed in the position of object looked at by the represented participant. A cold stare, realised by a neutral facial expression, might be intended to make the viewer feel admiration for or inferior to the represented participant, while a seductive gaze might ask the viewer to want what is shown in the image (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 116–117). Images where the element of relation is missing are considered offer images by Kress and van Leeuwen (2021: 118), as they address the viewer

indirectly, if at all, and offer the represented participant to the viewer as an item of information or an object of contemplation, placing the viewer in the role of subject and the represented participant in the role of object. Offer and demand images can be used by image producers to make viewers relate to some people and remain detached from others (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 119).

Lastly, Kress and van Leeuwen's theory proposes the compositional function, dealing with how the whole of the image is set up, that is, the placement of elements in the image and how these are arranged in order to relate to each other and to the viewer (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 179). For relating the representational and interactive meaning of an image, composition employs systems of information value, framing, and salience (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 181). Information value focuses on the placement of elements in the image and the meaning that is attached to these elements as a result; for example, an element placed on the left side of the image is read as known information, an element on the right as new information (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 186). Framing is realised by various elements that create dividing lines or actual frames in the image (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 181). For example, the thicker the dividing line, the stronger the disconnection, while a lack of framing highlights the unity of depicted elements (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 205). Lastly, salience has to do with guiding the viewer's attention to certain aspects of an image, for example, by way of size of the elements, lighting, placement in the foreground (to capture attention) or in the background (to make it less noticeable) (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 182).

The text analysis aims to find connections with related images to determine if the two modes of representation are aligned with each other or not. In carrying out the text analysis, these potential connections are addressed. In more specific terms, first the number of named and unnamed male and female characters in selected texts are counted for a

quantitative overview, followed by a more in-depth analysis of the types of identification, for example, whether the person is identified with a full name, first/last name, pronoun, or other identifier, such as person or girl. Additionally, the manner of introduction is observed, based on Richards (2002), to determine whether depicted people and/or characters are introduced as people in their own right or in reference to somebody else.

In applying the descriptive framework proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) to the visual material in the *I Love English 7* textbook, this thesis seeks to identify major categories of representation that might point to the communication of historically established gender stereotypes to users of this textbook. Additionally, applying text analysis to selected texts aims to determine whether interaction between the two can be identified and if so, then whether this is correlating or contradicting.

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Before analysis, the illustrations to be analysed were divided into two categories – drawings and photographs. It should be noted that, as the analysis that follows is qualitative in nature, there is always room for alternative interpretations, despite attempts to follow the method described above as objectively as possible. The analysis included 76 drawings and 65 photographs with a human or human-like character. The images were divided into separate groups based on the gender distribution of the group depicted in the image. In the tables that follow, the respective gender distribution in an image is marked by a combination of *M* for male characters and *F* for female characters, depending on the number of female or male characters in the image. For example, *MF* stands for images that depict one male and one female character.

Gender Distribution	Number of Drawings
M	29
F	10
MM	8
FF	7
MF	14
MMF	4
FFM	1
MMM	1
FFMM	1
MMMMMMFFN	1

Table 1. Gender distribution in drawings.

Gender Distribution	Number of Photographs
M	22
F	21
MF	3
MM	1
FF	1
Group photos	17

Table 2. Gender distribution in photographs.

Cover Image Analysis

This section describes the analysis of the cover image of the *I Love English 7* textbook based on Kress and van Leeuwen's theory of visual design. It is the first image that the user of the textbook sees and thus sees most frequently. It can therefore be said to frame the contents of the rest of the textbook. The image analysis begins with the identification of Participants, defined by Kress and van Leeuwen as "people, places and things, including abstract 'things'" represented in images (2021: 45). For the purpose of this thesis, Participants are considered human or human-like (i.e. robot characters in unit 6) characters. The cover image includes three Participants, two male (carriage rider and the playwright Shakespeare) and one female (carriage passenger). The text on the cover image consists of the title and authors of the textbook and was therefore not deemed significant from the perspective of gender.

First, the representational function of the Participants is analysed, that is, how they are depicted in relation to other Participants in the image (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). In this case, Participants are engaged in three separate narrative processes: a non-transactional action (the male carriage rider in the role of Actor is steering the carriage but no Goal, i.e.

the horse as implied by the reins, is shown on the front cover), a unidirectional transactional action (the male playwright in the role of Actor is holding a scroll and perhaps reading from it), and a unidirectional transactional reaction (the female passenger in the role of Reactor is looking out of the window at the two men). This might tell the viewer that the cover image exhibits the stereotype of male action and female inaction, as the male characters are depicted performing some sort of an activity while the female character is shown to be reacting to it. However, it should also be noted that the image is historical and thus it can also be read as exhibiting era-appropriate gender relations. Moreover, the gender roles depicted in the image could function as a good starting point for the language teacher to instruct their students to look at the image critically and to engage them in a discussion about what this might mean.

Next, the interactive function of the image is looked at, that is, how the Represented Participants relate to the viewer, i.e. the Interactive Participant (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). A relationship between Represented Participants and Interactive Participants is established by means of contact realised by gaze, gesture, size of frame, etc. (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). None of the Participants in the cover image are looking directly at the viewer, making this an offer image, offering the depicted Participants to the viewer for contemplation, to be looked at impersonally “as though they were specimens in a display case” (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 118). Furthermore, the bodies of the Represented Participants, most remarkably that of the playwright Shakespeare, are turned towards the viewer at varying angles. Unlike the other two Participants, the playwright’s entire body is fully shown to the viewer, as if inviting scrutiny. The playwright is also depicted from a low angle (indicated by the angle of the scroll, the bottom of which the viewer can see) and higher up in the image than the other Participants, making him appear higher than both the viewer and the other Represented Participants and, therefore, superior to them. It could thus be said

that the impersonality of the interaction is intentional, perhaps due to the historical and cultural significance of Shakespeare.

