

Challenging Gender Stereotypes through the Selection of Gender-Neutral Texts in Philippines School Context

Liwag, Mecaella Joy D.; Ramirez, Dianne M. and Santiago, Geraldine S.

La Consolacion University Philippines,
College of Arts, Sciences, and Education,
City of Malolos, Bulacan

Abstract: *From 1970's, gendering literature for children has been a topic of interest among researchers. As stated in social learning theory, children learn through their observations and experiences in their environment, and one of the factors that influence their perception are literary texts. Thus, this paper explores the implications of using Gender-Neutral Texts to the gender stereotyping behavior of early childhood education students. The researchers used Jung's Archetypal Theory to examine the characteristics of a gender-neutral literature to be used to challenge gender roles which are still existing today. The study employed narrative research design and textual analysis using a qualitative research approach. The participants were early childhood teachers who worked in both public and private schools. The data which was used to identify the effects of gender-neutral literature was collected through in-depth interviews. The findings of this study reveal that the characteristics of a gender-neutral literature involves atypical characters and morals of the study which condemns the view of gender stereotypes. Based on the narrative given by the participants of the study, the researchers found little to no significant change on the gender stereotyping behavior of students even with the use of gender-neutral texts, rather, presenting atypical characters provoke their interest and open discussions about gender stereotypes. This may have been brought by the new observation that children are already open towards the shift on sharing of roles in the society.*

Keywords— Gender Stereotypes, Gender-Neutral Text, Gender Roles, Early Childhood Education

1. INTRODUCTION

This template, modified in MS Word 2007 and saved as a “Word 97-2003 Document” for the PC, provides authors with most of the formatting specifications needed for preparing electronic versions of their papers. All standard paper components have been specified for three reasons: (1) ease of use when formatting individual papers, (2) automatic compliance to electronic requirements that facilitate the concurrent or later production of electronic products, and (3) conformity of style throughout a conference proceedings. Margins, column widths, line spacing, and type styles are built-in; examples of the type styles are provided throughout this document and are identified in italic type, within parentheses, following the example. Some components, such as multi-leveled equations, graphics, and tables are not prescribed, although the various table text styles are provided. The formatter will need to create these components, incorporating the applicable criteria that follow. One of the fundamental skills that an individual must possess in this age is the skill of reading for both meaning and pleasure. According to Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016), this is a skill that children start to learn during primary school and through this, children start the construction of their socio-emotional well-being. Children's story books are one way on how children can learn about the world, as it shows different representations of normative values which may have been persisting on the time of its publication. As stated by Abad and Pruden (2013), children may learn about the world through the use of storybooks, as it provides a representation of societal values during a time when children are developing their gender roles.

In this context, Nebbia (2016) emphasized that reading childrens' stories should be done from a critical viewpoint. As stated in their study, students learn about how the society works around them while they start to learn how to read, therefore, there is a need to be able to read various texts with a critical eye.

Arguably, reading literature can be a big part of the construction of a student's perception on how the world works, because of this, gendering literature especially for children has been a topic of interest in research since the 1970's. Bubriski-McKenzie and Gonzalez-Guittar (2016) stated in their study that research about gender representation in children's books increased significantly during 1970's as it is one of the social agents in children's life since the gender images that are presented in these types of literature influence their perception on gender.

Gender stereotyping has been a common issue among the people until today, it is defined by Charchika (2020) as an assumption or standardized norm dictated by society on how every individual should act according to the group that they belong with. In the study conducted by Aina and Cameron (2011), they recognized the conclusion from previous studies that identifies the ages five to seven (5-7) as critical stages wherein children's stereotypes are already fairly developed. Children should be given reading materials designed to foster their awareness on the different gender roles.

Hedmann (2016) concluded in their study that children's literature can affect the social construction of gender as children are introduced to characters in stories that show how boys are supposed to possess masculinity while girls should be more feminine. This conclusion coincides with the study

made by Haruna and Banke (2017) with the hypothesis saying that the role of man and woman are socially constructed in children's books and these roles automatically transfer our society's stereotypes to the children without giving them a choice to interpret the world as they grow. The result from the study made by Lee (2008) agrees with the previous study of Saltmarsh (2009) which says that popular literature provides social paradigms that can dictate how individuals should act according to their gender.

In the study conducted by Meland (2020), the researcher found that challenging stereotypes by presenting atypical characters in literature impacts the play behavior of a child. As it is seen in the result of this study, it decreases the gender-stereotypical behavior of early childhood students. The study of Ryan et al. (2013) has the similar result as Meland concluded, the result of her study stated that selecting gender-neutral text can help students grasp a stronger understanding of gender expression and gender identity. The study also added how the use of a read-aloud approach in the discussion of literature in primary students creates a strong impact in their attitude. The study made by Frawley (2008) showed different results as it was found in their study that the use of gender-atypical information in storybooks can confuse children making what they learn consistent with gender stereotypes. Green et al. (2004) found the same result especially with children who already have strong perception towards gender stereotyping.

Many existing studies aimed to explore the use of a certain literary text in discussion of equality to mirror the society's problem in gender stereotyping in the classroom of kindergarten students (Goble et al., 2013; Ifegbesan, 2010; Muasya & Kazungu, 2018). The goal of these studies varies from: (1) gaining knowledge of the teacher's perception on gender-stereotyping, and to compare characteristics of educators to their knowledge about gender-stereotypes (Ifegbesan, 2010). (2) introducing the students to gender-typed activity choices which involve the stereo-typically feminine and masculine and its gender neutral play. (Goble et al., 2012). And (3) teacher's view regarding the gender and pedagogical practices (Muasya & Kazungu, 2018). Aside from this, the researchers found multiple studies wherein authors tried to identify the effects of integrating atypical characters to the stories given to preschool students on their gender stereotyping behaviors (Green et al., 2004; Frawley, 2008; Meland, 2020). However, in the Philippines context, there has not been a lot of attention given to the effects of using gender neutral literary text on the social construction of readers regarding gender roles as well as the importance of integrating teaching strategies in promoting gender-neutral discussion of literature inside the classroom. Thus, the researchers decided to propose a solution to the problem by getting the narrative of Early Childhood Education teachers with regards to their experiences on using gender-neutral stories in their classes to be able to challenge the existing gender stereotypes.

