

Gender Representation in Persian Folktales for Children

Nafiseh Hosseinpour

Department of English Language, Falavarjan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

Akbar Afghari

Department of English Language, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

Abstract—the present study was an attempt to add to the understanding of gendered content in Persian folklore stories for children. A deductive content analysis was performed to identify and record gender representation in titles, central roles, and the total number of characters. Traditionally feminine and masculine stereotypes were also investigated based on a coding scheme. The sample included 50 popular Persian folktales for children. The results indicated significant under-representation of females regarding the overall number of characters in the sample. Additionally, there were disparities in the portrayal of the two groups: females were significantly portrayed as being sex object and attractive due to their physical appearance. On the other hand, males were illustrated as being more independent, rational, strong, sexually aggressive, and attractive due to their achievements.

Index Terms—gender representation, gender bias, stereotypes, folktales, female character, male character

I. INTRODUCTION

In the process of socialization, individuals learn to identify themselves as members of various social groups such as gender, social class, race, and ethnicity. One's basic social status is related to gender. Society maintains different sets of normal behavior for women and men and requires them different responsibilities. Then, one's expected opportunities and outcomes in life are strongly correlated with gender. However, many people believe that differential opportunities for males and females are due to biological differences rather than the process of socialization and social forces of gendered stereotypes (Mills, 1956). On the other hand, Sapir (1949) and Whorf (1956) believe that language is the mechanism through which human beings perceive the world. As children grow up, they are exposed to cultural symbols contained in their language. Based on the assumption that language shapes reality, it seems necessary to investigate what children might learn about gender in the process of learning and mastering their language.

According to Gender Schema Theory, individuals develop a sense of femaleness and maleness based on gender stereotypes in their culture and organize their behavior respectively (Bem, 1981, 1983, 1984; Eagly & Wood, 1999). Ideological messages about gender originate from our culture so that people use them as standards of comparison to make judgments about themselves and others so that it can be said that they are practicing ideology (Taylor, 2003). Mechanisms through which children perceive and practice gender stereotypes are stories, cartoons, toys, and textbooks.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Gender bias is the discrimination against people based on their gender rather than other individual characteristics. It is a belief that one gender is superior or more valuable than the other. As Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003, p.50) say, "The force of gender categories in society makes it impossible for us to move through our lives in a non-gendered way and impossible not to behave in a way that brings out gendered behavior in others." One aspect of sexism in language is gender systems (masculine, feminine, neuter) and its possible connections with gender differences (male, female, neither) (Wardhaugh, 2010). According to Thomas (2004, p.76) "sexist language represents women and men unequally." Romaine (1999, p. 66) claims that "ideological factors in the form of cultural beliefs enter into gender assignment in grammatical systems." Languages like English, French, and German are grammatically gender-biased; however, this is not the case with other languages like Chinese, Japanese, Persian, and Turkish. It would be difficult to maintain that people who speak these languages are or are not sexist (Wardhaugh, 2010). So, language plays an important role in maintaining and strengthening the sexist values. The relationship between language and gender has been disputed in sociolinguistic studies since 1960s. Liberal feminism has guided most of the research done by feminist social scientists for more than 30 years (Clark & Fink, 2004). Liberal feminism advocates equal opportunities for men and women as well as non-stereotypical portrayal of both (Cameron, 1992). Issues of sexist bias and gender stereotyping have been of great importance in feminist analyses of educational practices for children (Walker, 1991). These studies fall into three main categories of children's literature, media, and textbooks.

A. *Gender in Children's Literature*

Children's literature has been studied extensively due to its cultural importance as a powerful mechanism through which children learn their cultural heritage (Bettelheim, 1977). Children's books are celebration, reaffirmation and dominant blueprint of shared cultural values, meanings, and expectations (McCabe, Fairchild, Grauerholz, Pescosolido, & Tope, 2011). The development of gender identity and expectations associated with it starts from childhood. Schemas are broad cognitive structures that organize and guide perception; they are often reinforced through social practices (Bem, 1983). Children's books present a microcosm of ideologies, values, and beliefs from the dominant culture including gender ideologies (Taylor, 2003). Reading story books to children over a sustained period of time shapes children's gender attitudes and beliefs or gender schemas (Barclay, 1974; Trepanier-street & Romatowski, 1999).