Lastly, the composition of the entire image is considered. The image, as a whole, is most prominently divided vertically into a left and right side by the body of the playwright. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2021: 186–187), the left side often includes already given information that is assumed to be known by the viewer. It is a part of the culture that the image belongs in, whereas the right side holds information that is considered new and therefore contestable, something that has not yet been accepted as part of the culture. In the cover image, it could be said that the male Participants are known and accepted information, while the female passenger is new and contestable, as if asking if she belongs to the same world as the two male Participants, which might reflect the era that this image is depicting. The left-right placement can also be combined with other types, such as top (signifying the ideal) and bottom (signifying the real) placement, as is the case here (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). The cover image is divided horizontally into a foreground (more colour-saturated elements) and a background (less colour-saturated elements), with the male Participants occupying both spaces, meaning that the head of the carriage rider and most of the body of the playwright are in the “ideal” zone (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). This, together with the left-right placement, might tell the viewer that what they should strive for, that is, what is deemed ideal, is the knowledge and information present in the minds of the two male Participants, while that of the female Participant is something that is real, that is, something that anyone in that culture has, yet new and thus, not yet accepted, as indicated further by the way that she is framed. The somewhat contradictory meaning of real and, at the same time, new might also be read as attempting to place the students using the textbook in a similar position as the female character, as people who are just beginning to learn what the

textbook holds. In that sense, the real would symbolise the students while the new the knowledge to be learned.

Framing is used extensively in the cover image and in the rest of the textbook. All Represented Participants in the cover image are outlined, as are all the other drawn characters in the textbook, so this alone does not say much about connection or disconnection. However, it is noteworthy that the female passenger is additionally framed by the carriage windows. As opposed to the two male characters, who are outside and overlap each other, thereby forming a connected unit, she is inside, her head and shoulders shown to the viewer through the windows of the carriage with most of her body hidden from view. Based on Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), this implies a strong separation from the outside (one could say male-dominated) world which the two other Represented Participants occupy. It is also noteworthy that one of her hands crosses the boundary of the window, overlapping it visually, as if reaching outwards. This action of reaching outwards, possibly an intentional choice, is placed on the right side of the image. As indicated in the previous paragraph, it is therefore something that can be considered not yet known or accepted in the culture and thus up for debate, perhaps asking if the female Participant should be present in the world outside of the carriage or showing that she can. This aspect could also be used in the classroom to start a discussion about gender roles in the past and today.

The cover image, framing the textbook, can be said to set expectations for the whole textbook. As shown by the above analysis, it can be said to implicitly assign the active male characters to the public sphere while the mostly inactive female character remains inside, in the private sphere (Warner in Stimpson and Herdt 2014), also implying a lack of inclusion of women in the public sphere, which might be indicative of the portrayed era. When the female passenger tries to reach out, as indicated by the hand reaching out, and be a part of the outside world, her action is questioned by her placement in the right side of the image.

Other Findings

This section includes an overview of the results of the analysis of other drawings and photographs in the *I Love English 7* textbook. In total, the textbook includes 75 drawings, excluding the cover image, 38 of which have a single Participant and 37 of which have multiple Participants, and 65 photographs, most (43) of which have a single Participant.

Narrative Processes

Narrative Process	Male	Female	Male/Male	Female/Female	Male/Female	Male/Male/Female	Female/Female/Male	Male/Male/Male
Unidirectional transactional action	16	7	2 + 1 embedd ed in tr. unid. r.	2 + 3 embe dded in tr. unid. r.	10 + 6 embedd ed in tr. unid. r.	2 + 2 embe dded in tr. unid. r.	-	1
Bidirectional transactional action	1	-	1 (+1)	-	1	-	-	-
Non-transactional action	8	1	2	1 embe dded in tr. unid. r.	1 embedd ed in tr. unid. r.	(1, depen ding on interp retatio n)	-	-

Narrative Process	Male	Female	Male/Male	Female/Female	Male/Female	Male/Male/Female	Female/Female/Male	Male/Male/Male
Unidirectional transactional reaction	1	2	7	6 + 1 embedded in tr. unid. r.	8	2 (+ 1, depending on interpretation)	3	2
Bidirectional transactional reaction	1	-	1 (-1)	0	-	-	-	-
Non-transactional reaction	3	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	30	15	14	13	26	10 + 3		

Table 3. Narrative processes in drawings.

Narrative Process	Male	Female
Unidirectional transactional action	5	7
Bidirectional transactional action	-	-
Non-transactional action	-	-
Unidirectional transactional reaction	1	2
Bidirectional transactional reaction	-	-
Non-transactional reaction	16	12
Total	22	19

Table 4. Narrative processes in single-participant photographs.

Male (Re)action vs Female (Re)action

As can be seen in Table 3 above, the majority (16) of narrative processes observed in drawings with a single male Participant can be described as a unidirectional transactional action process after Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), where two Participants are engaged in some sort of a transaction, followed by eight non-transactional action processes, where the element of transaction is missing. In the case of both, the male Participant functions as the Actor, with a total of 23 male Actors, including one male Interactor in a bidirectional transactional action. This means that in 77% of drawings with a single male Participant, the male Participant functions as the Actor. In contrast, seven unidirectional transactional action processes and one non-transactional action process, in which the female Participant functions as the Actor, were identified in drawings with a single female Participant. This means that in drawings with a single female Participant, the female Participant functions as the Actor on just eight occasions, which, proportionally, is 53% of such drawings. It should be noted that this does not include drawings with a single male Participant, as the two types were analysed separately. With regard to reactional processes, where a Participant can be interpreted as reacting to something or someone, five male Reacters and seven female Reacters were identified. Due to the different number of drawings with either a single female or a single male character, it means that 17% of male Participants in single-Participant drawings function as Reacter, whereas the same can be said for 47% of female Participants. This shows that in drawings with a single male or a single female Participant, more male characters are shown performing some sort of an activity, whereas more female characters are shown reacting to something.