Given the above-mentioned issues, this study aims to determine whether selecting gender neutral text in literature class can help redefine the existing roles of individuals according to their gender. It also aims to identify the different gender-neutral texts that can be used by teachers in the discussion of literature in early childhood education. Lastly, it aims to determine the impact of gender stereotypes and unconscious bias on boys and girls; as this distinction is frequently made in literature.

Teachers, nowadays, must help pupils develop mindful practices and awareness while reading, which, in turn may lead to awareness on the different gender roles. As children's minds are malleable and they tend to pick up even the smallest gesticulations, when such literature depicts gender bias between girls and boys, it can have an effect on their minds. Teachers must provide a list of several stories that break gender norms nor misconceptions and foster open and gender neutral thinking.

This study shows how reading materials class can be carefully selected and scrutinized to redefine the existing gender stereotypes. Utilizing gender neutral readings may cause differences in students' gender awareness and critical thinking. This may also lead to positive learning outcomes, the identification of gender oppression, increased maturity, development of empathy and, as a result, respect and appreciation for others. Children's literature must be written in a way that depicts that both men and women as equal.

2. Research Objective

This study aims to identify gender-neutral texts which can be used to redefine gender roles among early childhood education students.

1. Use Jung's Theory of Archetypes to identify recurring patterns on the gender-neutral texts that are suggested by preschool teachers;
2. Assess how gender-neutral texts affect the gender stereotyping behavior of students by exploring the experiences of preschool teachers.
3. Determine the implications of modifying the pedagogy of literature with the use of selecting gender neutral texts to challenge the existing gender stereotypes.

2.1 Research Questions

Given these contexts, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of gender-neutral literature?
2. How does literary texts affect the social construction of readers regarding gender roles?
3. What are the possible strategies that can be used to promote gender-neutral discussion of literature in the classroom?

4. How can teaching literature be modified in terms of using gender neutral text?

3. METHODS OF STUDY

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a narrative research design and content analysis using qualitative approach. Narrative research design was used to identify the experiences of early childhood education teachers in utilizing the methods, strategies, and approaches that they use to redefine gender roles and in selecting a gender-neutral text in literature class. According to Elçi and Devran (2014), narrative research was used in exploring the stories of teachers through the narration of their experiences in a natural setting. On the other hand, gender-neutral literary texts were provided by the respondents and were analyzed using content analysis.

3.2 Research Participants

The participants of the study consist of six (6) early childhood education teachers from public and private schools, offering Early Childhood Education located inside the district of Malolos and Bulakan in Luzon, Philippines. This is with the consideration of exploring whether gender-neutral literary texts may influence young students who are still in the phase of constructing their views towards the world. Originally, there were fifteen (15) participants, however, due to the conflict in the availability of the participants, only six (6) ECE teachers actively participated in the study. The participants of the study were chosen through the use of purposive sampling technique and all consent to be part of the study. Purposive sampling is intentional selection of participants based on their knowledge and needs of the study. The participants of the study were chosen based on the following criteria; (1) teachers of early childhood education around Malolos and Bulakan in Luzon, Philippines (2) educators that use gender-neutral texts in the discussion of literature. The participation in this study is voluntary and has no known risk in joining. Confidentiality of the data gathered was guaranteed to the participants; thus, the data were used solely for the conduct of this study.

3.3 Research Instrument

The researchers used in-depth interviews to gather data from the Early Childhood Educators around the district of Malolos and Bulakan, an in-depth interview is the main data gathering instrument that takes form as an unstructured interview. The researchers asked the participants of the study to narrate their experience in teaching early childhood education students with cues on topics about the gender-neutral texts that teachers use in the classroom, strategies or approaches that teachers use in promoting gender-neutral discussion of literature in the classroom and its implications on the teaching of literature.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The researchers gathered data for three weeks, the researchers started by sending emails to have a schedule for a virtual interview with the chosen teachers from the Early Childhood Department. The researchers conducted a one-on-one interview using the preferred online platforms of the participants. The researchers explained the purpose, risks and benefits of the study to the participants under the criteria that is needed for the study. Only six of the fifteen participants who agreed for the interview responded when the researchers asked for their availability while the others were given two weeks for the update.

After the data gathering procedure, the researchers started to read the transcribed narrative for them to be familiar with the data provided by the Early Childhood Education teachers, the researchers used content analysis to organize the data gathered based on the questions that sought to be answered in the study. The researchers utilized Jung's Archetypal theory to analyze the literary text which was cited by the teachers from the early childhood education program in order to see the recurring patterns between the texts. The result from the interview and the analysis of gender-neutral texts allowed the researchers to analyze both the theme and the case.

3.5 Ethical Consideration/s

The researchers gathered the data with the compliance of Republic Act 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012. This ensures that the information given by the respondents remains anonymous and confidential. Before beginning with the data collection, the researchers sent emails and messages to the participants of the study. The emails and messages that were sent include a letter inviting the respondents for an interview and details about the purpose of the study. Aside from this, they were also provided with an informed consent and non-disclosure form to guarantee the confidentiality of the information that they gave.

Additionally, the researchers do not intend to promote the stories analyzed in the study. They were not forced, nor payed to advertise the children's books and it was used solely to be analyzed as part of identifying the archetypes in the suggested gender-neutral texts of the participants of the study.

4. Analysis

The aim of the study is to identify whether gender neutral texts can be used to challenge the existing gender stereotypes. Specifically, the researchers aim to identify the characteristics of a gender-neutral text by analyzing the suggested stories of early childhood education teachers and surveying their experiences about the strategies that they use to modify the attitude of students towards gender. Thus, the following figures detail the ideas that were observed upon the analysis of the responses from the participants of the study.

