

EFL textbooks and heteronormativity: Teachers' and students' interaction with textbook
discourses in the classroom

Ana Sofia Torres Villamil, Karol Yulyana Mora Medina y Juan Sebastian González Ruiz

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Zulma Xiomara Rueda García

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Human Sciences Faculty

School of Languages

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Dedication

This research is dedicated to us, a group of work since day one that resulted in a group of friends for life. To the dedication and hard work that involved this research project.

With love, to all the women and LGBTQIA+ people out there existing and resisting.

Acknowledgments

We thank our research director for her guidance and understanding, without her help this would not have been possible. Thank you for teaching us how to resist and advocate for ourselves and our causes.

And thank you to our participants for having been part of this project.

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Abstract

Title: EFL textbooks and heteronormativity: Teachers' and students' interaction with textbook discourses in the classroom*

Authors: Ana Sofía Torres Villamil, Karol Yulyana Mora Medina and Juan Sebastian Gonzalez Ruiz**

Key Words: Heteronormativity, EFL, Textbooks, Classroom Interaction, Gender Diversity, Inclusion.

Description:

This research paper examines heteronormative discourses within the "Cutting Edge" EFL textbook and explores how teachers and students engage with these discourses in the classroom through exploratory qualitative research, including content analysis, linguistic analysis, and discourse analysis. The research underscores that the textbook perpetuates conventional gender norms and heteronormative perspectives, failing to actively challenge established norms, even within a thematic unit aimed at discussing gender stereotypes. Genuine queer inclusion is found to be lacking, emphasizing the need for a more balanced approach. Key findings encompass students' emotional engagement with the textbook's content and the contrast with their passive reactions, leading to a rich exchange of ideas in the classroom. The study acknowledges the challenges faced by both students and teachers in addressing sensitive topics, often leading to limited influence on textbook content. The teacher plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between the textbook and students, enriching the learning experience with additional materials and fostering critical thinking. In conclusion, this research expands beyond analyzing textbook content to explore how teachers and students interact with, challenge, and transform heteronormative discourses within the classroom. It emphasizes the need for contextualized materials that reflect gender diversity and create spaces for discussion, providing valuable insights for students, educators, and institutions. Future research may further investigate teacher resource textbooks, additional language skills, and diverse classroom contexts using the same textbook to deepen our understanding of this issue.

* Bachelor Thesis

** Faculty of Human Sciences. School of Languages. Director Zulma Xiomara Rueda García

Resumen

Título: Libros de texto de inglés como lengua extranjera y heteronormatividad: la interacción de profesores y estudiantes con los discursos de los libros de texto en el aula

Autores: Ana Sofía Torres Villamil, Karol Yulyana Mora Medina y Juan Sebastián González Ruiz

Palabras clave: Inglés como lengua extranjera, Heteronormatividad, Libros de texto, interacción en el aula, diversidad de género, inclusión.

Descripción:

Este artículo de investigación examina los discursos heteronormativos dentro del libro de texto de inglés como lengua extranjera "Cutting Edge" y explora cómo los profesores y estudiantes interactúan con estos discursos en el aula a través de una investigación cualitativa exploratoria, que incluye análisis de contenido, análisis lingüístico y análisis de discurso. La investigación subraya que el libro de texto perpetúa normas de género convencionales y perspectivas heteronormativas, sin desafiar activamente las normas establecidas, incluso en una unidad temática destinada a discutir estereotipos de género. Se encuentra que la inclusión genuina de la diversidad sexual es insuficiente, lo que resalta la necesidad de un enfoque más equilibrado. Los hallazgos clave abarcan la participación emocional de los estudiantes con el contenido del libro de texto y el contraste con sus reacciones pasivas, lo que conduce a un rico intercambio de ideas en el aula. El estudio reconoce los desafíos enfrentados tanto por estudiantes como por profesores al abordar temas sensibles, lo que a menudo resulta en una influencia limitada en el contenido del libro de texto. El profesor desempeña un papel crucial en cerrar la brecha entre el libro de texto y los estudiantes, enriqueciendo la experiencia de aprendizaje con materiales adicionales y fomentando el pensamiento crítico. En conclusión, esta investigación va más allá del análisis del contenido del libro de texto para explorar cómo los profesores y estudiantes interactúan, desafían y transforman los discursos heteronormativos en el aula. Hace hincapié en la necesidad de materiales contextualizados que reflejen la diversidad de género y crean espacios para el debate, proporcionando ideas valiosas para estudiantes, educadores e instituciones. Investigaciones futuras pueden profundizar en los libros de recursos para profesores, en habilidades lingüísticas adicionales y en contextos de aula diversos utilizando el mismo libro de texto para mejorar la comprensión de este tema

* Trabajo de Grado

** Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Escuela de Idiomas. Director Zulma Xiomara Rueda Garcia.

Introduction

Colombia has always been considered a traditional country in which people that do not belong to what is socially considered as the norm have been left behind. In fact, this is not a phenomenon that only occurs in Colombian society, but it is a worldwide problem due to societies being driven under the same system which has naturalized the predominance of male domination over not only women but also non-heteronormative individuals (Vela, 2014).

Heteronormativity has been defined by Warner (1991) as the set of power relationships in which heterosexuality is normalized, idealized, and defined as the sexual human condition (as cited in Rzondzinski, 2017, p 47). In addition, Rojas (2016) stated that heteronormative acts as a compulsive regime that besides establishing unequal relationships between genders, it also reproduces and perpetuates them through several mechanisms without the need of justifying them rationally becoming naturally mandatory and contingent.

As a consequence of the imposition of heteronormativity, conflicts in the development of sexual and gender identity emerge (Rzondzinski, 2017, p 47.). These issues are not disregarded in the educational field since these institutions can serve as a vehicle to reproduce ideologies such as those heteronormative ones as it is seen in the studies (eg. the study conducted by Moyano and Durango, 2016 in schools of Bogotá). This restraining prevents the development of new pedagogical pathways that allow the construction of an independent and integrated gender identity without being led towards a heteronormative social order (2016).

In order to attempt to address this matter, some efforts have been made with public politics. An example for this is the creation of the Sentence T-478-153 which calls the protocols of the institutions into question after the unfortunate suicide of a student that suffered from bullying for

his sexual orientation who previously had sought support from the educational community and did not receive any escort from them (Corte Suprema de Justicia, 2015). In spite of these efforts, much more needs to be done. It is not enough challenging this paradigm in terms of protocols, but it is necessary to address the materials which take place in the practices that are present within the classrooms; for instance, the textbooks that are used in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes.