The analysis of photographs with a single male or single female Participant gave contrasting results. The number of photographs with a single male Participant that can be described as depicting a unidirectional transactional action process is five, that is, 23% of

such photographs, excluding photographs with a single female Participant. The same can be said for seven photographs with a single female Participant, that is, for 33% of such photographs, excluding photographs with a single male Participant. Thus, there are more female Actors in single-Participant photographs than male ones. In reactional processes depicted in single-Participant photographs, more male Reacters than female ones were identified. In total, 17 male Reacters in photographs with a single male Participant, that is, 77% of all such photographs, and 14 female Reacters, that is, 67% of photographs with a single female Participant, were observed. Thus, more women were depicted doing something in such photographs, while a larger number of men were portrayed reacting to something. These differences with regard to the mode of representation (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021) could be explained by the fact that the drawings were created from scratch and therefore filtered through the illustrators' beliefs (Sunderland 2015), whereas it can be assumed that the photographs were chosen from a pool of already existing photographs. It is possible that the photographs were initially taken to illustrate equality between the men and women depicted in them, as gender distribution in photographs seems to be more balanced in general.

Most (14) multi-participant drawings were images with one female and one male Participant. Of these, the majority (10) of main narrative processes were identified as unidirectional transactional actions, with additional six processes embedded in other unidirectional transactional reaction processes, of which there were eight. In total, six male and four female Actors, as well as four male and four female Reacters, were identified in the main narrative processes. This means that in 33% of cases, the Actor was male and in 22% of cases, the Actor was female. In reaction processes, the percentage of male and female Reacters was, respectively, 50. As the number of images with two female and one male Participant (one), two male and one female Participant (three), or three male Participants

(one) is low, it was not deemed necessary to group the three separately. Therefore, the total number of narrative processes in these types of drawings is 13. Among these, four male Actors and one female Actor, as well as six male and four female Reacters were identified. This means that in 67% of action processes shown in three-Participant drawings, the Actor was male and in 17%, the Actor was female. The percentage of female and male Reacters was 31% and 46%, respectively.

Contradictory results were also found in drawings with either two male or two female Participants. In total, six male Actors and six female Actors were identified, that is, 43% of all action processes in male/male drawings and 46% of all action processes in female/female drawings. One female/female drawing (unit 14 exercise 1) exhibited both a unidirectional transactional reaction, as well as the equivalent action process, by the same Participant, who is identified as a *copycat* by text below the drawing. In this case, the female Participant was both a Reacter and an Actor. Otherwise, seven unidirectional transactional reactions were identified as the majority for both male/male and female/female drawings. As multi-Participant drawings included also action and reaction processes that were embedded in the main action and reaction processes, the number of narrative processes in such drawings is larger than the total number of drawings. This means that in 50% of all male/male drawings and 54% of all female/female drawings, one of the Participants (male or female, respectively) had the role of Reacter. In addition to unidirectional processes, one bidirectional reaction process was observed in the case of one male/male drawing. This makes the total percentage of male Reacters in male/male drawings 57, that is, slightly more than the percentage for female Reacters, which stands in contrast to the findings for single-Participant drawings, where female Reacters and male Actors dominated, but aligns with the findings for three-Participant drawings and single-Participant photographs. In two- or three-Participant drawings, therefore, more balance with regard to activity and inactivity can be

observed, as a larger or equal number of men are depicted reacting to something, a role reserved for women in single-Participant drawings. Male characters are in the more active position in male/female drawings and three-Participants drawings.

In addition to the above, there are three drawings (one male/male and two female/female drawings), for which an alternative interpretation exists. Although a choice was made regarding their final interpretation for the purpose of this thesis, it is considered important to explain the reasoning. The male/male image (unit 19 exercise 4 drawing 1) can be interpreted in three ways. First, if analysed as a unidirectional transactional reaction, the student would be the Reacter to what the teacher is saying. The process of the teacher saying something, as implied by the position of his body and the direction of his gaze, would be identified as the Phenomenon. As a process, the Phenomenon would function as an embedded unidirectional transactional action structure in which the teacher is the Actor and the student the Goal. Second, it could be identified as a transactional bidirectional action process, in which both the student and teacher function as Interactors, talking reciprocally. These interpretations were initially discounted due to the lack of a facial vector that would indicate an open mouth, as is common for many other drawings in the textbook when depicting the act of talking. For these reasons, this drawing was identified as a bidirectional transactional reaction because of the visible eyeline of both Participants, a necessary component in a reaction process based on Kress and van Leeuwen (2021: 62). However, the related story about the student asking his male teacher about the latter's working life showed that in analysing the image together with the text, the image depicted a bidirectional transactional action, in which the Participants function as Interactors. This increases the number of men being active and decreases the number of men being reactive, aligning with the trend of male action over male reaction. As the number of male teachers in Estonian general education schools continues to be far below the number of female teachers (2,499

male and 12,443 female teachers in 2022 according to Statistics Estonia; see Appendix 2 for more details), the story, aptly titled *Teacher Man*, could promote the profession among boys, especially because it focuses on the male teacher's career choices by placing construction work and teaching on opposing ends, with the latter depicted as more desirable.

Likewise, two female/female drawings mentioned above (unit 10 exercise 1 and unit 12 exercise 2 drawing 3) have similar possibilities of interpretation. In both cases, they could be interpreted as including two separate unidirectional transactional processes: an action and a reaction. For the drawing of unit 10 exercise 1, this was deemed a possibility because the two Participants form separate visual units, and for drawing 3 of unit 12 exercise 2 because of the somewhat central placement of the object of the women's gazes – a skirt. In both cases, one of the women (incidentally, both are positioned on the left side of the drawing) would act as a Reacter and the object of scrutiny (i.e. kittens and skirt, respectively) as the Phenomenon. The other female Participant would be engaged in a separate unidirectional transactional action process, whereby she could be identified as the Actor and the kittens and skirt, respectively, as the Goal. However, as both drawings form a semiotic whole, it was decided to interpret them as unidirectional transactional reactions of the female Participants on the left – the Reacters – to the embedded action processes of petting the kittens and returning the skirt (expressed visually as touching the skirt placed on the counter), respectively, by the other female Participant functioning as the Actor. Such an interpretation was supported by the dialogue that accompanied the image of unit 12 exercise 2. In the case of unit 10 exercise 1, the related text made no difference.