1. What are the characteristics of gender-neutral literature?

Table 1: *Archetypes Presented in the Suggested Gender-Neutral Texts used by Early Childhood Education teachers*

Suggested Stories	Traits Associated with Gender Archetypes
Annie’s Plaid Shirt by Stacy B. Davids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Identity • Conformity • Equality
Feminist Baby by Loryn Brantz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuality • Gender Identity
Are You a Boy or Are You a Girl by Sarah Savage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuality • Gender Identity
Made by Raffi by Craig Pomranz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conformity • Breaking Gender Norms
Hansel and Gretel by Brother Grimm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality • Breaking Gender Norms

Upon the analysis of the data from the respondents of the study, five stories were analyzed through the lens of Jung’s Theory of Archetypes to identify the characteristics of a gender-neutral text. This theory came from a Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst named Karl Gustav Jung. According to him, our personalities were shaped by what he called “archetypes” which are derived from our collective past (Barrett, 2019). This theory was used to analyze five stories that were suggested by the participants in order to identify the characteristics of a gender- neutral text.

Annie's Plaid Skirt by Stacy B. Davids: The main character in the story is a girl named Annie who loves to wear a plaid shirt wherever she goes despite the occasion. By looking into Jung’s Archetypal Theory, the characteristics of Annie can be analyzed based on Ego, specifically the innocent and the everyman. Annie knows who she is and refuses to be told what to wear or who she should be. Annie’s character talks about being true to oneself and that all men and women are created equal. Annie’s Plaid Shirt is a story that affirms the right of a child to choose whether to conform or not to the roles which society dictates. This can spark a discussion about the current norms in the society, embracing every person’s uniqueness and diversity. Furthermore, this story confronts society’s perceptions of what men or women should wear, which relates to the issue of gender identity exploration.

Feminist Baby by Stacy B. Davids: The story is about a baby who doesn’t like being restricted. It talks about one’s uniqueness, and having the freedom to choose despite the presence of stereotypes. Upon using Jung’s Archetypal

Criticism, it was analyzed that the story can be based on Soul and Self-Centered archetypes. Supporting the claim are the subcategories of The Explorer and The Ruler. Gender roles do not hold back the main character and it tells every reader that they have the freedom to discover who they are through exploring the world they live in. The moral of the story clearly depicts a strong moral character who does not conform to gender norms, that everyone has the control over who they want to be.

Are You a Boy or a Girl by Sarah Savage: In this story, the presence of Animus and the Anima can be observed in the characters. The man in the story is portrayed to be more feminine in nature than the woman while the counterpart of the man is portrayed to be more masculine especially when looking into the way she dresses and orient herself. This story surrounds a gender-neutral protagonist named Tiny. In Jung’s Archetypal Criticism, Tiny’s characteristics take part in Ego also known as “Leave Mark on the World”. He has three ego archetypes which are The Innocent, The Everyman and The Caregiver. Tiny’s character determines that everybody can have the freedom to be themselves, to have faith and be optimistic. Also, he informs through his character that all men and women are created equal.

Made by Raffi by Craig Pomranz: This story is about a boy who is being teased because of having a hobby that seems to be girly for others. This story includes the concept anima which is seen by how Raffi exhibits feminine characteristics which he acknowledged despite being teased because he does not conform to the practice and beliefs of the society. The book presents the advocacy about breaking the existing gender norms, and stereotypes that limit the social and emotional experiences of the men they became.

Hansel and Gretel by Brother Grimm: The story presents the different characteristics of a mother, usually, mothers are portrayed to be caring and loving to the children, but this story shifted the traditional characteristic of a mother for letting her children go to the forest and get rid of them. The two children which are Hansel and Gretel characterized in Jung’s archetypal criticism based on Ego, the children’s characters present all of the types of Ego; The Innocent, The Everyman, The Hero, and The Caregiver. The children were intelligent for understanding different situations they faced, the Mother’s plan, and the Witch’s Plan, they outsmart the witch with their plans that also have teamwork. Hansel and Gretel show that even at a young age, everyone can figure out a plan to escape danger. And Gretel being a girl while she is being innocent shows that she can depict the evil plan of the witch, and that leads to the author’s message just like in “The Everyman” that all men and women were created equally and it is shown in the story that the girl could also do what the men do, that women are not weak. Additionally, it shows that men and women can play the same roles in stories, that women could also be strong just like every king and knight in children's stories.

As shown in the table, gender archetypes are frequently observed in the stories suggested by the teachers of early childhood education. Upon the analysis of the stories using Jung’s Archetypal Criticism, the traits of Individuality, Equality and Breaking Gender Norms are observed to be common between the stories. In addition, there is a presence of anima and animus in the characters of the story as they are presented as characters that do not conform to the rules dictated by the people around them. This was shown in their acts of dressing differently and doing things that are not thought to be for one gender only. Thus, the researchers concluded that these are the characteristics which one should look into, when selecting gender-neutral stories. The result of the study conducted by Foresman (2016) had similar results as to what the researchers found. It was stated that stories which portray characters that are non-conforming or those who transitioned from their gender to another are the literary texts which can pave way to gender non-conforming themes in literature.

2. Effects of literary text on the social construction of gender roles on readers

Table 2 : *The characteristics of literary texts related to gender and its effects on the social construction of gender roles*

Characteristics Present in Literary Texts	Effects on the Social Construction of Gender Roles
Strong Representation of the Difference Between Genders	Association of Roles based on gender
Gender Stereotypes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Roles and Possession based on gender • Conformity on the Existing Gender Roles • Limitation on what someone can do based on gender
Bias towards one gender	Association of Roles based on gender

In the table, it was shown that existing literary texts today possess strong representation on the differences between gender, bias towards boys and girls or vice versa and gender stereotypes. Various studies found that gender stereotypes and gender representations are still prevalent today. (Bradway, 2017; Brower, 2017; Liebig, 2016). Upon surveying books which were published during 2014 and 2015, Brower (2017) concluded that although gender stereotypes and representation are not as pervasive as before, children stories still contain under-representation of female and character portrayals that aligns to how the society expects people to act. This is supported by the study of Liebig (2016)

which stems from the fact that children’s stories show uneven depiction of men and women. Bradway (2017) also discussed similar results wherein children stories, even though not having definitive evidence that can show its influence on children, portrays stereotypical roles in which men are seen to be important and women are damsels in distress.