Over the last 40 years, several studies have looked at children's literature. The Caldecott Medal winners have been a favorite selection to analyze. Early work by Weitzman et al., (1972) found that the Caldecott Medal winner books published between the years 1966-1971 notably under-represented women in titles and central roles. Many replications of this study came to the same conclusion (Clark, Lennon & Morris, 1993; Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young, 2006; Kortenhaus & Demarest, 1993; McDonald, 2001; Tepper & Cassidy, 1999). However some other studies document improved visibility of women over time (Oskamp, Kaufman, & Wolterbeek, 1996; Williams, Vernon, Williams & Malecha, 1987; Goodens & Goodens, 2001). In addition, males were shown outdoors, adventurous, and playful whereas female characters were portrayed as passive and most often indoors (Crabb & Bielawski, 1994; Tognoli, Pullen, & Lieber, 1994; Weitzman, 1972). Very few studies compared Caldecott winners to other books producing mixed results which may be due to different methodologies applied (Hamilton et al., 2006; Kortenhaus & Demarset, 1993; McCabe et al., 2011; Poarch & Monk-Turner, 2001; Tepper & Cassidy, 1999).

One kind of literature which has originated from popular culture is folklore literature which is closely related to real life of people in that culture. In fact, folk literature is a reflection of social and cultural norms and values. It can be claimed that children's literature arises from folk literature (Haj-nasrollah, 2005). An inclination to children's folk tales has been increased in the 20th century and different individuals like Anjavi (1974), Hedayat (1931), Sobhi, (1949, 1951) have tried to compile those stories which were mostly in oral form. Bayat (2010) investigated women's role in 40 Persian folktales and claims that females were represented as weak and passive. According to Bagheri (2013) who studied 22 popular folk tales, men appeared in central roles more than women. However, Mirfakhraee (2001) claims that although female characters occupied central roles more than men, they were mostly passive. None of the studies so far have focused on Persian folktales for children.

B. Gender in Children's Media

Several studies focused on gender role portrayals in children's media. Based on the constructivist approach and cultivation theory, children's beliefs and opinions about gender norms and behavior may be influenced by role portrayals in the films (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorelli, 1980; Graves, 1999; Martin, Ruble & Szkrybalo, 2002). According to Thompson and Zerbinos (1995) who analyzed 41 different cartoons, these programs had gender stereotyped messages. However, those produced after 1980 showed less stereotypical gender behavior. Leaper et al (2002) conducted a content analysis of gender-stereotyped character portrayals across four genres of TV shows among which educational cartoons showed less gender bias. Disney films have also been shown to depict stereotypical gender portrayal (England, Descartes & Collier-Meek, 2011; Lacroix, 2004; Towbin, Haddock, Zimmerman, Lund & Tanner, 2003; Wiserma, 2001).

C. Gender in Children's Textbooks

Textbooks play an important role in education. Since 1970s, numerous attempts have been made to analyze gender role in textbooks at all educational levels. Based on these studies, the main characters were male (Graham, 1975), and men occupied skilled or managerial positions but females were mostly housewives or workers (Ansary & Babaii, 2003; Arnold-Gerrity, 1978; Behnam & Rahimi, 2010; Coles, 1977; Hall, 2014; Hellinger, 1980; Peterson & Kroner, 1992; Porreca, 1984). Nonetheless, disparities between male and female characters remain in recent years. This message is reinforced in the books, films, and textbooks intended for children. This widespread pattern of female under-representation may contribute to a sense of unimportance among girls. According to Marshall (2004), liberal feminism tends to privilege certain modes of girlhood namely white, western, middle class femininity that excludes other perspectives. So, it is necessary to invite researchers to investigate gendered identity in terms of how global or local sites of experiences and social practice differ.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study was conducted to assess gender bias in popular Persian folklore stories for children given that other researchers have come to the conclusion that children's literature provides them with standard behavioral models of masculinity and femininity (Rachlin & Vogt, 1974; Peterson & Lach, 1990; st. Peter, 1979; Sunderland, 2005). Most research so far has focused on picture books for young children. What is ignored is that children are exposed to lots of oral folk tales much earlier than they start to read books. The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study:

1. Male and female characters are equally presented in the title of the stories.

2. Female and male characters occupy central roles equally.
3. There is parity between the overall number of male and female characters.
4. Traditional gender stereotypes are applied equally to represent female and male characters.