Based on the above, a difference in the percentage of male and female Actors (77% and 53%, respectively) and male and female Reacters (17% and 47%, respectively) was observed in single-Participant drawings. There were also more male Actors than female ones in male/female and three-Participant drawings, which exhibited a slightly larger percentage

of male Reacters. Despite this, more female Participants were attributed the role of Reacter than that of Actor in such drawings, and vice versa for male Participants. This aligns with the interpretation of the cover image, as in both male action is more visible than female action, and female reaction is shown more than male reaction. This can be said to convey the stereotype that men are active and women passive. Contrasting results were observed in drawings with either two male or two female Participants as well as in single-Participant photographs, showing more male reaction and less female reaction, as well as more female action and less male action, with some variety depending on interpretation.

Female Participants via Male Participants

This section describes a pattern where female Participants were interpreted as shown to the viewer through the male Participant. In more concrete terms, this means that despite the female Participant functioning as the Actor, she was presented either together with a male Actor and/or as shown to the viewer through the male Reacter, for example, in an embedded action process. As the single-Participant images do not show any relationships between different human or human-like Participants, these are not included in this category.

In drawings with a male and a female character, in three of the six cases where the Actor was a male Participant, the Goal, that is, the Participant that the action is directed towards or done to, was a female Participant. The examples include a male thief stealing from a woman (unit 3 exercise 1), a pizza delivery man handing pizza to a woman (unit 10 exercise 2), and a man handing a tissue to a crying woman (unit 13 exercise 6). One instance was identified where the roles of Actor and Goal were reversed (unit 10 exercise 2). In that case, the female character, functioning as Actor, is piercing a male character's ear. The latter functions as Goal because an action is being performed to him. This drawing is a good

example of variety in the representation of gender roles, as earrings are traditionally considered feminine in Western culture, including Estonia. In the remaining three drawings that had a female Actor, the image depicted two separate action processes that included both a female and a male Actor. In that sense, the role of Actor was shared by the two (two drawings in unit 15 exercise 1 and one in unit 18 exercise 1). In those cases, there was a non-human Goal.

The drawing of unit 13 exercise 6 is specifically notable for its somewhat contradictory interpretations depending on whether the viewer is looking only at the image or also reading the text surrounding it. If one were to look at only the image, it would be easy to agree with the above interpretation of the woman crying, that is, being emotional, and the man comforting her by handing her a tissue, which would align with gender-stereotypical behaviour. Together with the text, however, it becomes evident why the woman is crying in the first place (she is an actor practising a role) and how the man is actually reacting to it (he is not happy about having to comfort her, although it is noteworthy that he feels an obligation to comfort her, which additionally places him in the role of protector, a traditionally male gender role). The image thus slightly contrasts the text with regard to the power balance between the two characters. Looking at the image alone, the man is both visually and action-wise at a more advantaged position which is more in line with traditional gender roles. However, looking at it multimodally, it appears that the female character holds the power in this interaction, as she has more information than the male character about her reason for crying. This is further shown with how the story ends: the woman wipes her tears and gets on the bus, unbothered and feeling successful at having fooled the man, and the man remains standing at the bus stop, confused about what just happened.

In all reaction processes shown in male/female drawings where the Reacter was a male Participant, he was reacting to a female Actor (in an embedded action process). In

addition to the above, this shows that even when a female Participant is in the role of Actor, that is, an active Participant, she is looked at by a male Participant, allowing the viewer to see her actions through the eyes of a man. For example, a female shop assistant is shown to the viewer from the perspective of a male client as he is guided into the dressing room (unit 12 exercise 2), a crying woman at a bus stop is looked at and given a tissue by a man (unit 13 exercise 6), as described also in the previous paragraph, an art student is shown to the viewer from the perspective of a male art professor (unit 18 exercise 1). In the latter case, it could also be argued that the male Reacter in the form of an art instructor is necessary for depicting an art class, as indicated by text under the image.

The reverse was also observed; that is, a female Reacter and male Phenomenon (unit 6 ex 2, unit 10 ex 2, unit 15 ex 1), however the context in which the latter appears is significant. Even though the male Phenomenon is not shown as overly emotional in these examples, he is depicted in the gender-stereotypical role of a handyman, for example. Other gender stereotype conforming roles for male characters across all drawings include those related to crime, construction, police work, state leadership, and writing literature, to name a few. For female characters, gender stereotype conforming roles include those related to shopping, hairdressing, and housework. Men and women are also portrayed in non-gender-conforming roles, such as women in mathematics or related fields, men doing arts and crafts. One of the male characters referred to above (unit 12 exercise 2) is depicted in the context of shopping, accompanied by a dialogue between him and a shop assistant. The exercise includes two other images, both featuring two women and a dialogue between the two. Despite portraying the male character in a stereotypically feminine context, he is given far fewer and much shorter lines in the dialogue than his female counterparts, consisting mostly of thanking the shop assistant. This might be seen as reinforcing the image of the helpless man in a clothing store, which, based on this exercise, as well as exercise 1 of the same unit

that instructs students to compare two images featuring joyful female shoppers, is still considered a female domain. Both male and female characters are also shown in the school setting, which is a common context in language textbooks.

For two drawings with two male Participants and one female, the Goal was identified as two other Participants (male and female) (unit 6 exercise 1) and as a single female Participant (unit 10 exercise 1). Although in both drawings the characters functioning as Goal are placed in the background, the latter instance is made more notable by the text accompanying the image. The drawing is structured in a way that the two male Participants are placed in the foreground, with their backs mostly towards the viewer. One of these men is shown pointing at a female Participant who is positioned in the top-middle section of the drawing. As she is in the background, she is depicted as much smaller and much less detailed than the two men. In addition, the text underneath the drawing reads, “She’s such a beauty!” This might invite the viewer to identify with the male Participants, as based on the composition of the drawing, the viewer is placed almost in the middle of the two men, standing next to them, with one of them asking the viewer to look at the woman far away, with whom the viewer cannot relate to or identify with, as she is seen as an *object* of scrutiny (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, Mulvey 1975). In comparison, the image in unit 6 exercise 1, the aim of which seems to be to introduce students to different types of strengths and talents, is accompanied by text that reads “interpersonal”. In the second part of the exercise, students are asked to match this term to various characteristics that are grouped together, including “talking and listening to others”, “helping others”, “co-operating”, “fitting in easily”, to name a few. Considering the two together creates a picture of an all-around helpful and active person that arguably carries a more positive connotation than that of an indistinct person being looked at from afar.