In fact, textbooks used in EFL classrooms are mostly produced by mainstream publishers which means that they are not adapted to the specific contexts, that is the reason why it is necessary to approach the issue of gender in these materials. In this order of ideas, Canale and Furtado (2021) observed that in Uruguay, as books are decontextualized, there is no space to discuss relevant issues such as gender. Besides, Canale (2015) pointed out that official institutions and policymakers purposefully evade bringing public discourses of EFL teaching and learning, and they are limited to matters of gaining grammar and vocabulary for the sake of improving oneself or better global interaction, without socially contextualizing education (as cited in Canale & Furtado, 2021). Nonetheless, It is not only politically influenced, but economically as well. Gray (2013) stated that “heteronormativity is the default position when profits may be at stake” (as cited in Moore, 2020, p. 5). Furthermore, it is argued in the text “Understanding heteronormativity in ELT textbooks: a practical taxonomy” that the profitable performance of a textbook relies on being global in order to reach as much publicity as possible. However, this so-called global vision disregards diversity, even though globalization is highly related to the idea of people with different realities being interconnected. It is then that at the moment of selecting the contents, publishers privilege traditionalist conceptions over the progressivist ones (Moore, 2020).

Fortunately, even though the textbooks mostly legitimize heteronormative discourses, there have been some attempts to defy these practices. As a matter of fact, Canale and Furtado (2021) found that teachers have a great responsibility for creating spaces in which students are encouraged to raise their voices and share their opinions. As well, it was observed that students “denaturalize available discourses in the textbook and transform them to fit their own representational and rhetorical purposes” (Kress, 2008, as cited in 2021, p. 64). This conveys that the established system is challenged by teachers’ and students’ agency when they encounter the textbooks in the EFL classes as they are pieces of material that can be discussed and contested in the classrooms, not merely neutral or objective vehicles of information and knowledge (2021).

1. Research Question

This research project will attempt to answer the following question: How do teachers and students negotiate the heteronormative discourses presented in the Cutting-Edge textbook for advanced learners?

2. Research Objectives

2.1. General objective

To analyze the heteronormative discourses present in the Cutting Edge book used in English as a Foreign Language class and the interactions of teachers and students with them.

2.2. Specific objectives

To select gender-critical points present in the textbook.

To identify the types heteronormative discourses present in the Cutting Edge textbook.

To describe teacher's and students' interactions with heteronormative discourses from the book in a class environment,

To recognize teachers' and students' reactions towards heteronormative discourses.

3. Justification

The principal motivation of this research project is not only to contribute to the heteronormative discourse analysis on EFL textbooks but also to provide new information to the specific field of studying the teachers' and students' interaction with the heteronormative discourses present in the textbooks used in class (Canale, 2020, as cited in Canale & Furtado 2021). By pointing out the heteronormativity that can be present in the textbook used in the classrooms, it is offered a wider and critical view that adapts the educational practices to the reality of the current society. With this, at the same time of promoting a safe and equitable atmosphere for learners to explore their own identities freely, it is possible to establish spaces for the exaltation of variety (Moyano & Durango, 2016). As teachers of EFL, it is important to have access to different views to approach these heteronormative discourses to open room for reflection and critical thinking.

Finally, as it has been observed, very little research has been made about this topic in the Colombian context, specifically related to the analysis of the interactions of students and teachers with textbooks used in the EFL field. However, it would help to build a bigger corpus of data about this matter in order to open more spaces in which these discourses are problematized and contested.

4. Theoretical Framework

4.1 Related Research

4.1.1 Heteronormative discourses in the classroom

Heteronormative discourses are strongly rooted in the foundations of society affecting different sectors of it. The educational sphere is not an exception to this because the actors present in the field are influenced by these notions. In fact, Moyano and Durango (2016) assert that students who consciously or unconsciously try to challenge heteronormative practices such as gender roles imposition, end up feeling marginalized by other students. Additionally, the fear that these students present is not only with peers, but also alters teacher-student interactions (Erazo, 2020). In this order of ideas, teachers play an important role when facing these discourses. For example, Vargas and Carvalho (2011) express that the vocabulary used by teachers when addressing their students can reproduce gender stereotypes based on heteronormativity that affects the construction of identity. Finally, it is important to highlight that teachers belonging to the LGBTQ+ community see the problem and try to defy it, however, they dread the aftermath coming from the institutions, the administrative staff, other educators, and even students (Oliveira, 2017).

4.1.2 Heteronormative discourses in the textbooks

The discussions of matters related to gender identities have resulted in the development of public policies in the Latin American context. An example for this is the research conducted by Rojas (2016) states that the Argentinian Ministry of Education implemented the usage of a primer called “Cartilla de Educación Sexual Integrada” (ESI) for secondary students in which the author based his work on different thematic axis to analyze each of them. As a result, he discovered that in the primer it is not indicated that heteronormativity is the cause for the exclusion of people that do not belong to the norm, but what this really pursues is to divide people into what is considered

by society as “normal” and “abnormal” (2016). In this order of ideas, some authors have proposed a way to categorize the type of heteronormative discourses existing in the ESL textbooks. In fact, Paiz (2015) proposes some “degrees of heteronormativity” which are “heteronormative”, “low-heteronormative”, and “non-heteronormative”. Besides, Moore (2020) suggests a more detailed classification from the lowest to the highest level of heteronormative discourses called a “practical taxonomy of representational heteronormativity”. The difference between these two stratifications is that Moore provides some specific situations that are present in the textbooks which serve as an example of how to approach this material.

4.1.3 Teachers’ and students’ interaction with heteronormative discourse in the textbooks

It is important to point out that plenty of research has been made about identifying these patterns in the EFL textbooks, but few have been investigated about the interactions of the social actors (teacher and students) with them. For example, Canale and Furtado (2021) conducted a study in Uruguay in which they affirm that textbooks are not a neutral material, but contain institutionalized conceptions that shape the knowledge that is transmitted in a class by legitimizing heteronormativity. Moreover, Sunderland et al. (2002) established “*gender critical points*” which consist of situations given by the book that allow problematizing gender issues in the classroom. By having this in mind they examine two critical points concerning two discourse text aspects: “*naturalizing heteronormativity*” and “*avoiding addressing gender issues*” in class. Finally, they concluded that even though EFL textbooks do not offer many opportunities to address these matters, teachers and students are more willing to open spaces for discussion by denaturalizing these heteronormative practices exposed by the textbooks in EFL classes (2021). It is important to mention that due to the lack of studies to refer to this specific matter, a gap was found and the intention of this project is to contribute to the filling of it.