IV. METHOD

A deductive content analysis was performed to identify and record gender representation in titles, central roles, and the total number of characters. Traditional feminine and masculine stereotypes were also investigated based on a coding scheme.

A. Sample

The sample included 50 popular Persian folktales for children which were obtained from *Ghesseh-hye Sobhi (Sobhi's Stories)*, Saleh Ramsary, 2008, vol.1) that is the most inclusive one in this regard. The book consisted of five sections each of which was based the original books compiled by *Sobhi* who was entitled as the *Father of Children* in Iran.

B. Instrument

The coding scheme consisted of 31 items. The first three were the title, main character, and the total number of characters. For the first item, gender in the title was coded as 1) male, 2) female, 3) both male and female, and 4) none (if it was neutral or gender was not identifiable). The second item focused on the number of main characters as well as their gender (female, male, or neutral). The third item was about the total number of male, female, and neutral characters per story. Items 4-31 considered the traditional feminine and masculine stereotypes (see appendix A) based on a coding frame proposed by Macionis (as cited by Taylor, 2003, p. 304).

C. Procedure

Each story was analyzed twice by both researchers (one male, one female) for gender representation in the title, central roles, and overall number of characters in the story based on the coding scheme. Each time the main characters of the story were mentioned to have a stereotypical characteristic or exhibited that trait in their speech, it was coded and tallied. The coding themes were identified as traditionally masculine or feminine based on the past content analysis literature (Taylor, 2003; England et al., 2011; Bayat, 2010, Bagheri, 2013). The intrarater/intracoder reliability was measured with Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. After analyzing 15 stories, the discrepancies between the two raters' counts decreased and a reliability coefficient of .80 was reached. One-way ANOVA and paired t-test were used to analyze the interval data and nominal data was analyzed by chi-square test.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The first hypothesis concerned occurrence of male and female characters in the title of the stories. A chi-square test indicated a significant difference in the proportion of genders in the titles, $\chi^2(3, n=50) = 15.12, p = .00$. Of the 50 stories studied, 21 titles (42%) were neutral. There were 15 (30%) male and 12 (24%) female titles with a ratio of 1.25:1. Only 2 titles (4%) included both male and female characters. So, the neutral titles outnumbered gendered ones. Therefore, the first hypothesis is accepted that is male and female characters were equally represented in the titles.

With regard to the second hypothesis, there were 80 (52.63%) male, 63 (41.44%) female, and 9 (5.93%) neutral characters occupying central roles in the stories. A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore gender representation in central roles. There was a statistically significant difference between these three groups at $p < .05$: $F(2, 149) = 31.18, p = .00$. Post hoc comparisons using Scheffe test indicated that the mean score of neutral main character ($M = .18, SD = .62$) was significantly different from both male ($M = 1.60, SD = 1.10$) and female ($M = 1.26, SD = .98$) characters. However, gendered main characters did not differ significantly, so the second hypothesis that is equal representation of male and female characters in central roles was accepted too.

Considering the overall number of characters, there were 226 (51.14%) male, 141 (31.90%) female, and 75 (16.96%) neutral characters in sum. An ANOVA test was carried out to compare these three groups. A significant difference was observed at $p < .05$: $F(2, 149) = 24.61, p = .00$. Post hoc Scheffe test revealed significant differences between all three groups with the following mean scores: male characters ($M = 4.52, SD = 2.56$), female characters ($M = 2.82, SD = 2.04$), and neutral ones ($M = 1.50, SD = 1.78$). As it is clear, male characters outnumbered both female and neutral ones. So, the third hypothesis was rejected.