Regarding the only female/female/male drawing (unit 9 exercise 5), the narrative process shows a tendency similar to that of male/female drawings. That is, the female Participants, regardless of whether they are analysed as Actors petting the dog or as Reacters who are simply watching it, are nonetheless portrayed through the eyes of the male Participant, who is looking at the whole event with an unhappy expression on his face, with his arms and legs crossed and his face turned away from the scene. Together with the surrounding context given in the text (that is, the male Participant is jealous of his dog who is liked better by girls), this might implicitly ask the viewer to also see the two women the way that he sees them, from a slightly negative perspective. In male/male and female/female drawings, a similar tendency was observed. Despite the fact that no male Participants were present in female/female drawings, each time one of the female Participants was a Reacter, she was reacting to a female Phenomenon. In male/male drawings, in contrast, the number of other male Participant Phenomena and non-human Phenomena was equally four. Therefore, it can be concluded that even in cases with two female Participants, one of them is still shown to the viewer through somebody else's eyes, which places her in a distant and therefore somewhat passive position, othering her. Despite the fact that male Phenomena were also observed, it is significant that no female Reacters were reacting to a non-human Phenomenon, as was the case for male/male drawings.

Male Known vs Female New

In this section, the positioning of Participants in the drawings of *I Love English 7* is described and an overview of major patterns given. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), there are three major possibilities for the placement of visual elements: left-right, top-bottom, and centre-periphery, as well as their various combinations. Left-right placement endows the

elements on the left side of the visual unit with the information value of known and accepted information, whereas elements on the right are considered new (or at least presented as such) and therefore not yet accepted information (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 186). If elements are positioned vertically rather than horizontally, then the elements in the top part of the image are presented as the ideal, that is, the idealised version of something, and those in the bottom as the real, that is, as more specific or more attainable, depending on context (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 191). If something is placed in the centre with elements surrounding it, then the centre functions as the core of the surrounding elements, giving meaning thereto (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 201).

In single-Participant drawings, the male Participant was placed on the left, that is, the known information side, in the majority of cases (with 9.5 male Participants on the left and 3.5 on the right, the .5 marking a drawing where the body occupied both information areas). For single-female drawings, the numbers were four for both information zones. The left-right placement was used, in some combination or other, in 48% of single-male images, that is, in 14 drawings, whereas for single-female drawings, the numbers were 40% and four, respectively. This is not a drastic difference but it is noteworthy that even in single-Participant drawings, where dividing the image into two or more information areas might be more complicated due to the small number of Participants, a trend of left-male, that is, known-male, placement is prevalent.

In the case of multi-Participant drawings, more varied conclusions can be made. All drawings with a male and a female Participant (14) incorporated the left-right placement, with two images also combining it with the top-bottom placement. Five such drawings showed the female character in the left/known area of the image and the male character in the right/new area. In comparison, a total of nine images showed the male character on the left and female character on the right, that is, 36% for female left/known and 64% for male

left/known. This shows that in the majority of images with a male and a female Participant, the male Participant was presented as accepted information, whereas the female Participant as something new. It is also meaningful that in the images where the female character was in the left/known area she was often shown at a disadvantage in comparison with her male counterpart, that is (1) being pickpocketed (unit 3 exercise 1), (2) a fully separate unit from the desk that the male character formed a single visual unit with (unit 6 exercise 2), (3) crying (unit 13 exercise 6), (4) an almost separate unit from the toy box that the male character formed a strong single visual unit with (unit 15 exercise 1), (5) ballroom dancing, where the man is traditionally the lead, (unit 18 exercise 1). Alternatively, it is possible to interpret the character referred to in unit 3 exercise 1 as a gender-neutral character if one were to discount the proportions of the body, which stylistically align more with the female characters depicted in the textbook. Further, the text under the image states “Joseph Swan took money from people’s pockets at the market place”, indicating no gender other than Joseph Swan’s, the thief’s.

Out of all seven female/female drawings, in all cases but one, the female Participant placed on the left, that is, the known information side, was portrayed as reacting to something, for example, to being bitten (unit 4 exercise 4), to watching the other female Participant pet a couple of kittens (unit 10 exercise 1), or to a pair of pants being shown by the other female Participant (unit 12 exercise 2), to name a few. In short, in all mentioned cases, the female Participants were reacting to the other female Participant doing something. Such a placement of female reaction on the left and female action on the right might be read as reflecting the notion that what is known and accepted in the culture of the textbook, that is, Western and Estonian culture, is women reacting to something or having something done to them, thereby being in a passive role, and what is new and therefore contestable information is women performing some sort of an action, that is, being active. This idea

could also be seen in male/female drawings, as described in the previous paragraph. Male/male drawings did not exhibit major differences. For example, an equal number of male Participants were shown as doing and reacting on both the left and the right side of the visual unit. With regard to reacting to something, four male Participants were placed on the left and five on the right, suggesting that male reaction is something that is yet unknown or barely known.

Drawings with either two male Participants and one female or vice versa largely followed the trend of male known vs female unknown information. For example, in all male/male/female drawings that included a left-right placement (three out of four), the left side of the visual unit was reserved for either one or two male Participants, for example, the cover image, unit 6 exercise 1 (a male Participant is interacting with a female and male Participant in the background), unit 11 exercise 6 (two male Participants who could be interpreted as being critics or journalists are watching a female chef prepare food). In the one image where the reverse was true (unit 9 exercise 5), which incidentally was the only drawing with two female Participants and one male, the two women on the left side of the image were portrayed as seen via the male Participant's glance, as detailed above.

Contact with Viewer

This section describes the results for the analysis of how Participants in the drawings and photographs of *I Love English 7* are intended to, based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021) theory, relate to the viewer. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), contact is created by gaze and gesture, as described in the methodology chapter above. Since minimum contact was observed for drawings, this section will focus on single-Participant photographs.

