Introduction to the Gender Analysis of a Textbook

Goals	Supporting the ability to think analytically, learning the basic principles of the gender analysis method of textbooks
Duration	10 minutes
Difficulty	High school
Tools and space	Seminar room appropriate to the size of the group, computer technology, textbooks

This type of analysis focuses on how a particular educational tool takes into account the differences between the roles of men and women in society. It focuses on what activities, images, values or language are associated with men and women. This type of analysis aims not only to describe the state of current textbooks, but also to highlight where gender roles or stereotypes are reproduced.

Structure of the educational situation

- At the beginning of the seminar we will introduce the topic of the lesson.
- We will start the lesson with a brainstorming session on gender analysis. We find out
 what the students imagine by this term and whether they already have experience
 with it.
- We then invite students to work in e-learning to analyze the visual aspect of the textbook.
- Together with the students we summarize and reflect on their work.
- Invite students to work with the text part of the textbook in e-learning.
- Again, reflect on the work in the online activity.
- Enough time should be given for reflection. What was difficult about the analysis? How can the results be summarized? What other materials could be analyzed in a similar way? What other questions does the analysis generate? What else did the students notice?

Modification of the seminar

- Students can hypothesize how the analysis will turn out and then compare their results with that hypothesis.
- Similarly, you can work with other textbooks or textbooks for other subjects.

Introductory text

- You're going through one of the most challenging times of your life right now, but remember: "You know what you are? You are a miracle. You are unique. In all the years that the world has been a world, there has never been a child like you. No one has had your legs, your hands, your skillful fingers, your movements. You could be Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Beethoven. You can do anything. You are truly a miracle. And when you grow up, how could you hurt someone who is a miracle just like you?" (Pablo Casals from Canfield, J.: Chicken Soup for the Soul.)
- This text appeals to students' perceptions of their own worth. The gender aspect is
 particularly present in the choice of examples, where only men are chosen
 (Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Beethoven). Given that this is the introductory text of
 the chapter, the text may have a negative effect on the motivation of girls in the
 classroom.

Example of Czech Textbook



The picture is from the textbook of the Citizenship Education for the 8th grade of primary schools in the Czech Republic, published in 2005. It is a chapter dedicated to human personality. Even without knowledge of the Czech language, it is obvious that two of the three examples of personalities are men: a famous violinist and a successful footballer, both depicted while performing the activity for which they became famous. A single woman, then, is most often associated with caring for the poor - i.e. a "female" activity. Moreover, her photograph bears only a very loose relationship to the activity in which she was successful. In addition, it is also possible to draw students' attention to the fact that the author of the opening quote is also a male writer. It is also possible to discuss with students whether the choice of a nun suggests that if a woman wants to be successful she must give up her family.

Example of Polish Textbook



The picture is from the Polish textbook of civic education published in 2021. The picture is part of the chapter "Citizenship and nationality". The figures mentioned are explicitly described as role models for the implementation of valuable civic ideas. Marcin Gortat is mentioned for his philanthropic activities linked to his successful sporting career. Janusz Korczak was a doctor from the Warsaw ghetto who refused to leave the ghetto and perished in the Treblinka concentration camp. Franciszek Stefczyk is an example of socially beneficial entrepreneurship. Irena Sendler represents civic courage because she was involved in helping Jews during World War II. Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski serves as an example of a church official who stood up to dictatorship. Marek Kotanski was involved in helping people excluded from society. During the analysis, it is important to note that although only one of the six is a woman, she is used as an example of courage and thus does not occupy any of the stereotypically "feminine" roles.

Example of Slovak Textbook



The picture is from the Slovak textbook for the 7th year of primary schools. It is a sample from the chapter on the court system and shows roles in the courtroom. The picture is an example of a balanced approach to gender roles. In particular, women are strongly represented in the role of judges. Women thus have an active role in a professional position. It is also important to note the form of the figure. It is a drawing and not a photograph. The drawing therefore depicts a model reality and the ratio of women to men is therefore probably the intention of the authors of the textbook. The topic can be developed with students by investigating the ratio of men and women in the contemporary judiciary.

Conclusion

Finally, we offer students tips on other additional activities. For example, students can produce didactic analyses of other types of textbooks in a similar way in the form of homework.