For the last hypothesis, main characters were compared based on the traditional feminine and masculine descriptions. Table I shows descriptive statistics and distribution of feminine traits for both female and male characters. As it is shown in table 1, feminine characteristics are arranged from the most frequent to the least one for both female and male characters. Interestingly, traditionally feminine traits were not exclusively applied to represent female characters but also for male ones. To further explore the differences between female and male characters regarding the traditional feminine traits; paired t-tests were conducted for each characteristic separately. Results revealed statistically significant differences (indicated by *) between male and female characters on the portrayal of *sex object* $t(49) = 6.53, p = .00$, and *physically attractive* $t(49) = 5.46, p = .00$. That is female characters were more represented as sex object, and physically

attractive than men. There were also noticeable disparities regarding other traits including *analytical* $t(49) = 1.73$, $p=.09$, and *weak* $t(49) = 1.77$, $p=.08$; however, they were not statistically significant at $p<.05$.

TABLE I.
DISTRIBUTION OF FEMININE TRAITS FOR FEMALE AND MALE CHARACTERS

Females	Sum	Mean	SD	Males	Sum	Mean	SD
dependent	136	2.72	2.40	emotional	137	2.74	2.38
submissive	130	2.60	2.79	submissive	120	2.40	2.19
passive	119	2.38	2.37	passive	119	2.38	2.34
emotional	118	2.36	2.47	receptive	114	2.28	2.68
physically attractive*	108	2.16	2.41	dependent	106	2.12	1.97
cooperative	106	2.12	2.47	unintelligent	96	1.92	2.83
sex object*	90	1.80	1.94	sensitive	86	1.72	2.14
receptive	88	1.76	2.47	cooperative	82	1.64	1.95
unintelligent	83	1.66	2.93	intuitive	65	1.30	1.55
weak	57	1.14	1.76	content	48	.96	1.71
sensitive	56	1.12	1.68	weak	31	.62	1.22
content	44	.88	1.80	timid	26	.52	1.35
timid	44	.88	1.54	physically attractive*	17	.34	.87
intuitive	42	.84	1.39	sex object*	0	.00	.00

* Significant at $p<.05$

Table II shows descriptive statistics and distribution of masculine traits for both female and male characters. Amazingly, masculine traits were applied to represent male characters as well as female ones. These traits are arranged in a descending order for both groups. To investigate the differences between the two groups, paired t-tests were carried out for each trait separately. There were significant differences between male and female characters with regard to the following traits: *independent* $t(49) = 3.94$, $p=.00$, *rational* $t(49) = 2.68$, $p=.01$, *strong* $t(49) = 4.17$, $p=.00$, *sexually aggressive* $t(49) = 5.5.7$, $p=.00$, and *attractive achievement* $t(49)=1.99$, $p=.05$. That is male characters were more represented as being independent, rational, strong, sexually aggressive, and attractive due to achievements rather than females. There was also a remarkable difference between *active* males and females but it was not statistically significant $t(49) = 1.91$, $p=.06$.

TABLE II.
DISTRIBUTION OF MASCULINE TRAITS FOR FEMALE AND MALE CHARACTERS

Females	Sum	Mean	SD	Males	Sum	Mean	SD
assertive	106	2.12	2.55	competitive	148	2.96	3.75
dominant	98	1.96	2.39	dominant	139	2.78	2.46
competitive	96	1.92	2.50	assertive	131	2.62	2.94
intelligent	90	1.80	2.33	active	129	2.58	2.77
insensitive	74	1.48	2.41	intelligent	114	2.28	2.68
active	74	1.48	2.24	insensitive	113	2.26	2.27
ambitious	67	1.34	1.93	attractive achievement*	88	1.76	1.90
attractive achievement *	44	.88	1.90	sexually aggressive*	76	1.52	1.93
analytical	42	.84	1.37	analytical	72	1.44	1.79
brave	25	.50	1.31	independent*	67	1.34	1.69
rational*	22	.44	1.01	rational*	62	1.24	1.81
independent*	15	.30	.70	ambitious	61	1.22	1.68
strong*	2	.04	.19	strong*	45	.90	1.44
sexually aggressive*	0	.00	.00	brave	43	.86	1.67

* Significant at $p<.05$

On the other hand, male and female characters enjoyed rather equal portrayal on other feminine and masculine traits except those mentioned above. This may lead to the conclusion that there is a spectrum of traditional themes and stereotypes which both genders possess. A descendent arrangement of the traits also shows a mixed collection of traditionally masculine and feminine characteristics for males and females (see table 3).