In nine out of 21 single-female photographs (43%), direct contact was established with the viewer, realised mostly by a direct gaze. The same was true for eight out of 22 single-male photographs (36%). These can be identified as demand images, in which Represented Participants visually address and acknowledge the viewer (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 116). No contact was established in 10 (48%) single-female or in 13 (54%) single-male photographs, in what can be identified as offer images. Therefore, based on gaze, female Participants may be said to be more in contact with the viewer than male ones, demanding something of them. This is further shown in the angle of the Participants, with a majority (55%) of female Participants in single-Participant photographs placed in a frontal angle, indicating involvement, whereas the same can be said for 37.5% of male Participants in single-Participant photographs. The oblique angle, indicating detachment from Represented Participants, based on Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), was observed in 44% of single-female photographs and in 62.5% of single-male photographs, indicating that male Participants are and should be looked at in a more impersonal way than female ones. It is therefore interesting to look at some such demand photographs more closely.

Two photographs with a single female (unit 1 exercise 2) and a single male (unit 18 exercise 2) Participant stand out in particular. These photographs were chosen because of their rather interesting contact with the viewer. In the first, the female Participant is looking directly at the viewer, with her hands crossed by her neck. From the perspective of composition, she is placed in the centre of the visual unit, surrounded by various sentences, such as “I’m sorry”, “I was wrong”, “Please forgive me”. She is also shown from a frontal yet slight high angle, which makes her look smaller than and inferior to the viewer. It can therefore be said that she is addressing the viewer directly by asking for their forgiveness and doing so in a manner that places her in an inferior position. In contrast, the other photograph with a single male Participant, in which he is also looking straight at the viewer,

exhibits a different type of engagement with the viewer. In the photo, the man is shown holding up a camera, aimed directly at the viewer. He is shown at eye-level, which makes him equal to the viewer. Similarly to how female Actors in drawings were often shown to the viewer via a male Reactor, the man in this photograph is reacting to the viewer, by putting them in the role of Phenomenon, engaging them by implicitly asking to take their photo.

Text and Image

The role and meaning of texts was touched upon to a lesser extent in above paragraphs dedicated to the image analysis. The aim of text analysis was not to analyse all texts of the textbook from the gender perspective but, rather, to investigate the relation, if present, between the image and the text to see whether one mode of representation can be considered more gender-fair than the other (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021). In more specific terms, it means that the text analysis only included texts that could be interpreted as related to an image. An overview of whether the images and texts are in correlation or in contrast with regard to gender representation, as well as other observations that are deemed significant in the context of gender are given as follows.

For a general overview, the number of different male and female characters that were identified by name in analysed texts was counted first. In total, 45 different fictional male characters or real-life people were named, 27 of whom were referred to by their full name. In contrast, the same can be said for 23 fictional female characters or real-life people, of whom six were referred to by their full name. This imbalance is most likely related to the fact that fewer women were represented in images overall but might inadvertently point to the exclusion of women from the narratives handled in the textbook, as well as to the greater anonymity of women. A vast majority of images related to a text, included gendered names,

such as *Henry Worth, Betty, John*, and/or pronouns, such as *he, she, they* but also other gendered identifiers, such as *one boy, her sister, his brother, the girl*. There were a number of instances where the text included a pronoun or identifier that, would it not be for the image, could be read as gender-neutral. In unit 3 exercise 1, for example, *people* and *somebody* could only be interpreted as a woman and a man, respectively, due to the images directly related to the text. As the unit deals with the topic of crime, it became apparent that all the criminals depicted in the texts and images of the unit were male and all were identified by their full name, while the victims, one of whom was a woman, two were men, and one whose gender could not be determined based on the image, were referred to with a gender-neutral pronoun, such as *people, someone* (twice), and *middle-aged guy*, who was not pictured but was mentioned in the main text of the unit, thus guaranteeing their anonymity in the text.

It also became apparent that the imbalance in the “category of famous and historic people”, observed by Talvik (2014: 56) in the *Key English* series, could also be seen in this textbook of the *I Love English* series. For example, 16 historic men were portrayed in the analysed textbook, in comparison with two historic women (Jean Webster and Agatha Christie). This aligns with Järviste’s (2002) findings in her history textbook analysis. Lehiste (2013) unfortunately did not touch upon this aspect, so it cannot be said whether *I Love English 7* differs in this regard from other *I Love English* books or not. From this, it was deemed important to look at how different pictured and named characters and real-life people were introduced in text to determine if they were introduced as people in their own right or in reference to someone else. As the number of male persons in the textbook is larger in general, the quantitative differences in this regard are not remarkable. However, it is noteworthy that among famous and/or historic people, all three men were introduced as persons in their own right, while the one woman was introduced via her family ties. Three

historic men and one historic woman were not introduced, as they were identified only by a caption under the photograph. The following list illustrates this finding:

- Albert Einstein “was a German-born theoretical physicist. He developed the theory of relativity, which is considered to be one of the two pillars of modern physics alongside quantum mechanics” (Kurm and Soolepp 2018: 69).
- William Shakespeare “has been called “the chief of all the poets”. He is one of the greatest playwrights. He wrote or helped write 38 plays for the theatre. He wrote comedies, tragedies, and historical plays” (Kurm and Soolepp 2018: 79).
- William Henry Fox Talbot is introduced as “one of the world’s most influential inventors” (Kurm and Soolepp 2018: 115).
- Jean Webster “was born to a famous publishing family in America. Her great uncle was Mark Twain, and her father became rich as the publisher of the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*” (Kurm and Soolepp 2018: 75).

It is possible that although Jean Webster is an author in her own right, she was considered unknown for students and thus it was thought necessary to introduce her in relation to somebody who students might be more familiar with. However, such an introduction also contributes to and further cements women’s continued role as a bystander in (historical) narratives. More female characters are introduced in their own right among fictional female characters, for example, Rosie Chubb or Mrs Noye. In this regard, it could also be argued that male characters are introduced more via their profession or title, such as “John, the cook” (unit 3 exercise 4), “prince called Llewelyn” (unit 7 exercise 6), “Scott Robertson, the school’s young English instructor” (unit 14 exercise 3). There are a few occasions where fictional male characters are introduced in reference to somebody else, for example, “Frank, my partner” (unit 3 exercise 4). Based on this, it could be concluded that, in line with image analysis, a gender bias can be observed also in some aspects of the text of the textbook.