Based on the experiences of the six (6) Early Education teachers who became participants of the study, it was narrated how literary texts affect the social construction of readers regarding gender roles. According to one of the participants of the study, the pupils are in critical stages of their lives wherein their perception on how gender should be is being influenced not just by the people around them but also by the literary text that they read. This is accorded by Frieden and Laffin (2019), as emphasized in their study, children start to become aware of gender norms and expectations during their primary years in education.

“Kids are on the stage of developing a schema or ideology of what their environment is, and gender roles is one of the most sensitive topics being established in their mind. Their idea is usually from their observation of their family, society, media influences and even stories that they are studying or reading. An example of the common mindset that is more or less affected by children stories is that men should always protect and save the women, like how it has always been, or at least, most of the time is represented in classical children stories such as Cinderella and Snow White.” [Participant C, 00:13]

As seen in the table, the participants of the study listed three observable effects which literary texts can bring on children: (1) Association of Roles and Possession based on gender, (2) Conformity on the Existing Gender Roles and (3) Limitation on what someone can do based on gender. As found in the analysis of the data that was gathered, young students tend to establish their perception on how a girl and a boy should act based on how they see the characters in stories are perceived. “It [children stories] clearly manifests the supposed difference and characteristics that a man and a woman should possess. And because of this, some of the pupils create a conclusion in their heads that a man should always be strong whilst a woman should always be prim and proper.” [Participant C, 00:13]

Flood (2017) argued that children can be influenced by the stories which they read, especially when human characters are being involved. As stated, after narrating with human characters, children showed an attitude which is alike to the portrayed characters in the story. This coincided with the result from the analysis of the data gathered among the participants, wherein it was shown that preschool students tend to conform and associate their actions towards what they can observe on the characters of the story which they read.

Additionally, it shows that literary texts may also affect children by limiting them on what they can do based on gender and even make them conform to the existing gender stereotypes. As stated by one of the participants of the study, the characters which are portrayed in children’s books limit the capabilities of readers as they perceive that they should only settle with the actions done by a particular gender in the stories they read. This result aligns to the study of Nebbia (2016), it was emphasized that literary texts condition children to accept the gender images constructed by society. It affects their beliefs, perceptions, and thinking of how someone should behave according to their gender. Additionally, it leads readers to conform to the existing gender bias in society and accept the established gender roles.

“In children's stories we all know that it limits the things that girls can do than boys. It also limits the things that girls are capable of doing because it is how they perceive their roles, based on the text they read.” [Participant F, 00:16]

3. Strategies to promote gender- neutral discussion of literature in the classroom

Table 3 : *Suggested strategies that can be used to promote gender neutral discussion of literature in the classroom*

Strategies	Practice in the Classroom
Explaining how stories in classical children’s books differ from real life situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasizing how gender should not be the basis on how someone should act. • Providing real-life examples that would show the distinction between fiction stories and real-life scenarios. • Explaining that people have equal responsibilities in society despite having different sexual identity.
Brainstorming and Re-enactment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking the students to share their observations on their parent’s role in the house. • Visualizing activities which are practiced by both men and women.
Carefully Selecting Words that are used in discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming mindful of using words which may be biased towards one gender. • Avoiding the use of gender binaries during discussion.

From the result of the discussion with the Early Childhood Education teachers, one of the strategies that most participants suggested is explaining how stories in children’s books differ from the real world.

“[Teachers should] always explain things to the kids so they can understand and not only rely on the book itself.” [Participant F, 00:16]

“When I have a text or lesson which I will discuss in class, what I first do is to give real life examples because that is when pupils can easily absorb [or understand] the lesson. It is important to explain clearly to the students that the color blue is not only for boys, while pink is also not only for girls. It is good to make it clear that not all information written in stories can be applied to the real world.” [Participant A, 01:13]

According to the responses of the teachers, this strategy can be practiced in the classroom by emphasizing that the characters in the story may act limitedly based on their gender, but this should not be the case for people who are striving in the real world, because all human beings have their own responsibilities and all are held liable despite having different gender orientation.

“It is important to let them realize, by providing realistic examples, that it is not just the man's responsibility to save a woman, but it will depend on the situation and the act of rescuing should be about who can help but not what the gender is.”[Participant C, 00:42]

Another strategy is brainstorming and re-enactment, wherein teachers open the discussion by letting students narrate their experiences and observations on how gender roles are perceived in their own household.

“[I] give my pupils the opportunity to choose and explain their own ideas about the discussion. Like in discussing about the roles of the parents inside their house, I always ask them their personal experiences before carefully incorporating the literary topic at hand” [Participant E, 00:17]

“One of the strategies that I use is brainstorming. I ask their opinion first then collaborate with the different answers of the pupils. Second is the reenactment, for example I will try to visualize activities that can also be done by the same gender or the other gender. For example, cooking can be done by both boys and girls.” [Participant B, 01:49]

Lastly, in order to create a gender-neutral discussion of literature, the participants of the study also suggested the strategy of being careful on the selection of words that are used in discussion. As stated in the table, this strategy can be practiced in the classroom by becoming mindful of the words that are used in the discussion as well as limiting the use of gender binaries when referring to the class.

4. Modifying the pedagogy of literature through the use of gender-neutral text

Table 4: Perception of teachers on how teaching literature can be modified through the use of gender-neutral text

Interventions Associated with the use of gender-neutral texts	Effects on the stereotyping behavior of students
Presenting Atypical Characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attracts the interest of the students on the story - Creates confusion on how people act in contrast to their beliefs.
Fully Integrating the moral of the story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the awareness of the students about gender roles that need to be addressed. - Affects their emotions which leads to a respectful and equal classroom environment.
Using Gender Neutral Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students become interested in the lesson.

As reflected in the table, the interventions associated with the use of gender neutral texts are the following: (1) Presenting Atypical Characters, (2) Fully Integrating the moral of the story, and (3) Using Gender Neutral Information.

The first intervention that is present in gender neutral texts which can be used to challenge gender stereotypes is presenting atypical characters. According to the narratives of the teachers, presenting characters who act different from the existing roles of individuals based on their gender attracts the interest of the students and makes them involved in the discussions. As opposed to the previous findings, teachers also mentioned that it also creates confusion to other students especially those who already have established strong perceptions on gender stereotypes.