TABLE III.
DESCENDING ARRANGEMENT OF MASCULINE AND FEMININE TRAITS

Females	Sum	Mean	SD	Males	Sum	Mean	SD
dependent	136	2.72	2.40	competitive	148	2.96	3.75
submissive	130	2.60	2.79	dominant	139	2.78	2.46
passive	119	2.38	2.37	emotional	137	2.74	2.38
emotional	118	2.36	2.47	assertive	131	2.62	2.94
physically attractive	108	2.16	2.41	active	129	2.58	2.77
assertive	106	2.12	2.55	submissive	120	2.40	2.19
cooperative	106	2.12	2.47	passive	119	2.38	2.34
dominant	98	1.96	2.39	intelligent	114	2.28	2.68
competitive	96	1.92	2.50	receptive	114	2.28	2.68
sex object	90	1.80	1.94	insensitive	113	2.26	2.27
intelligent	90	1.80	2.33	dependent	106	2.12	1.97
receptive	88	1.76	2.47	unintelligent	96	1.92	2.83
unintelligent	83	1.66	2.93	attractive achievement	88	1.76	1.90
insensitive	74	1.48	2.41	sensitive	86	1.72	2.14
active	74	1.48	2.24	cooperative	82	1.64	1.95
ambitious	67	1.34	1.93	sexually aggressive	76	1.52	1.93
weak	57	1.14	1.76	analytical	72	1.44	1.79
sensitive	56	1.12	1.68	independent	67	1.34	1.69
content	44	.88	1.80	intuitive	65	1.30	1.55
timid	44	.88	1.54	rational	62	1.24	1.81
achievement attractive	44	.88	1.90	ambitious	61	1.22	1.68
intuitive	42	.84	1.39	content	48	.96	1.71
analytical	42	.84	1.37	strong	45	.90	1.44
brave	25	.50	1.31	brave	43	.86	1.67
rational	22	.44	1.01	weak	31	.62	1.22
independent	15	.30	.70	timid	26	.52	1.35
strong	2	.04	.19	physically attractive	17	.34	.87
sexually aggressive	0	.00	.00	sex object	0	.00	.00

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results support an egalitarian gender representation in the titles. This was also the case for central roles which was in line with the findings of Bagheri (2013), Goodens and Goodens (2001), Mirfakhraee (2001), Oskamp et al., (1996), and William et al., (1987). However, there was disparity between the overall number of female and male characters, that is female characters were under-represented compared to their male counterparts. This was similar to the results of previous studies by Hamilton et al., (2006), McDonald (2001), Weitzman et al., (1972).

In this study, main male and female characters were analyzed based on traditionally gendered stereotypes. Results indicated that females were more represented as being sex object, and attractive due to physical appearance. Males were more portrayed as being independent, rational, strong, sexually aggressive, and attractive due to achievements. Earlier studies found various results for example England et al., (2011) found gendered bias toward strong male and female's inclination to physical appearance. On the other hand, women appeared to be weak more than men in findings of Bagheri (2013) and Mirfakhraee (2001). A strong bias toward active male characters was found in Kinman and Henderson (1985), Oskamp et al (1996), and William et al, (1987). Moreover, men were found to be more assertive than women in Oskamp et al (1996), and William et al, (1987).

Whereas there were discrepancies between male and female characters regarding the seven stereotypical gender qualities of sex object, and being attractive due to physical appearance, independent, rational, strong, sexually aggressive, and attractive due to achievements; the other 21 characteristics were applied rather equally to portray both genders. This may inspire an egalitarian view at first sight; however, other social factors might influence the results such as the positive or negative nature of characters, their age, or social class. This necessitates a more in-depth analysis including other social factors as well as gender.

The present study was an attempt to add to the understanding of gendered content in Persian folklore stories for children. The results indicated significant under-representation of females regarding the overall number of characters in the sample. Additionally, females were portrayed as being sex object and attractive due to their physical appearance more than males. On the other hand, males were illustrated as being more independent, rational, strong, sexually aggressive, and attractive due to their achievements.

This study demonstrates that there are both stereotypical and non-stereotypical gender role portrayals in Persian folktales for children. The gendered messages did not consistently verify the taxonomy proposed by Taylor (2003). Both female and male characters were represented by a wide spectrum of traditionally feminine and masculine traits. This may be better explained in further studies taking into account other social factors as well.