4.2 Theoretical Foundations

4.2.1 *Heteronormative discourse*

Heteronormative discourse consists of ways of thinking, marked by the mandates of the dominant knowledge that each society determines as legitimate and that are at the same time reproducers of the masculine social order (Bourdieu, 1996). Furthermore, Moyano and Durango (2016) asserted that heteronormative discourse is a communicative event that predisposes the collective imaginary, where the "correct" is exclusively what is known and what would be well seen in the eyes of society. The reproduction of these discourses demands people to be active by keeping preconceived conceptions such as gender identity according to what has been pre-established without trespassing the boundaries of what it entails to be a woman or a man (2016).

In order to develop a research project about heteronormative discourses it is important to explain what discourses entail. Following this order of ideas, discourse is defined by Foucault (1997) as a regime framework of existence that is present in all reality, which is known and accepted by the speakers of a language and which is constantly in circulation. In addition, Henry and Tator (2002) explain that

"Discourse is the way in which language is used socially to convey broad historical meanings. It is language identified by the social conditions of its use, by who is using it, and under what conditions. Language can never be 'neutral' because it bridges our personal and social worlds" (p. 25)

Taking into account these definitions one can say that heteronormative discourses are present in everyday life and in different aspects of the social sphere and it is seen as a standard that people have to fulfill.

4.2.2 Heteronormativity as the rule

Heterosexual normativity or heteronormativity is interpreted by Rangel (2018) as an ideology that is constituted throughout the centuries as the social, cultural, and political system that ubiquitously conditions our understanding and agency with respect to sex and sexuality. Besides, Warner and Berlant (2002) stipulate that heteronormativity refers to the various practices of social regulation that concur to make the correspondence between biological sex, social expression of gender, and sexual preference as the norm (as cited in Marshall, 2018).

Through this distinction between what is being masculine and feminine, the patriarchal system structures people and social relations around gender in a dichotomous, exclusive, and interdependent way (Vela, 2014). Due to this separation of roles, the work of naturalization and essentialization to justify subtle domination is impeccable, and heteronormativity legitimizes and normalizes the use of domination over women and other men (2014). Unfortunately, the desertion of the cisgender heterosexual female and male imposed roles would bring social consequences and abuses against the rights of non-heteronormative people, forcing them to adopt a corresponding role foisted by society at the moment of birth, forcing them to be outcasted for identifying themselves as different from the norm (Erazo, 2020).

4.2.3 Heteronormative discourses in the education sphere

As a way to assess heteronormativity discourses in English Language Teaching (ELT) books, Moore (2020) suggests “A practical taxonomy of representational heteronormativity” in which the author classifies these discourses into categories. The first category is called “Explicit heterosexism”, it consists of the appraisal of heterosexuality over other gender and sexual identities that are also viewed as deviant. The second category is named “Heteronormative erasure”, this one involves using heterosexuality as the standard when talking about relationships, especially

romantic ones, removing non-heterosexual representation. The third category is labeled “Heteronormative marginalization”, it embodies the inclusion of non-heterosexual portrayal, but it is done through segregation and stigmatization. The fourth category is “Heteronormative mainstreaming” which depicts non-heterosexual relationship models, however, they imitate heterosexual stereotypes. The last category is “Queer inclusion”, and in this type “queer inclusion is a well-balanced form of representation that features people in various forms of relationships, not all of which conform to Western heteronormative paradigms” (2020, p. 7).

For the purpose of this research, it is important to clarify aspects such as representation and “gender-critical points”. Representation is seen as “ a semiotic practice through which discourse producers construct the social world to present it to their audience, or, in this case, how textbook discourse presents social reality to the learners and the teacher” (Canale & Furtado, 2021, p. 61). And gender-critical points are occasions where gender issues are brought into discussion in the classroom for teachers and students when negotiating with the EFL textbook (2021).

Finally, given that the material to be analyzed is a textbook, it is important to mention that they are commercially created products that are both curriculum and cultural artifacts that help to define what languages represent in specific ways (Gray, 2013). Nonetheless, Van Dijk (2019) states in his book *The Evolution of Heteronormativity in EFL textbooks* that historically, curriculums have been used as a vehicle to perpetuate what elites can benefit from which preserves power relationships and oppression. As a consequence, textbooks are not an exception and they show how the creation process seeks to “including the culture, history, morals, behaviors, norms, and values of the dominant group (i.e. upper- and middle-class, white, heterosexual men) in textbooks and presenting them as natural or neutral and thereby ultimately rendering them invisible” (Miceli, 2007, as cited in 2019, p. 11).

4.3 Legal Framework

In article 13 (1991) of the Colombian Constitution, every citizen is free and equal, with the same rights and opportunities regardless of their gender, ethnicity, origin, or religion. Similarly, Law 1009 (2006) dictates the creation of the Observatorio con Asuntos de Género (OAG) on a permanent basis to identify and select a system of gender indicators, categories of analysis, and monitoring mechanisms to make critical reflections on policies, plans, programs, regulations, jurisprudence for the improvement of the situation of women, and gender equity in Colombia. Likewise, Decree 410 (2018) promotes free-discrimination environments for reasons of sexual orientation and gender identity. Finally, Law 1581 by which general provisions are issued for the protection of personal data, specifically to the educational community belonging to the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2012).

5. Methodology Design

5.1 A Qualitative Case Study

This research project employed a qualitative approach in order to address the purpose of the study which was intended to explore the heteronormative discourses present in the Cutting Edge book used in English as a Foreign Language class and the interactions of teachers and students with it. The main reason for this choice was because qualitative methods can “provide an in-depth, intricate and detailed understanding of meanings, actions, non-observable as well as observable phenomena, attitudes, intentions, and behaviors, and these are well served by naturalistic inquiry” (Gonzales et al., 2008, as cited in Cohen. et al., 2018, p. 288). In addition, it is an exploratory research because it aims to study a topic that has scarcely been studied and to contribute with new propositions to the existing literature (Swedberg, 2020).

It was determined that it would be carried out as a case study given that it was “an in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon. The study was conducted in great detail and often relied on the use of several data sources” (Feagin, et al., 1991, p. 2). Besides, three different types of analysis were applied in the study which were content analysis, linguistic analysis, and discourse analysis as they helped the contrast and analysis of the data collected. This was explained in depth in section 3.4 Resources and analysis techniques.