“In terms of their [student] behavior, I don’t think there is a change. They already have these established beliefs even before going to school. And for us teachers, it is challenging to redefine that.” [Participant B, 07:42]

“With a very short time of online sessions we are having in the new normal, it is actually hard to say that stereotyping behavior decreased, but the usual reaction is that it opens up gender related discussion in class.” [Participant C, 01:36]

Another participant added that the students show interest in the story when gender- neutral information is used.

When using gender-neutral text “every one of them [students] showed interest in the story. They tend to listen more and interact during the class.” [Participant D, 00:15]

“I don’t think that it really changes their behavior but one thing that I can see that affects them is the moral of the story.” [Participant B, 07:42]

Modifying the existing pedagogy in literature using gender neutral text may take time and effort as some students have already established their perception even during their early years of their education. Two participants of the study admitted that despite using gender neutral stories and using activities to reinforce their gender stereotyping behavior, there are no visible changes observed. The participants stated that it does not directly show changes in student’s gender stereotyping behavior, rather, the contrasting ideas from the classical characters in story books and the atypical characters present in gender-neutral texts attracts the interest of the learners and opens their perspective on what role men and women play in the society.

“They [students] become more open in giving the other gender a chance to do the task when it comes to specific tasks that were commonly done by specific gender, this actually earns respect to one another.” [Participant E, 01:43]

The second intervention which can be used to modify the pedagogy of literature is fully integrating the moral of the story. Based on the experiences of teachers, this intervention raises the awareness of the students about the existing gender roles and how it should be addressed today. Aside from this, the moral of the story affects not the behavior of the students, rather, their emotions are touched which leads to the creation of an immediate but not lasting environment wherein everyone in the class is equal and respected.

“This is just based on my observations in children nowadays, roles associated with gender are not already a big deal among them. Unlike before, their generation is very unique. As I observed, it’s not a big deal for them if the activities are designated for one gender only. They participate actively despite that.” [Participant B, 01:49]

“Kids at their young age are facing a critical period of establishing gender-roles and other important details of the society. Having a thorough discussion about the story presented to them plays a valuable part. Instance is that, when it is portrayed in the story that a prince rescued a princess, we may also elaborate that it should not always be the case.” [Participant C, 00:42]

“In creating a gender-neutral classroom, one of the strategies that I can think of is to give my pupils the opportunity to choose and explain their own ideas about the discussion. Like in discussing the roles of the parents inside their house, I always ask them their personal experiences

before carefully incorporating the literary topic at hand.” [Participant E, 00:17]

The third intervention associated in Gender Neutral text is the act of using Gender Neutral Information that affects the students in a way wherein preschool students become more interested in the lesson. The teachers take charge in transforming the understanding of students to their authentic perception in gender roles. According to the participants, the students already had their own understanding about gender roles. Using Gender Neutral Information makes the students interested in the discussion, because it is part of the community and society that students need to understand, that is why teachers were asking questions about how the students understand the different roles of a person and using the right words to have a discussion that promotes equity among the class as everyone is part of the community they belong to.

5. Discussion

The following data are the summary and analysis of the responses that were gathered from the participants of the study.

5.1. What are the characteristics of gender-neutral literature?

From the data gathered among the respondents, the researchers employed Jung’s theory of Archetypes to examine the different recurring patterns in the literary text that Early Childhood Education teachers use in the classroom and to identify the characteristics of a gender-neutral literature. Based on the findings that were presented in the previous chapter, the context of animus and anima as well as the patterns of Individuality, Equality and Breaking Gender Norms are observed to be recurring between the suggested gender-neutral stories cited by the teachers from Early Childhood Education. To elaborate, the characteristics of gender-neutral texts are the following: (1) having atypical characters wherein men can dress like women and vice versa, (2) women may show masculinity while men can be feminine. (3) men could feel vulnerability, the need for assistance, and the sense of responsibility in having a family, while women can show superiority inside the house. (4) Lastly, women can play physical and noisy sports, and men can show creativity and artistry.

This coincides with the study conducted by Chick (2002) and Nebbia (2016). As stated in their study, a gender neutral literature must have characters who possess traits that is different from the existing belief of the people in the society (Nebbia, 2016) Aside from this, Chick (2002) emphasized that in order to challenge gender stereotypes, literary texts should show characters in both traditional and non-traditional professions. From this analysis, it can be seen that gender-neutral literature does not convey the inclusion of ungendered characters in a narrative, rather, teachers consider gender

neutral literature as stories that contradict the existing roles of characters which are dictated by their biological reproductive function. As stated by Khuman and Ghosal (2020), genderless narrative of stories may lead to unconscious bias towards men, as ungendered terms end up coinciding with universal which stands for male in western traditions.

This supports the research findings of McCabe et al. (2011) that gender is a structure deeply embedded in our society, including in children’s literature. The research highlights patterns that give us hope for the success of feminist attention to issues of disparity and remind us that continued disparities have important effects on our understandings of gender and ourselves.

5.2. How does literary texts affect the social construction of readers regarding gender roles?

The researchers have already surveyed countless literary texts, varying from children’s literature to contemporary literature, and it is noticeable that there are parts of these stories wherein bias on one gender to another was shown. Plucknette (2013) emphasized in their study that there is an underrepresentation of females in literary texts. Although this may benefit male readers, it unconsciously forces them to accept the existing gender stereotypes. Apparently, Bubriski and Gonzales- Guittar (2016) sees culture as a factor that makes gender stereotypes perpetuate. In this context, authors, and the creators of literature are still products of their societies and they are influenced even once by the belief which people around them share. The study of Arabacıoğlu and Kahraman (2017) added that the time wherein students are attending preschool is wherein they shape their perceptions towards their judgement on how gender is presented to them by the society.

This is supported by the study conducted by Tadayon-Nabavi (2012), they discussed Bandura’s social learning theory as a theory that is based on the idea that humans learn from the interactions that they have with others and through observation, people tend to develop similar behaviors. These two studies coincide with the statement given by one of the participants, as they stated that students, especially those who are in early childhood education level learn through their observation from society. Thus, from the responses of the participants of the study, even though children’s literature delimits the capabilities of individuals because of the perceptions that it builds starting from childhood, we cannot remove gender stereotypes presented in stories, especially those which were already published years ago.