APPENDIX. CODING SCHEME

Traditionally Feminine Traits	Traditionally Masculine Traits
submissive	dominant
dependent	independent
unintelligent	intelligent
emotional	rational
receptive	assertive
intuitive	analytical
weak	strong
timid	brave
content	ambitious
passive	active
cooperative	competitive
sensitive	insensitive
sex object	sexually aggressive
attractive due to physical appearance	attractive due to achievement

Source: Taylor, F. (2003). Content Analysis and Gender Stereotypes in Children's Books. *Teaching Sociology*, 31 (3), 300-311.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers and editors of TPLS journal for reading earlier drafts of this article and providing valuable comments and feedback.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ansary, H. & E. Babaii. (2003). Subliminal Sexism in Current ESL/EFL Textbooks. *Asian EFL Journal*, 5.1, 1-15. <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/march03.sub1.php> (accessed 10/1/2015).
- [2] Bagheri, B. (2013). Zanane fa-al va monfa-el dar dastanhaie amiane [Active and passive women in folktales]. *Farhang va Adabiye Ame*, 1.1, 119-142. http://cfl.modares.ac.ir/article_10846_5081.html (accessed 10/1/2015).
- [3] Bahman, M., & A. Rahimi. (2010). Gender representation in EFL materials: an analysis of English textbooks of Iranian high schools. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* 9, 273–277. “doi: 10. 1016 /j. sbspro.2010.12.149”.
- [4] Barclay, L. K. (1974). The emergence of vocational expectations in preschool children. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 4, 1-14.
- [5] Bayat, H. (2010). Central role of heroines in folktales [Mehvariate ghahraman-ane zan dar ghese-haye amiane]. *Naghde Adabi*, 1.11&12, 87-116. <http://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/913648> (accessed 10/1/2015).
- [6] Bem, S. L. (1981). Gender Schema Theory: A Cognitive Account of Sex Typing. *Psychological Review* 88, 354-64.
- [7] Bem, S. L. (1983). Gender schema theory and its implications for child development: Raising gender-aschematic children in a gender-schematic society. *Signs* 8, 598-616.
- [8] Bem, S. L. (1984). Androgyny and Gender-Schema Theory: A Conceptual and Empirical Integration. Nebraska Symposium on Motivation: *Psychology and Gender* 32, 179-226.
- [9] Bettelheim, B. (1977). *Uses of enchantment*. New York: Vintage.
- [10] Cameron, D. (1992a). Review: Deborah Tannen: You Just Don't Understand! Women and Men in Conversation, *Feminism and Psychology* 2.3, 465–89.
- [11] Cameron, D. (1998b) 'Gender, language and discourse: a review essay', *Signs* 23.4, 945–73.
- [12] Clark, R. & H. Fink. (2004). Picture this: A multicultural feminist analysis of picture books for children. *Youth & Society* 36.1, 102-125. “doi: 10.1177/0044118X03258241”.
- [13] Clark, R., R. Lennon, & L. Morris. (1993). Of Caldecotts and kings: Gendered images in recent American children's books by Black and non-Black illustrators. *Gender and Society* 5, 227-245.
- [14] Cole, C. M., F. A. Hill, & L. F. Dayley. (1983). Do masculine pronouns used generically lead to thoughts of men? *Sex Roles* 19, 785–798.
- [15] Crabb, P. B. & D. Bielawski. (1994). The Social Representation of Material Culture and Gender in Children's Books." *Sex Roles* 30, 69-79.
- [16] Eagly, A. H. & W. Wood. (1999). The Origins of Sex Differences in Human Behavior: Evolved Dispositions Verses Social Roles. *American Psychologist* 54, 408-23.
- [17] Eckert, P. & S. McConnell-Ginet. (2003). *Language and Gender*. Cambridge, CUP.
- [18] England, D.E., L. Descartes & M. A. Collier-Meek. (2011). Gender Role Portrayal and the Disney Princesses. *Sex Roles* 64, 555–567. “doi: 10.1007/s11199-011-9930-7”.
- [19] Gerbner, G., L. Gross, M. Morgan, & N. Signorelli. (1980). The “mainstreaming” of America. Violence Profile No. 11. *Journal of Communication* 20, 10–27. “doi:1.1111/j.1460-2466.198.tb01987.x”.
- [20] Gerbner, G., L. Gross, M. Morgan, & N. Signorielli. (1994). Growing up with television: The cultivation perspective. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 17–41.
- [21] Gooden, A. M., & M. A. Gooden. (2001). Gender representation in notable children's picture books: 1995-1999. *Sex Roles* 45, 89-101.
- [22] Graham, A. (1975). The Making of a Nonsexist Dictionary. In B. Thorne & N. Henley (eds.), *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance*. Rowley: Newbury, 57-63.