5.2 Participants and Sampling

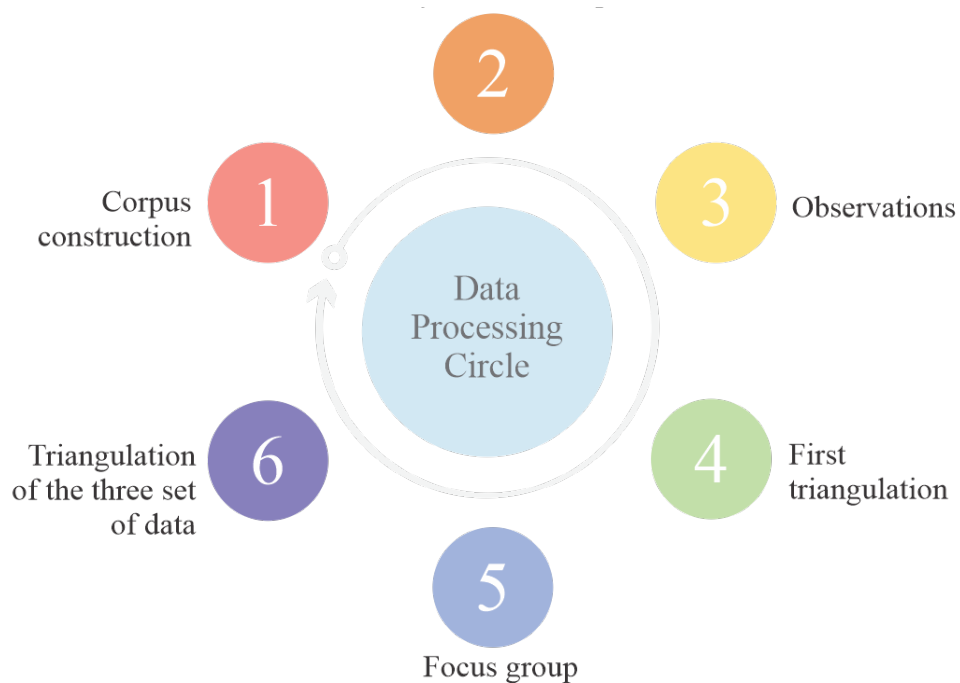
This research was executed at the Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS) which is a public university located in a city of Colombia named Bucaramanga. The university offers more than thirty programs including bachelors’ and masters’ degrees with more than 20.000 students from different parts of the country. Among these programs, it included the bachelor's degree in foreign languages teaching with an emphasis in English whose curriculum contains two subjects called Advanced English I and Advanced English II for fourth and fifth-level students. For this research, the participants chosen were students from Advanced English II, and the sampling method chosen to be implemented is convenience sampling because of the proficiency that students are expected to have in the two final levels of the English subject in the academic program in order to avoid any linguistic barriers when expressing themselves. Moreover, the teacher in charge of this subject took part in this research along with the third edition of the Cutting Edge Advanced textbook by Cunningham and Moore (2014) and published by Pearson Education which is the material used in the class.

5.3 Data Collection Instruments

In order to carry out this research, the following data collection instruments were chosen: conformation of the corpus, observations, and focus group, as seen below in *figure 1*.

Figure 1

Data Processing Circle



Note: The figure shows the main six steps involved in the processing of the information.

5.3.1 Conformation of the corpus

Primarily, the corpus was composed of the readings and speaking exercises from the textbook examined following the “gender critical points” developed by Sunderland et al. (2002). It was decided to use one productive and one receptive skill as both of them allow teachers and students to have a finer interaction with the information presented. This instrument was determined

with the purpose of classifying the selected corpus into the different types of heteronormative discourses according to the taxonomy proposed by Moore (2020).

5.3.2 Observations

Secondly, a set of observations was carried out in the classes corresponding to the topics specified in the corpus where the “gender critical points” were addressed, seeking to obtain information for the development of the focus group. Besides, they were conducted aiming to collect data about teachers’ and students’ interaction with the content selected, and the collection of data was gathered through fieldnotes.

5.3.3 Focus group

Finally, a focus group was implemented based on the previous analysis of the corpus and the observations. It was held with the goal of gathering information regarding teachers' and students' engagement with the content chosen, and a manual transcription was used to avoid missing any piece of information.

5.4 Resources and Analysis Techniques

The resources necessary for the accomplishment of the research project were word processors (Google Docs, excel) to gather and systematize the information collected in the corpus, observations, focus group, and voice recording software to keep documentation of the focus group. For the corpus, aspects of content analysis, linguistic analysis, and discourse analysis were implemented along with the categorization according to Moore’s taxonomy which was previously mentioned in the theoretical framework of this study. Regarding the observations, the information was color-coded to cluster this data into emerging categories. A first triangulation was done with the data analysis of the corpus and observations to design the emerging categories that were used

in the focus group. As for the focus group, color-coding and categories were used as well, adding analytical memos to contrast the findings with previous research. Finally, besides analyzing the different sets of data individually, a triangulation of all the information was carried out to compare the documentation gathered earlier as seen in *figure 2*.

Figure 2

Triangulation of the Information.

Analysis of the corpus



Note: The figure shows the three set of data used for the triangulation for the analysis of the information.

6. Results

In this chapter the results of this research project, the outcomes are presented and organized into distinct sections, each corresponding to a defined research objective, enabling a concise and structured presentation of the results. This approach facilitates a clear understanding of the implications and insights derived from the study.

6.1 To select gender-critical points present in the textbook

The exercises used to build the corpus were taken from the New Edition of the Cutting-Edge Textbook for advanced students, and the criteria for the selection of the exercises were the following:


- Exercises from units 6 to 10.
- Unimodal receptive and productive exercises specifically reading and speaking not including grammar-only exercises.
- Multimodal receptive and productive exercises specifically reading and speaking not including grammar-only exercises.
- Exercises that deal with heteronormativity, e. g. gender roles.

6.2 To identify the types of heteronormative discourses present in the Cutting-Edge textbook

Exercises were highlighted in a digital version of the textbook and then organized in an Excel document. A chart (*see Table 1*) was created in which these extracts were added as an image and then described in terms of unit, page, number of exercises, space in the didactic sequence, alignment in the thematic unit, if they involved input or output, and at the end, a code was assigned to each of them for their better identification. This chart was done to get a better understanding of each of the extracts (*see Appendix A*).

Table 1

Corpus with images.

Images	Unit	Page	Exercise	Space in the didactic sequence	Alignment in the thematic unit	Input	Output	Code
<p>2a Which photo(s) do you think the groups of adjectives below describe?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cute, twee, sweet, childish 2 classic, vintage, outdated 3 sleek, minimal, stark, contemporary, ultra-modern 4 colourful, garish 5 outrageous, unconventional, fun, provocative 6 sophisticated, conventional, frumpy, chic 7 glamorous, tacky, vulgar, over-the-top 8 scruffy, messy, casual 	7	66-67	2a	Initiate the discussion / Adjectives' introduction	Students can select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language to express themselves clearly; can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects.	X		U7-P66-EX2A

Note: Information taken from the exercises of the textbook.