5.3. What are the possible strategies that can be used to promote gender- neutral discussion of literature in the classroom?

In the narrative that is given by one of the participants of the study, it was emphasized that it is the teacher’s responsibility to have different strategies to use in the classroom because students have their own characteristics which are needed to be conformed with by the teacher. As shown in the findings section of the study, aside from using

gender neutral texts, the strategies which the teachers from early childhood education use to promote gender-neutral discussion of literature in the classroom were identified as the following:

Explaining how stories in classical children's books are different from real-life situations.

Most of the participants of the study mentioned in their narrative that explaining thoroughly the content of the stories, especially fictional stories is important on how students will be able to understand and develop their perception on the difference between real life and stories in children's books. According to their narratives, explaining these roles in children's stories can help them understand that a person's actions should not be limited based on their gender.

As third year students undertaking the subject of literature, the researchers noticed upon numerous analyses of stories that gender stereotypes are clearly manifested in literature, especially those which were created decades ago. We cannot get away from this fact and as teachers and future educators, we should create activities that would make students, especially children, understand the difference between a fictional story in the real world. One of the strategies that is recommended in the study of Hedmann (2016) is the use of combining both fiction and non-fiction literature such as news articles in the discussion related to gender. This approach shows the importance of letting the students not just depend on the book itself to learn concepts about life, which is agreed upon by one of the participants in her narrative. In addition, the result from the study of Frawley (2008) implies that children tend to distort and misinterpret information that is why thorough discussion should be given to students when presenting concepts about gender. Furthermore, Peterson & Lach (1996, as cited in Nebbia, 2016) acknowledged that educators have a duty and the capacity to use children's literature to elicit change towards a gender-neutral society through the learning process. One way is to explain how the real world differs from the world presented in classical children's books. It can be demonstrated through challenging the gender-related concepts in the story. Teachers may intrigue students by asking unusual questions that might challenge their perceptions. It can be asking what-ifs questions such as, "What if Sleeping Beauty was a boy?" (Temple, 1993, as cited in Singh, 1998) or "What if the prince prefers to be dressed in gowns?" Through this strategy, teachers can emphasize that reality is not confined within the story. It is supported by Lev Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development, which states that there are areas that the learners can only access with mentorship. In this case, the teacher can influence their beliefs that there is more than how stories define genders. In this case, the teacher can influence their beliefs that there is more than how stories define genders.

Brainstorming and Re-enactment

Some of the approaches that ECE teachers usually practice in the classroom to promote gender-neutral discussion of literature is brainstorming and re-enactment. It is where teachers ask the students their opinion about their experiences or observations on how gender creates certain roles in their family or make them visualize the activities that can be done both by boys and girls.

From the narrative of one of the participants of the study it was suggested that letting students explain their ideas and share their personal experiences foster discussion on the roles which individuals can do without the limitation brought by their gender. Another participant reckons that giving real life examples wherein activities are not limited to just one gender is a great strategy which teachers can use to promote gender neutral discussion of literature in the class.

The strategy of facilitating group discussions was also identified in the study of Ryan et al. (2013) as an effective approach to open students' perspectives on gender and conforming to gender roles. Through this, classes will not just focus on the literary text itself but also in recognizing unjust treatment in the society and create student's own responses on the issues with regards to gender. Aligned with the strategies that are being used by participants, Hedmann (2016) provided a similar approach called teacher framed approach, this is a strategy wherein teachers provide discussion points in order to assist students in understanding the literature and then gradually releasing the responsibility to the students for them to discuss their insights and experiences that can be applied to the topic. In the researcher's experience of studying literature, it is evident that discussions are livelier when students are asked questions that they can easily apply in real life. This is what the suggestion implies, that creating a real environment fosters engaging discussion of literature as well as opening deep discussion including issues regarding gender. Moreover, this second strategy suggests employing brainstorming and re-enactment in ways that the students can share observations of gender roles. It can be done through dialogues between the teacher and the children. Teachers can use literature to initiate a discourse that exposes injustice (Nebbia, 2016). This strategy agrees with the Feminist Literary Theory, which seeks to instill in readers a critical awareness of the execution and functioning of repressive mechanisms of patriarchal culture in the text (Yaqoob, 2011).

Carefully selecting words that are used in discussion.

One of the most critical parts of teaching students, especially those who are in their primary years, is being aware and careful of the words that are being used in the classroom. The teachers who were interviewed shared one of the strategies which is used in the classroom along with the utilization of gender-neutral texts.

Teachers tend to unconsciously differentiate boys and girls through comparing their attitude from each other based on their gender. The result of the study made by Hedmann (2016) had similar results wherein teachers also see the use of gender binaries as one of the matters which teachers should

be careful of because as students have interaction with language, they are also being socialized in what it means to be a boy and girl according to what the society tells them to be. This statement is supported by the study of Meland (2020), stating that children are influenced by what they hear and see. According to the same study, this develops knowledge about gender roles in the case of the students. Furthermore, at a young age, children are still developing their moral and social views, which can be affected by the people around them. This is in line with the Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura (1977) which asserts that the environment influences the behavior of the children as they tend to model and imitate the people around them.

5.4. How can teaching literature be modified in terms of using gender neutral text?

From the data gathered through the participants, the perception of the Early Childhood Education teacher on how teaching literature can be modified through the use of gender-neutral text. As shown in the finding of the study, the interventions associated with the use of gender-neutral text are the following: (1) Presenting Atypical Characters, (2) Fully Integrating the moral of the story, (3) Using Gender Neutral Information.

The teachers of the Early Childhood Education students emphasized that the moral of the stories that their pupils read plays an important role in making them aware of these gender roles that needs to be addressed today and it leads to creating a respectful and equal environment in the classroom. One of the participants observed that when the main idea of the story is fully integrated and understood by the students it helps create an environment wherein everyone is respected.