Moreover, it was also considered whether and how users of the textbook, especially students, were expected to engage with the image and text, as greater engagement would theoretically indicate a bigger impact. For example, engagement was considered high if students were explicitly instructed to interact with the image, by describing or comparing for example. Engagement was considered medium if the image and text seemed to accompany each other, for example, because of the common theme or the visual depiction of characters mentioned in the text, but if students were not asked to specifically interact with the image. Engagement was considered low if the image and text seemed to be completely separate and exhibited no connection. Such cases were in the minority. Most images could be categorised in the second group of medium engagement. However, as high engagement would indicate a bigger impact, these were analysed further.

All high-engagement exercises were the first ones of the unit, asking students to either match pictures with text (unit 1 and 9), compare two pictures (unit 4, 12, and 19), describe pictures (unit 8), or to simply look at the pictures, as they illustrated an activity referred to in the related text (unit 18). Most images and texts in these exercises can be considered either gender-neutral or including men and women mostly fairly. For example, no gendering was found in the exercises of unit 4, where only *you*, *the people*, and *they* were mentioned. The two images could, nonetheless, be analysed to a greater extent from a gender perspective, but because the photos are from two very different time periods, no strong conclusions could be made. Unit 8 and 9 also showed no gendering in the text, with images representing both men and women; unit 8 images included more women than men. Unit 18 exhibited no gendered language, however a slight bias could be identified in the images, as described in above sections about image analysis.

The first exercises of units 1, 12, and 19 stood out from the rest. In unit 1 ex 1, a female character and a gender-neutral character are pictured. The text includes three female

characters (“she has three children”, “my sister”, and “Betty – she’s dynamite”) and one male (“her youngest son”). The only male character here is introduced in reference to his mother and remains anonymous while a female character, of whom there are more in this exercise, is identified by name. This could initially be deemed as exhibiting a gender bias against male persons. However, it is noteworthy that the female characters in this exercise are a mother, somebody’s sister, and somebody that is characterised mostly for her hot-headedness, emphasising her emotional state. The text of unit 12 exercise 1 does not feature any gendered language. However, the accompanying images are gendered in the depiction of shopping as a solely female domain, as analysed in more detail above. In unit 19 exercise 1, the reverse can be observed. Although the images depict an equal number of female and male students, it includes a textbox with various prompts, asking students to describe what is happening in the image. In this textbox, only the female students are referred to with “The girl is ...”, “The second girl from the left is ...”, and “One of the girls in the middle ...”, with no equivalent prompts for the depicted male students. Based on this, it might be said that students are actively asked to look at the women in particular, despite the image including three men as well, objectifying them in a way that the men in the image are not.

CONCLUSION

A multitude of regulations have been implemented for the purpose of ensuring a fair society in most nations, including Estonia. Schools contribute to this effort by instituting curricula in accordance with the national curriculum. However, a hidden curriculum operates alongside the officially established curricula, conveying to students values and attitudes that are not in harmony with the goal of achieving a fair society, such as the equal treatment of all people regardless of gender, race, or sexuality. A hidden curriculum might be produced and maintained in a range of ways, for example, in the beliefs and attitudes that students encounter in their teachers, school climate, or in learning materials, acknowledged or not.

This thesis attempted to investigate whether and how a hidden curriculum in the English language textbook *I Love English 7* might indirectly convey gender in its images and related texts. To do so, Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's (2021) theory of visual design was applied to the images – drawings and photographs – and text analysis to selected texts. It was additionally investigated if and how the textbook might reflect gender-based ideologies implicitly and/or explicitly present in Estonian society.

It was found that quantitatively male characters dominated over female ones in drawings and photographs in general. A higher percentage of male Actors and female Reacters were identified in drawings with a single character and at least three characters. This aligned with the analysis of the cover image, as it can be said to frame the contents of the textbook. However, the reverse was observed for photographs with a single character as well as for drawings with two characters. Based on this, it can be concluded that a gender bias in reinforcing the notion of male activity and female passivity might be observed only in single- and three-Participant drawings of the textbook, and not in other types of images.

Qualitatively, several categories of representation based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021) theory of visual design were identified. The first can be characterised by a tendency

to show female Participants, even when functioning as Actor and thus depicted in an active role, through the eyes of the male Participant reacting to them. On several occasions, the female Participant in a multi-Participant drawing was depicted as having something done to them or being looked at by a male Participant, for example, being pickpocketed or being handed a tissue. The reverse was observed for one drawing where the female Participant was piercing a male Participant's ear. This category unwittingly highlighted more men in the passive role of simply observing something or someone, mostly a female Participant.

Another category focused on the positioning of Participants in images. It was found that in most drawings, the male character was placed in the left information area, endowed, in the terms provided by Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), with the information value of known and familiar in the target culture. It was additionally noted that when a female character was placed in the left information area, she was shown at some sort of a disadvantage in comparison with her male counterpart (for example, she was being pickpocketed, crying, or placed in the passive role of reacting to something). Few male Reacters were placed in the left information area.

Albeit in different terms, the positioning of characters depicted in images was also investigated by Moser and Hannover (2014) in the German context. According to them, agentive persons are typically placed on the left side of the image and are stereotypically men, whereas communal persons are usually placed on the right side and are stereotypically women. Although no bias was observed by them in this regard, their interpretation can be considered to be in line with the interpretation of this thesis, whereby male action was placed on the left/accepted and female action on the right/new information field.

In accordance with Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), contact with the viewer was established mostly in photographs included in the textbook. Contact was most frequently created by the gaze of the Participant, who was female in the majority of cases. However,

the difference was not significant. A greater difference could be observed in the angle of the Participant, with the frontal angle indicating more involvement and the oblique angle less. Similarly to gaze, female Participants could be considered more involved with the viewer but male Participants were not far behind.

From the perspective of multimodality in particular, the majority of images and the related texts exhibited both correlations and contradictions with respect to gender representation. Quantitatively, the ratio of male characters and real-life men who were identified by name to female characters and real-life women who were identified by name aligned with the ratio of men and women depicted in images, meaning that men largely outnumbered women in both aspects. Similarly to the findings of Talvik (2014), an imbalance was especially prevalent among historic people, both in numbers and in the way that they were introduced in the textbook. It was found that historic men were introduced as people in their own right, known for their accomplishments, whereas the only historic woman was primarily presented as the niece of Mark Twain, not as somebody with accomplishments of her own. Although these were mentioned, they seemed secondary. This aspect was found to be more balanced among fictional characters and potentially known contemporary people where women and girls were introduced for their own merit.