After the completion of the chart, the next step taken was the creation of the **corpus instrument of analysis**. However, while designing it, it was evidenced that to optimize the process it was needed to change some aspects of the corpus with images (*see Table 1*) such as simplifying the codes and taking out the images for better visualization of the document (*see Table 2 and Appendix B*).

Table 2*Corpus with no images*

Unit	Page	Exercise	Space in the didactic sequence	Alignment in the thematic unit	Input	Output	Code
7	66-67	2a	Initiate the discussion / Adjectives' introduction	Students can select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language to express themselves clearly; can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects.		X	U7-E1
8	76-77	1a	Initiates the discussion /Vocabulary Introduction	Students can express themselves fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions; can use language flexibly and effectively.		X	U8-E1

Note: A new version of the corpus with better coding and no images for easy access.

Regarding the corpus instrument of analysis, a first chart draft was made that included the following aspects: *implicatures, inferences, presuppositions, linguistic, visual, spatial, and level of heteronormativity*, as we wanted to explore how images and text were connected with a specific intention of the book. Afterwards, a pilot test was conducted along with the research director and some changes were decided to be made (*see Appendix C*). The reason behind this was that as the corpus is composed of sets of extracts that include both unimodal and modal texts, they needed to be analyzed from two facets: *linguistic* and *non-linguistic* features. That is why, previous aspects

were reorganized according to their corresponding facet and some more were added, combined, or eliminated.

From the *non-linguistic* analysis approach, it was necessary to incorporate the way extracts were located and the space they were taking within the text, so it was determined that *spatial* and *visual* merged, and *spatial configuration* emerged. Then, *typography* was included to explore relevant patterns concerning font type, size, and colors. Two checking columns were also integrated to know if extracts contained *photographs*, *illustrations*, or none. Subsequently, the extracts embodying them were dissected bearing in mind the cohesion in multimodal texts involving the upcoming characteristics: i. *iconography* subdivided into two columns; *denote* and *connote*, seeking to find who and/or what is depicted, and what ideas and values are communicated through, respectively. ii. *Attributes* entail the ideas and values communicated by objects and how they are represented. iii. *Settings* referring to the placement of elements in an environment. iv. *Salience* implies cultural symbols, size, color, tone, focus, foregrounding, and overlapping. Furthermore, from the *linguistic* approach, some syntactic aspects were encompassed such as *types of adjectives*, *pronouns*, and *verbs*. Besides, the following pragmatic features were added: *labels* and *implications*. The latter replaced the initial *implicatures*, *inferences*, and *presuppositions* from the first draft, as all those aspects were covering assumptions and they all could be included in the section of *implications*.

Finally, the last column of the chart concerns the *level of heteronormativity* of each extract and is also a checking column, composed of five levels; *explicit heterosexism*, *heteronormative erasure*, *heteronormative marginalization*, *heteronormative mainstreaming*, and *queer inclusion*. The purpose of this categorization was that after covering all of the aspects mentioned before, one

level could be assigned to each one of the extracts. These levels were taken out from Moore's taxonomy, and they will be addressed in the following section named *Instrument Application*.

Moreover, a second pilot test was made with a random extract of the corpus that is U7-E5. This testing consisted of researchers analyzing and completing every column of the instrument involving the previous criteria mentioned based on the corpus extract. As a result, two last changes were made to the instrument. Firstly, in the *pronouns* row it was added *subjects*, resulting in a new naming: *pronouns/subjects*. This switch was necessary to clarify to exactly whom pronouns were referring, for example; in U8-E5 in the statements of the exercises there were personal pronouns, subject pronouns (you), and possessive pronouns (your), so a clarification was made: "both directing to the reader", remarking pronouns were addressing the reader. Same case with they/them/their "referring to men and women". Secondly, one more *level of heteronormativity* materialized: *gender role appraisal*. The motivation for this was that as heteronormative discourses are not exclusively limited to queer inclusion but also are highly related to gender role stereotyping, it was crucial to add a new tier that covered the latter aspect taking into account that Moore's taxonomy already enclosed the queer inclusion approach and that there were at least three extracts involving this topic.

6.2.1 Instrument application

After applying the instrument of analysis to the corpus data, it was evidenced that four extracts fit into the *heteronormative erasure*, three into the *gender role appraisal*, and one into the *heteronormative marginalization* level. Moreover, the *explicit heterosexism*, *heteronormative mainstreaming*, and *queer inclusion levels* were not assigned to any extract as they did not suit the criteria (see Appendix D).

6.2.1.1 Heteronormative erasure. In the case of Heteronormative Erasure, the results were the following:

Firstly, evidence revealed that the extract **U8-E1** corresponded to the heteronormative erasure level. The explanation for this is that even though the images intended to illustrate different types of families apart from the heterosexual nuclear considered as the standard, it falls into heteronormativity. In this extract, four pictures were presented at the top of pages 76 and 77, with three on page 76 and one on page 77, all depicting people in different settings. It was seen that the first image portrayed a clean and spacious kitchen with three individuals, highlighting a sense of community and happy coexistence. In contrast, the second image focused on a single mother and child, emphasizing the challenges of single parenting with a blurred background to accentuate their bond. The third image showcased a traditional nuclear family in a typical household setting, highlighting the father's involvement in childcare. And, the final image conveyed a sense of solitude and boredom, with a lone individual in a living room-like environment. Nonetheless, none of them included any type of representation of non-heterosexual families.

Secondly, findings suggested that the extract **U8-E2** aligned with the heteronormative erasure level, as several key characteristics within the extract emphasized traditional and normative aspects of household categorization. Mainly, the positioning and significance of this extract within the unit were notable. It was the first exercise of the unit, placed right after the images, and occupied a substantial quarter of the page. This positioning and spatial allocation emphasized the importance of the content within the curriculum and highlighted its role in shaping students' perspectives.

Furthermore, the typography choices within this exercise revealed a clear emphasis on certain elements, such as the exercise number, which was prominently displayed with a bigger font

size than the exercise instructions, indicating its significance. Moreover, the instructions and bullet points were presented in bold black font, drawing attention to key aspects, while the rest of the text maintained a non-bolded format. These emphasized sections contained instructions related to classifying different types of households, reinforcing traditional and normative ideas of categorization.

The content of this exercise was another indicator of its heteronormative nature. It involved superlative adjectives, focusing on "most" and "least" common attributes. The exercise prompted students to classify various household types into two categories: "common" and "least common." Additionally, the overall intention of this exercise was to classify a list of households into predefined categories of "common" and "least common." As a result, it reinforced traditional and normative household constructs by not allowing students to consider alternative categories beyond those presented in the exercise.