The implications of this study show that there is no significant effect that can be observed among students of Early Childhood Education despite being given interventions that would decrease their gender stereotyping behavior. As stated by a participant, it is hard to redefine gender stereotypes that have already been established to the students even before they enter the school. This conclusion coincides with the result of the study made by Frawley (2008) and Green et. al (2004) wherein they see that the use of gender-neutral information did not imply changes in the student's behavior, instead, it only confuses children because they already have strong perceptions on how gender roles are applied based on what they observed in the society.

In addition, the researchers were able to get new insights on how children nowadays do not see gender as a factor that dictates the role of each individual. As observed by one of the participants of the study, it is noticeable in children today that it is not a big deal for them whether a man is doing a women's job and the other way around.

This observation may come from the upbringing of children and what they pick up on the people around them.

The article written by Gaag (2017), emphasized that the generation which is labeled as "millennials" show different attitudes towards sharing of houseworks as well as doing livelihood. As stated, this new way of running relationships at home on how individuals should not be limited by their gender can be modeled and passed on from parents to children. Aside from this, there is a growing trend of gender-neutral parenting wherein new parents, who are identified as millennials in particular, do not dictate the gender of their children. According to Westbrook (2018), millennials who are becoming parents approach child-raising which leans on being gender-neutral. This shift plays a significant role on how children today are being exposed to equality in gender roles as well as going beyond the traditional gender stereotypes.

6. Conclusion

By all counts, and with proven results, the researchers came upon the following conclusions:

6.1. Gender neutral literature are literary texts which do not imply having ungendered characters, rather, these are stories which depict characters who went beyond the roles which their society determines based on their gender. Aside from this, the moral of the story may also be looked upon when finding gender-neutral text as it can easily influence the affective domain of the students, making them reflect on their stereotyping behaviors.

6.2. Literary texts influence the social construction of children's perception towards gender, making them associate ideas and things based on the gender of an individual. Aside from this, children tend to be

6.3. more influenced by stories when the roles are played by human characters.

6.4. Teachers can help create a gender-neutral discussion of literature through the use of gender neutral texts which is reinforced with approaches such as explaining how children's stories differ from real life, brainstorming and re-enactment of activities which is inclusive to all gender and carefully selecting words that do not indicate gender binary.

6.5. There are no significant changes observed by teachers in the behavior of the preschool students even when they use gender-neutral texts. This may stem from the fact that gender roles are not a big deal in today's generation but extensive studies are needed to draw a definite conclusion on this problem.

7. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researchers came up with the following recommendations:

7.1. Future researchers should look into identifying the characteristics of a gender-neutral text using other theories aside from Jung's Archetypal Criticism. The use of other

theories may help concretize the ideas on how teachers may choose stories for their classes to challenge gender stereotypes.

7.2. Explore the use of animal characters in stories and how it can help in preventing the notion of gender roles which children get from the influence of human characters in children stories.

7.3. Experiment with other activities that cultivate a fair environment for every individual to accept growth and understanding for the success of cultivating a wide-range equal society.

7.4. Create a research program that would open discussions on the perception of people towards gender roles and give way for other researchers to make inference through the use of experiments and observations regarding the implications of using gender-neutral text on challenging gender stereotypes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researchers wish to convey their heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to the persons who in one way or another have extended the much-needed help and inspiration during the study to make this paper possible.

First and foremost, we would like to offer this project to our Almighty God, for He bestowed us with wisdom, strength, and courage in order to finish and share to others this research.

We would also like to extend our deepest gratitude to our families, for the encouragement, patience, and understanding which helped us in the completion of this paper. We are also indebted to the faculty of La Consolacion University Philippines' College of Arts, Sciences, and Education for giving us the opportunity to be included in this meaningful affair.

We, the researchers, also would like to show our genuine appreciation to our research adviser, Prof. Jay Mark B. Santos, for his never-ending patience and support during the accomplishment of this study. Without his passion and guidance, we would not be able to gain confidence with our study.

Lastly, we would like to express our gratitude to the early childhood education teachers who actively participated to make this study possible.

8. REFERENCES

- [1] Abad, C., & Pruden, S. M. (2013). Do storybooks really break children's gender stereotypes? *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4, Article 986. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00986>
- [2] Aina, O., & Cameron, P. (2011). Why Does Gender Matter? Counteracting Stereotypes with Young Children. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 39, 11-20. https://www.eccnetwork.net/sites/default/files/media/file/Why_Does_Gender_Matter_Counteracting_Stereotypes_With_Young_Children_Olaiya_E_Aina_and_Petronella_A_Cameron.pdf
- [3] Arabacıoğlu, B. & Bağçeli-Kahraman, P. (2017). The relation between the gender stereotypes of children and the gender perceptions of their parents. *Curr Res Educ*, 3(3), 95-104. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324727582_The_Relation_between_the_Gender_Stereotypes_of_Children_and_the_Gender_Perceptions_of_their_Parents
- [4] Barrett, [Laurence]. (2019, March 16). Animus and Anima: Gender as Archetypes of Humanity [Online Forum Post]. LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/animus-anima-gender-archetypes-humanity-laurence-barrett-1f>
- [5] Bradway, R. (2017, March 1). Contemporary Gender Roles in Children's Literature by Joshua Heinsz - Norman Rockwell Museum - The Home for American Illustration. Norman Rockwell Museum. <https://www.nrm.org/2013/04/contemporary-gender-roles-in-childrens-literature-by-joshua-heinsz/>
- [6] Brower, A. P. (2017). Gender Roles and Gender Stereotypes in Four Newbery Award-Winning Books. *SLIS Connecting*, 6(1), 24–36. <https://doi.org/10.18785/slis.0601.06>
- [7] Bubriski-McKenzie, A., & Gonzalez-Guittar, S. (2016). Children's Literature and Gender. *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118663219.wbegss504>
- [8] Chick, Kay. (2002). Challenging Gender Stereotypes through Literature: Picture Books with Strong Female Characters. *Journal of Children's Literature*, 28(2), 19-24. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ658959>
- [9] Elçi, A., & Devran, B. U. (2014). A Narrative Research Approach: The Experiences of Social Media Support in Higher Education. *Learning and Collaboration Technologies. Designing and Developing Novel Learning Experiences*, 8523(1), 36–42. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-07482-5_4
- [10] Flood, A. (2017). Storybooks with human characters can influence a child's social behavior. *Newsela*. <https://newsela.com>.
- [11] Frawley, T. J. (2008). Gender schema and prejudicial recall: How children misremember, fabricate, and distort gendered picture book information. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 22(3), 291–303. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02568540809594628>
- [12] Foresman, D.B. (2016). Representations and Impacts of Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Ideals in Children's Literature for Young Children. (Unpublished Manuscript). College of Education and Human Performance, University of Central Florida
- [13] Frieden B., & Laffin, J. (2019). Breaking Gender Barriers Through Literature in the Elementary and Pre-School Classroom. [Unpublished Manuscript]. Saint Catherine University
- [14] Gaag, N. (2017). WOMEN'S WORK? CHALLENGING GENDER ROLES IN THE PHILIPPINES. *Views and Voices*. <https://views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2017/10/womens-work-challenging-gender-norms-philippines/>
- [15] Goble, P., Martin, C. L., Hanish, L. D., & Fabes, R. A. (2012). Children's Gender-Typed Activity Choices Across Preschool Social Contexts. *Sex Roles*, 67(7–8), 435–451. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-012-0176-9>
- [16] Green, V. A., Bigler, R., & Catherwood, D. (2004). The Variability and Flexibility of Gender-Typed Toy Play: A Close Look at Children's Behavioral Responses to Counterstereotypic Models. *Sex Roles*, 51(7/8), 371–386. <https://doi.org/10.1023/b:sers.0000049227.05170.aa>