- [23] Graves, S. B. (1999). Television and prejudice reduction: When does television as a vicarious experience make a difference? *Journal of Social Issues* 55, 707–725. “doi:1.1111/0022-4537.00143”.
- [24] Haj-nasrollah, Sh. (2005). Folklore literature the origin of children’s literature [Adabiate amiane sar-aghaze adabiate koodak]. *Farhange Mardom* 2.14&15, 139-154. <http://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/253211> (accessed 10/1/2015).
- [25] Hall, M. (2014). Gender Representation in Current EFL Textbooks in Iranian Secondary Schools. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 5.2, 253-261. “doi:10.4304/jltr.5.2.253-261”.
- [26] Hamilton M. C., D. Anderson, M. Broaddus, & K. Young. (2006). Gender stereotyping and under-representation of female characters in 200 popular children’s picture books: A twenty-first century update. *Sex Roles* 55, 757–765. “doi: 10.1007/s11199-006-9128-6”.
- [27] Hellinger, M. (1980). For Men Must Work, and Women Must Weep: Sexism in English Language Textbooks Used in German Schools. In C. Kramer (eds.), *The Voices and Words of Women and Men*. New York: Pergamon Press, 267-274.
- [28] Kortenhaus, C. M., & J. Demarest (1993). Gender role stereotyping in children’s literature: An update. *Sex Roles* 28, 219-32.
- [29] Lacroix, C. (2004). Images of animated others: The orientalizing of Disney’s cartoon heroines from the Little Mermaid to the Hunchback of Notre Dame. *Popular Communication* 2, 213– 229. “doi:1.1207/s15405710pc0204_2”.
- [30] Leaper, C., L. Breed, L. Hoffman, & C. A. Perlman. (2002). Variations in the gender-stereotyped content of children’s television cartoons across genres. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 32, 1653– 1662. “doi:1.1111/j.1559-1816.2002.tb02767.x”.
- [31] Marshall, E. (2004). Stripping for the wolf: Rethinking representations of gender in children’s literature. *Reading Research Quarterly* 39.3, 256–270. “doi: 10.1598/RRQ.39.3.1”.
- [32] Martin, C. L., D. N. Ruble, & J. Szkrybalo. (2002). Cognitive theories of early gender development. *Psychological Bulletin* 128, 903–933. “doi: 1.1037/0033-2909.128.6.903”.
- [33] McCabe, J., E. Fairchild, L. Grauerholz, B. Pescosolido, & D. Tope. (2011). Gender in twentieth century children’s books: Patterns of disparity in titles and central characters. *Gender & Society* 25.2, 197-226. “doi:10.1177/0891243211398358”.
- [34] McDonald, S. M. (2001). Sex bias in the representation of male and female characters in children’s picture books. *Journal of Genetic Psychology* 150, 389-401.
- [35] Mills, S. (1995). *Feminist Stylistic*. London: Routledge.
- [36] Mirfakhraee, T. (2001). Iranian popular fictions: Compatible Women [Roman-haye ame pasande Irani: Sazgharie zan]. *Motale-ate Farhangi va Ertebatat*, 1.4, 197-221. <http://fa.journals.sid.ir/ViewPaper.aspx?ID=57311> (accessed 10/1/2015).
- [37] Oskamp, S., K. Kaufman, & L. A. Wolterbeek. (1996). Gender role portrayals in preschool picture books. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality* 11, 27-39.
- [38] Peterson, S. & T. Kroner. (1992). Gender Biases in Textbooks for Introductory Psychology and Human Development. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 16.1, 17-36.
- [39] Peterson, Sh. B., & M. A. Lach. (1990). Gender stereotypes in children’s books: Their prevalence and impact on cognitive and affective development. *Gender & Education* 2, 185-97.
- [40] Porreca, K. L. (1984). Sexism in Current ESL Textbooks. *TESOL Quarterly* 18.4, 705-724.
- [41] Rachlin, S. K., & G. L. Vogt. (1974). Sex roles as presented to children in coloring books. *Journal of Popular Culture* 8, 549–556.
- [42] Romaine, S. (1999). *Communicating Gender*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- [43] Sapir, E. (1949). *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum (ed.) Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- [44] St. Peter, S. (1979). Jack went up the hill...but where was Jill? *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 4, 256–260.