Thirdly, after a thorough analysis, it became evident that extract **U8-E3**, much like the previous extract, U8-E2, could be categorized within the level of Heteronormative Erasure. In line with this, the exercise intended to encourage students to either approve or disapprove of the stereotypes presented within the quotes. Furthermore, as the introductory exercise on the topic, students were expected to compare their perspectives but were not explicitly encouraged to engage in discussions. Considering these findings, the following details from the provided information supported this classification.

To begin with, it was positioned as the first exercise on the page, occupying the top left corner. Its placement and prominence in this educational context highlighted its significance in shaping students' perspectives on the subject matter. The exercise was primarily composed of instructions and a set of four quotes, which were divided by boxes and collectively occupied

approximately one-sixth (1/6) of the page. Notably, within each box, a quotation mark stood out due to its size, indicating the importance of the quotes in the exercise.

Additionally, superlative adjectives, such as "best" and "least," were employed in the exercise's instructions, reflecting an emphasis on extreme judgments. Attributive adjectives like "incomplete" and "happy" were utilized in the quotes. These adjectives were integral to the exercise's purpose of labeling and categorizing the provided quotes.

In conclusion, the core objective of the exercise was to apply labels to men, women, and relationships based on students' judgments of the quotes. Students were tasked with classifying the quotes into two categories: "like best" and "like least."

Finally, results show that extract **U10-E1** corresponds to the heteronormative erasure level. The reason is that this illustration reinforced the idea of portraying the concept of family as what is culturally and socially acceptable or the norm, which is a heterosexual nuclear family as it was presented in the figure of a family composed of a mom, a dad, and a child. It was socially related to the idea of a nuclear or traditional family which is considered as the rule and standard for families. As well, portraits are culturally used to show important moments or highlights of people's lives.

All these extracts were placed in this category as they utilized heterosexuality as the norm in discussions about relationships, particularly those of a sentimental character while omitting representation of non-heterosexual individuals (Moore, 2020).

6.2.1.2 Gender role appraisal. In the case of Gender Role Appraisal, the results were the following:

In the first place, the extract **U8-E4** fell into this level as it intended to prompt students to associate a list of personality characteristics with men, women, or both, without recognizing the

difficulty in generalizing such characteristics. These characteristics were not chosen randomly; they corresponded to socially constructed gender stereotypes. In this case, in contrast to the previous exercise, students were not only expected to compare their answers but also to explain their viewpoints. These assertions were supported by several key observations within the provided information.

Firstly, U8-E4 was the second exercise on the page, and it occupied a prominent position in the middle left. Its positioning suggested that it was a significant component of the content, emphasizing its relevance to the topic. Secondly, the exercise was divided into two parts: (a) and (b). Part (a) included instructions, a set of four questions, and a box with statements. Notably, the exercise specifically instructed students to label behaviors as belonging to men, women, or both, indicating a focus on gender-related attributes, which aligned with the theme of gender roles. Thirdly, the instructions for the exercise also guided students to read, associate, and generalize certain characteristics in the context of gender, indicating that the exercise encouraged students to think critically about how certain behaviors were associated with gender, promoting discussions related to gender stereotypes. Finally, it should be emphasized that the exercise asked students not only to compare their answers but also to explain their points of view. This suggested a deeper level of engagement with the subject matter and encouraged students to challenge and discuss their perspectives on gender roles.

In the second place, extract **U8-E5** settled into the linking of stereotypical behaviors socially constructed to a specific gender. This exercise consisted of a statement, a reading passage, and the respective answers. The statement was divided into parts (a) and (b) and was located at the bottom of page 80, in which part (a) instructed the reader to move to page 108, where the answers were positioned in the middle-left section, occupying approximately one-fourth of the page. The

reading passage spanned both the right half of page 80 and the left half of page 81, essentially taking up an entire page. Within the reading, three images were incorporated: one in the middle of page 80 and two on page 81 (one at the top and one at the bottom). Throughout the paragraphs of the reading, there were 28 gaps numbered from 1 to 28 that were supposed to be filled out by the students. The text assigned stereotypical characteristics to both men and women; in the case of women, they were depicted as susceptible to seeking approval, talkative (chatterbox), overly sensitive, prone to nagging, often dissatisfied, and inclined to spend time window shopping. In contrast, men were portrayed as more pragmatic, comfortable with showing their emotions, less prone to nagging, valuing sports-related friendships, having a higher tolerance for messiness, being commitment-averse, disliking shopping, and engaging in it only when planned. Students were asked to individually categorize the stereotypes presented in the reading as either about "men/man" or "women/women". Then, they were encouraged to compare their opinions and verify their responses using an answer key, indicating the presence of right and wrong answers for these stereotypes.

In the third place, extract **U8-E10** intended for students to analyze and reflect on the stereotypes mentioned in the reading through the use of close questions (i.e. or) including opposite adjectives to take a stand regarding the matter. It was placed on the bottom left of the page just before the reading, however, it demanded the reader to move to the text that was placed on the right half of that same page and the left half of the following one, and then move back to the exercise. All of the exercises on this page had an intended sequence to guide students to a final exercise that promotes a discussion of the topic. This extract did not include any type of illustration or photographs so nonlinguistic aspects were not analyzed. Referring to linguistics features it was found that the exercise asked students to label the extract as true/unfair, biased/critical, and

meaningful/stereotyping through the use of Attributive adjectives to qualify the situations (unfair-true-biased-meaningful- critical).

These excerpts were categorized as such because they depicted and reproduced gender role stereotypes when trying to represent notions such as family, professions, jobs, etc.

6.2.1.3 Heteronormative marginalization. In the case of Heteronormative Marginalization, the results were the following:

Evidence suggested that extract **U7-E1** belonged to the heteronormative marginalization level. The grounds for this are that the exercise intended that students label the images with a list of adjectives, and both the images and adjectives were assigned positive, negative, and neutral connotations. The exercise consisted of a set of 8 pictures placed at the top of pages 66 and 67, and they were named with letters from A to H. Four images depicted people, and F was the one that took up the most space; it was placed on the top of the page in the middle and was the most colorful picture of the set. Also, it was situated before exercise 2a which asked students to match a group of adjectives from a list with the images. When analyzing these images from the nonlinguistic approach, it was found that:

1. Picture A represented luxury as it depicted a hotel with a big golden fountain, ceilings, and walls. It exhibited wealth and ostentation through the elements setting; It was a spacious hotel lobby with a long hallway formed by tiles that follow a pattern, high coffered ceilings, and golden and spacious areas linked to expensive places and rich people. Besides, the ceiling and the fountain areas were brighter than the others to make people focus on them.
2. Picture B reflected modernity as it portrayed a tall white building. It manifested the idea of modern architecture as it showed the view of the facade of a tall building

from a street during the sunset, and structures with geometrical sharpened shapes are linked to modern architecture. Also, the shape of the building was exalted by the cut out of the image, taking space over the other image (overlapping).