- [17] Haruna-Banke, L., & Ozewe Banke, R. (2017). Stereotyping Gender in Children's Literature. *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 5(5), 77–81. <http://www.questjournals.org/jrhss/papers/vol5-issue5/L557781.pdf>.
- [18] Hedmann, A. (2016). Challenging Gender Norms: How Teachers Can Reinforce a Challenging Gender Norms [Unpublished Manuscript]. University of Toronto Libraries.
- [19] Bradway, R. (2017). Contemporary Gender Roles in Children's Literature by Joshua Heinsz - Norman Rockwell Museum - The Home for American Illustration. Norman Rockwell Museum. <https://www.nrm.org/2013/04/contemporary-gender-roles-in-childrens-literature-by-joshua-heinsz/>
- [20] Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>
- [21] Ifegbesan, A. (2010). Gender-Stereotypes Belief and Practices in the Classroom: The Nigerian Post-Primary School Teachers. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, 10(4), 29-38. <https://doi.org/10.1.1.1059.7158>
- [22] Khuman, B. J., & Ghosal, M. (2019). Literature for building an inclusive society: Ungendered narrative and its impact on the daily life of queer individuals. *Moderna Språk*, 113(2), 108–123. <https://ojs.ub.gu.se/index.php/modernasprak/article/view/4670/3758>
- [23] Lee, L. (2008). Understanding Gender through Disney's Marriages: A Study of Young Korean Immigrant Girls. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 1, 11–18. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-008-0260-5>.
- [24] Liebig, K. (2016). Gender-Stereotyping in Children's Literature. A Case Study on the children's novel "Matilda" by Roald Dahl [Unpublished Manuscript]. Language and Gender, University of Erfurt
- [25] McCabe, J., Fairchild, E., Grauerholz, L., Pescosolido, B. A., & Tope, D. (2011). Gender in Twentieth-Century Children's Books. *Gender & Society*, 25(2), 197–226. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243211398358>
- [26] Meland, A. T. (2020). Challenging gender stereotypes through a transformation of a fairy tale. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 6, 911–922. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293x.2020.183658>.
- [27] Muasya, J. N., & Kahiga, R. M. (2018). "Invisible Obstacle" to Gender Equality: Gender Stereotype Messages in Early Childhood Education Books in Kenya. *Global Journal of Educational Studies*, 4(1), 69. <https://doi.org/10.5296/gjes.v4i1.13074>
- [28] Nebbia, C., (2016). Gender stereotypes in children's literature [Unpublished Manuscript]. University of Northern Iowa
- [29] Plucknette, K., (2013). The Portrayal of Gender in the Secondary English Texts and its Effects on Students [Unpublished Paper]. Department of Education. St. John Fisher College
- [30] Pretorius, L., & Klapwijk, N. (2016). Reading comprehension in South African schools: Are teachers getting it, and getting it right? *Per Linguam*, 32(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.5785/32-1-627>
- [31] Rishi, C. (2020). Gender Stereotypes. [Unpublished Manuscript]. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.34843.28969>.
- [32] Roller, M., & Lavrakas, P. (2015). *Applied Qualitative Research Design: A Total Quality Framework Approach* (1st ed.). Guilford Publications.
- [33] Ryan, C. L., Patraw, J. M., & Bednar, M. (2013). Discussing Princess Boys and Pregnant Men: Teaching About Gender Diversity and Transgender Experiences Within an Elementary School Curriculum. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 10(1–2), 83–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2012.718540>.
- [34] Saltmarsh, S. (2009). Becoming economic subjects: agency, consumption and popular culture in early childhood. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 30(1), 47–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596300802643082>
- [35] Siemens, G. (2004). Connectivism: A Learning Theory for the Digital Age. *International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning*, 2(1), 3–10. https://www.itdl.org/Journal/Jan_05/Jan_05.pdf
- [36] Singh, M. (1997, November 30). Gender Issues in Children's Literature. ERIC Digest., 1998. ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED424591>
- [37] Tadayon Nabavi, R. (2012). Bandura's Social Learning Theory & Social Cognitive Learning Theory [Unpublished Manuscript]. Department of Psychology, University of Science and Culture
- [38] Westbrook, G. (2021, March 23). The rise of gender-neutral parenting. Euromonitor. Retrieved September 4, 2021, from <https://www.euromonitor.com/article/rise-gender-neutral-parenting>
- [39] Yaqoob, M. (2011). Reader and text: Literary theory and teaching of literature in the twenty first century. 2011 International Conference on Languages, Literature and Linguistics IPEDR 26, 511-515. <http://ipedr.com/vol26/102-ICLL%202011-L10180.pdf>
- [40] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: the Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press