Like most studies, this too had some limitations. Because the analysis focused mainly on images in order to remain within the scope of a Master's thesis, as well as on a single textbook of the *I Love English* series, texts of the textbook and their interrelations with images received less coverage. However, the present analysis points to the need for a more in-depth analysis of all components of the textbook, as well as of the entire series, which could prove useful in the field of education in general and textbook production and publication more specifically. Likewise, teacher mediation of the contents of the textbook warrants further investigation, possibly including interviews with teachers using the

textbook and lesson observations. Such an investigation was not in the scope of this thesis due to time and length restrictions but would allow for more thorough conclusions to be made on the topic.

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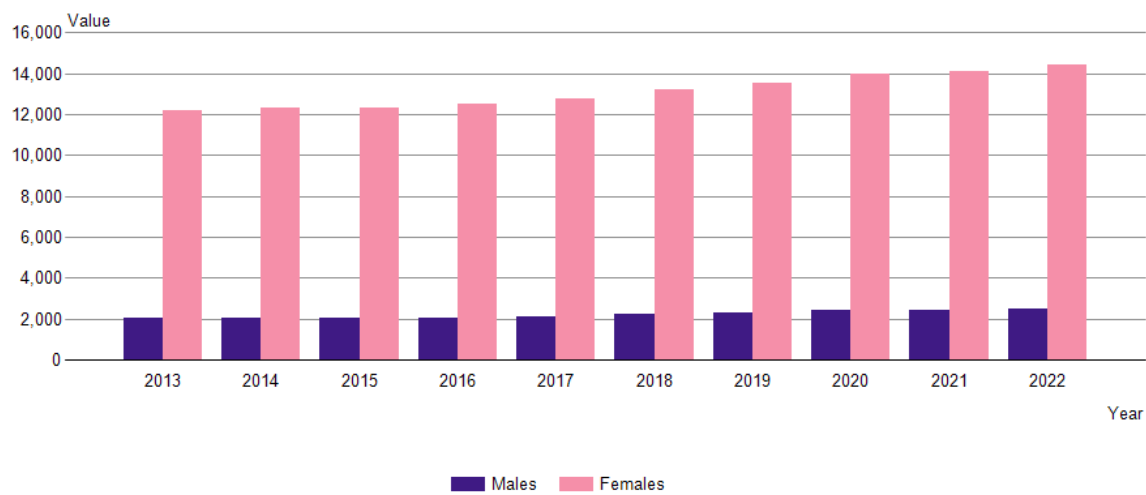
APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF ANALYSED ILLUSTRATIONS

Unit	Exercise	Drawing / Photograph
Cover image	N/A	Drawing
1 – New beginning	1	Drawing (2)
	2	Photograph
	11	Photograph
2 – Up in the air	3	Photograph
	12	Photograph
3 – Crime	1	Drawing (6)
	3	Photograph
	4	Drawing (2)
	9	Photograph
4 – Life in the past	1	Photograph (2)
	4	Drawing (2)
	8	Drawing
	12	Photograph (3)
5 – Show what you know (units 1–4)	2	Drawing (5)
	3	Drawing
6 – Robots	1	Drawing (8)
	2	Drawing
	3	Photograph
	4	Photograph (2)
	6	Photograph
7 – Wales	1	Photograph

Unit	Exercise	Drawing / Photograph
	6	Drawing (2)
8 – Street protest	1	Photograph (2)
	3	Photograph
9 – Faces of friendship	1	Photograph (9)
	3	Drawing (2)
	4	Photograph
	5	Drawing (2)
	8	Photograph
10 – Show what you know (units 6–9)	1	Drawing (4)
	2	Drawing (6)
11 – Great inventions	1	Photograph
	5	Photograph
	6	Drawing
12 – Daddy-Long-Legs	1	Photograph (2)
	2	Drawing (3)
	4	Photograph
	11	Photograph
13 – Theatre	1	Photograph
	2	Photograph
	6	Drawing
14 – Building bridges	1	Drawing (7)
	3	Drawing
	10	Photograph (5)

Unit	Exercise	Drawing / Photograph
15 – Show what you know (units 11–14)	1	Drawing (10)
	6	Photograph (3)
16 – Estonia	N/A	N/A
17 – Wildlife	N/A	N/A
18 – In focus	1	Drawing (10)
	2	Photograph (3)
	3	Photograph
	4	Photograph (3)
	7	Photograph
	8	Photograph (3)
19 – Career	1	Photograph (2)
	4	Drawing (2)
	9	Photograph
	10	Photograph (5)
20 – Show what you know (units 16–19)	1	Drawing (3)
	4	Photograph

APPENDIX 2 – TEACHERS OF GENERAL EDUCATION IN ESTONIA



Source: Statistics Estonia

RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Merlyn Eessaar

**A Multimodal Analysis of Gender Representation in the *I Love English 7* Textbook /
Soolisuse multimodaalne analüüs inglise keele õpikus „I Love English 7“**

(magistritöö)

2023

Lehekülgede arv: 65

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Selle magistritöö eesmärk on analüüsida kas ja kuidas esindatakse kaudselt soolisust inglise keele õpiku „I Love English 7“ illustatsioonides. Pildianalüüs põhineb Kress ja van Leeuweni visuaalse grammatika teorial, mille kohaselt esinevad sarnaselt tekstidele ka piltides teatud tähenduslikud mustrid. Lisaks vaadatakse, kuidas seostuvad illustatsioonid nendega seotud tekstidega, et leida, kas soolisuse kujutamine on erinevates esitusviisides kooskõlas või mitte. See õpik valiti, sest selle on kirjutanud eesti autorid ja illustreerinud eesti illustraatorid. Lisaks on sama seeria õpikuid varasemalt soospektist uuritud.

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Märksõnad: multimodaalne analüüs, õpikuanalüüs, soouuringud, inglise keele õpetamine

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