3. Picture C manifested abstract art as it illustrated paintbrushes. It characterized abstractness related to random patterns, in this case, random brushes made of warm and cold colors.
4. Picture D symbolized underdressing, and it depicted the upper body of a woman in front of a red carpet backdrop and she was wearing a pink sweater. It was a red carpet backdrop and it alluded to high-maintenance dress codes, attending this kind of event implies people following certain high-maintenance dress codes, and the type of clothing and the color choices made her fade on the white background.
5. Picture E rendered casual pictures taken of celebrities as it illustrated the upper body of a man wearing a black coat it portrayed spontaneity. It occurred outside in front of a building's facade, the focus was on the actor, and the background was blurred. Additionally, this man had greasy messy hair which is linked to poor personal hygiene.
6. Picture F conveyed art as it detailed a woman's face with make-up and a hand with jewelry on. It hinted at performativity as this took place in a photo shoot session, and this type of make-up is highly related to drag queens' performances. The colors of the background were dull but the make-up was done with vivid colors, the background was blurred, and the picture was focused on the face.
7. Picture G exhibited formality as it outlined a standing woman wearing a two-piece set with a white and blue tweed fabric, this set was made of a pencil skirt and a

coat, and she was also wearing a white handbag and white heels. Therefore, this type of dress code is linked to formal attire, the main focus was on the woman, and the colors of the background were dull but hers were vivid.

8. Picture H presented fashion. It depicted a radio-shaped red handbag, with golden hardware, and it happened in a photoshoot session of a product. Fashion is related to innovative eccentric designs, and the handbag was cut out and overlaps another image.

On the other hand, when exploring linguistics aspects of this extract content it was identified that the exercise was asking students to *think* and *describe* pictures and also made use of attributive adjectives with the use of opposites (conventional - unconventional, outdated - ultra-modern).

It is important to highlight that picture H was depicting a drag queen persona and was the only time queer representation was included in the extracts analyzed, but it was never declared explicitly in the book. It was left very wide open to interpretation (i.e. for readers instead of linking it to a drag queen it could be related to a cisgender woman wearing extra makeup). Even though the extract enfolded this image it was decided it could not belong to the *queer inclusion level* as it does not show a balanced representation that showcases diverse relationships, including those outside Western heteronormative norms. According to the findings, this extract is connected to the *heteronormative marginalization level* as it incorporated the representation of non-heterosexual individuals. However, this portrayal is achieved by isolating them and being ambiguous about it.

These exercises were labeled as such because they encompass the incorporation of non-heterosexual representation, yet this is achieved by alienating and marginalizing them.

6.3 To describe teacher's and students' interactions with heteronormative discourses from the book in a class environment

To facilitate the collection of interactions among students, the teacher, and the textbook, an observation format was implemented (*see Appendix G*).

In its initial version, this format consisted of two sections; the first one included a small chart, designed to record key details such as the observation date, class topic, observation number, and the observer's name to track and offer a broad overview of these aspects; the second section included four columns, namely *Exercise* to indicate the exercise to which the described interactions corresponded, *Teacher's Interaction* and *Student's Interaction*, which identified the person leading the intervention. Additionally, there was a column labeled *Extra Resources* which was added to specify any external materials related to the textbook that could generate responses from the participants.

However, after a discussion with the project director and a thorough review of the data collection tool, it was determined that the format needed some adjustments to gather more data that could help with the development of the project. This updated version incorporated significant modifications, including:

- **Transition to Checkbox Columns:** The columns of *Teacher's Interaction* and *Student's Interaction* were transformed from textual descriptions to checkboxes. This change involved utilizing interaction-type abbreviations (e.g., S.-T for student-teacher or T-S for teacher-student), which simplified the data entry and interpretation processes.
- **Introduction of *Key Points*:** It was included to provide concise explanations for the interaction type abbreviations, enhancing the understanding of the observed interactions e.g.(S speaking), and (R reading).

- Inclusion of *Language Skills*: A new column was added to document the language skills promoted during the interactions observed. This addition aimed to provide deeper insights into language development and further support the research objectives.
- Removal of *Extra Resources*: This column was eliminated, and a new one for textual descriptions was incorporated. This change allowed for a more detailed account of participants' responses based on the class theme. This new column was named *Class Development Description*, as it was considered relevant for the later analysis of spaces for discussion.

After revising these changes, it was evident that these adaptations to the format would help to improve its practicality and effectiveness as a data collection tool, ultimately contributing to the achievement of the research goals.

6.3.1 Informed consents

Before conducting the observations, two informed consent forms were developed, one for teachers and one for students (*see Appendixes E and F*). These documents provided the participants with comprehensive information about the research in order to clarify aspects related to their involvement in this research project. The aspects mentioned in the forms include:

- Invitation to participate: Information such as the title, objective, and the research director was illustrated to the participants.
- Participation: Participants were informed that, from the teacher's perspective, it involved granting researchers access to the classes, and from the student's perspective, it involved allowing researchers to collect data arising from classroom interactions. Besides, it was clarified that researchers would not intervene but would instead take notes during the observations.

- Risks and benefits: Participants were informed that no identified risks or benefits were associated with this research. However, it was emphasized that their participation would contribute to generating insights into student-teacher interaction with heteronormative discourses found in the textbook.
- Voluntariness: Participants were informed that their involvement was entirely voluntary, and it was explained that they could exit the research at any time without negative consequences.
- Confidentiality: It was clarified that the data would be used exclusively for academic purposes. Furthermore, they were notified that all information would be kept confidential and would not be linked to their personal identities.
- Knowledge of results: Students and the teacher were given the possibility to get the final version of the research, therefore, they were asked to provide their email addresses.
- Contact information: Researchers provided participants with their contact details for any additional questions or inquiries regarding the research.

6.3.2 Observations

Following the development of the data collection instrument, and after obtaining the participants' informed consent the observation phase was initiated with the objective of gaining a comprehensive understanding of the interactions in the classroom environment. A total of seven observations were carried out within a span of approximately a month.