- [45] Sunderland, J. (2006). *Language and Gender: An advanced resource book*. NY: Routledge.
- [46] Sunderland, J. (2011). *Language, Gender, and Children’s Fiction*. NY: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- [47] Taylor, F. (2003). Content Analysis and Gender Stereotypes in Children’s Books. *Teaching Sociology* 31.3, 300-311.
- [48] Tepper, C. A., & K. W. Cassidy (1999). Gender differences in emotional language in children’s picture books. *Sex Roles* 40, 265-80.
- [49] Thomas, L. (2004). *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction* (2nd ed). Ishtla Singh & Jean Stilwell Peccei (Eds.). London and New York: Routledge.
- [50] Thompson, T. L., & E. Zerbinos (1995). Gender roles in animated cartoons: Has the picture changed in 20 years? *Sex Roles* 32, 651–673. “doi:1007/BF01544217”.
- [51] Towbin, M. A., S. A. Haddock, T. S. Zimmerman, L. K. Lund, & L. R. Tanner (2003). Images of gender, race, age, and sexual orientation in Disney feature-length animated films. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy* 15, 19–44.
- [52] Wiserna, B. A. (2001). *The gendered world of Disney: A content analysis of gender themes in full-length animated Disney feature films* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from *Dissertation Abstracts International* 61, 4973.
- [53] Tognoli, J., J. Pullen, & J. Lieber (1994). The privilege of place: Domestic and work locations of characters in children’s books. *Children’s Environments* 11, 272–280.
- [54] Trepanier-Street, M. L., & J. S. Romatowski. (1999). The influence of children’s literature on gender role perceptions: A reexamination. *Early Childhood Education Journal* 26, 155–159.
- [55] Walkerdin, V. (1991). *Schoolgirl fictions*. London: Verso.
- [56] Wardhaugh, R. (2010). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (6th ed.). MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- [57] Weitzman, L., D. Eifler, E. Hokada, & C. Ross (1972). Sex-role socialization in picture books for preschool children. *American Journal of Sociology* 77, 1125-1150.
- [58] Whorf, B. L. (1956). The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language. in John B. Carroll (ed.) *Language, Thought and Reality*, pp. 134-59. MA: CUP
- [59] Williams, J., J. Vernon, M. Williams, & K. Malecha. (1987). Sex role socialization in picture books: An update. *Social Science Quarterly* 68, 148–156.

Nafiseh Hosseinpour was born in Isfahan, Iran. She got her BA in TEFL from Kashan University, Kashan, Iran in 2000. She got her MA in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, (Khorasgan) Branch, Isfahan, Iran in 2003. She is currently a PhD student in Islamic Azad University, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch. She has been a faculty member of Islamic Azad University, Falavarjan Branch since 2005. Her research interests are teacher education, teaching and learning strategies, and teaching English as a foreign language, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis.

Akbar Afghari was born in Isfahan, Iran. He got his B.A. in English Language and Literature from Isfahan University, Isfahan, Iran in 1970. He got his M.A. in English Language and Literature from Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran in 1975. He got his M.A. in Applied Linguistics from Stanford University, USA in 1979. He got his Ph.D. in Foreign Language Education from Stanford University, USA in 1984. He has been the assistant professor of English Department in University of Isfahan. Now, he is the faculty member of Islamic Azad University, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch. He has published papers in national and international conferences. His research interests include applied linguistics, discourse analysis, testing, and sociolinguistics.