During this time frame, a number of unforeseen interruptions and extensions to the observation period were encountered. These inconveniences were attributable to external factors, such as strikes, which disrupted the regular class schedule, and due to the occurrence of exams, class cancellations, days of protest, and an instance where some students' presentations unrelated

to the subject matter of the book took place within the classroom. In response to these challenges and as a result of the limited classroom space, it was also decided to transition from conducting group observations to individual ones. Initially, all three researchers attended the class together during the first observation, however, it was determined that for the following observations, each day one of the researchers would attend the class individually. It's important to highlight that two of the seven observations carried out involved grammar classes, and, for obvious reasons, they were excluded from the analysis as they did not represent any important insight for the research project.

6.3.2.1 Observations data coding. After collecting information from the observations, it was decided to scan the notes to find situations or instances that potentially could help with the development of the research project. Then, these occurrences were organized in a chart that was divided into four items as follows: situation, where it was mentioned the subject discussed in the session, book, where it was noted the specific extracts that the participants referenced during their interventions, and teacher and students, where it was transcribed the professors' and students' interventions correspondingly (see Appendix I).

Following the completion of this chart, a color-coding analysis was implemented (*see Appendix I*) in order to look for correlations between the data to group these relationships and then create the three main categories of analysis with their correspondent subcategories that were as follows: *Contextualized topics* that dealt with the Colombian culture, cultures from other countries and personal experiences, *class development* where it was discussed aspects such as the structure of the class, reiteration, and participation, and *taking stands* that covered aspects like agreement and disagreement between the class actors, them making statements and voicing their opinions. As a way to document the findings of the observations, three memos were created to condense this

information which comprised the raw data taken from the observations, a summary of these findings, and an analysis and discussion of the data (*see Appendix J*).

6.3.2.2 Observation memos. As part of the tools used in the analysis of the data collected, it was decided to include research memos in order to facilitate this process. The creation of memos was a crucial part of this research project as they helped with the condensation of the vast data that was collected during the observations, resulting in a well-organized and concise summary of these insights. In terms of layout, these documents are divided into the following elements:

- **Code or category:** where all the information is compacted into a brief statement that provides a general idea of what was found in this information set.
- **Subcodes or subcategories:** in this section, the information is condensed but divided into multiple sections that provide a more detailed idea of the topics covered in the category.
- **Raw data:** which contains the list of extracts from the observations used for the memo's construction.
- **Findings summary:** includes a description of all the data found and their correspondent connections.
- **Analysis and discussion:** involving a synthesis of the information in which the data is connected with other sources, ensuring the reliability of the analysis.

Following the process of the creation of these research memos, the insights that were gathered from the observations are listed below:

6.3.2.2.1 Contextualized topics. It was found that when talking about stereotypes, the teacher brought to the conversation general conceptions reproduced in societies around the globe that were contextualized by students through their personal experiences. The teacher on various occasions brought to the class different situations concerning aspects of Colombian culture in relation to family types and relationships; for example, when discussing the first topic, the teacher showed students the legal types that are recognized according to the country's constitution. In fact, at the moment of introducing them, he clarified that in Colombia there are two more types of family types than the ones shown in the book which are homoparental and monoparental families conformed by non-heterosexual people; and, when addressing the concept of relationship, the teacher acknowledged that instead of using the term couple, he uses "two people" to refer to a romantic relationship between two subjects who can be a man and women, two men, or two women.

Besides, the teacher brought up the conception of women being relegated to the upbringing of newborns and the education of children. As a matter of fact, the teacher stated that in the past it was believed that women were the best for the teaching profession, which one student reaffirmed by expressing that this belief is still present in society and exemplifies it with her cousin's school where the majority of primary school teachers are women. In addition, the teacher commented on the stereotypes present in a distinctive region of the country, specifically the Colombian coast; for example, he mentioned that house chores are perceived as a women's job, and men who get involved in these activities would become less of a man and, therefore, a homosexual. As well, he made a reference alluding to one of the most representative icons of the music industry from that territory, stating that not all men leave their love relationships when they find someone new. And,

joining to the conversation of what is expected of men when discussing hairstyling, one student added that his father, who is from this region, makes offensive comments about his long hair.

Finally, at the moment of addressing the topic of marriage, the teacher brought an example of a culture different from the Colombian one, in this case, the culture of India, which consisted of young girls married to fifty-year-old men, behavior that has been normalized, however, he claimed to disagree with it, even though that is part of certain cultures.

6.3.2.2.2 Class development. Findings revealed that there was a specific class dynamic developed by the participants in the learning process, the teacher, the students, and the textbook. This dynamic consisted of using the exercises from the book as a foundation or spine for the class development and then bringing some extra information to expand on the topics of the session. Moreover, the teacher merged both, the input from the textbook and added material brought by him to finally generate a space for discussion in the classroom not only between teacher-students but also among students. This moment of the class was characterized by the frequent use of reiteration to elicit the participation of students through the use of general and particular questions (i.e. the ones aimed at the class as a whole, and others that are directed to a particular student) in order to know students' perceptions or positions on the matters. For example, when referring to general questions, it was evidenced that the teacher included questions such as "what do you think about [...]?", "Is that true?" "I want to know what you think about it?", or questions like "really?"; this occurred at the time of dealing with exercises involving quotes, texts, and images about gender stereotypes, and love relationships, among other subjects.

In the case of particular questions, the teacher evoked students' participation by asking directly about their personal experiences. As well, he promoted peer discussion between students inviting them to share their arguments, contrast information, and add their personal perspectives

on the topics. An example of this was the part of the class when the teacher created one activity in which the students were required to discuss “real” habits or misconceptions about certain behaviors assigned to a specific gender. Despite of teacher’s attempts to foster participation and discussion, most of the students limited themselves to show agreement or disagreement by nodding or merely by saying yes and no, and even though some of them did take part by bringing questions, examples, and experiences, they did not elaborate or extend on their interventions.

6.3.2.2.3 Taking stands. Observations indicated that students and the teacher took stands on the material and information present in class resulting in emerging opinions and criticism. Primarily, it was evidenced that students and teachers showed solid postures of agreement and disagreement towards the textbook, the extra material, and the discussions that came to light during the development of the class. For example, in two instances the participants used not only facial expressions but also body language to differ such as “I actually disagree” and when the teacher showcased a face of disagreement to complement his opposition to a student’s intervention. Secondly, it was found that these agreements and disagreements happened between the different actors in the classroom when dealing with the textbook’s exercises about the stereotypical behavior of women and men. For instance, when the teacher interacted with the textbook’s statements, he tended to add his personal point of view by saying expressions like “this is true” or “in my case, this is totally true”. In the case of the interactions between the students and the book, the students communicated their thoughts through verbal comments and gestures.

In terms of the teacher’s and students’ exchanges, it was noted that there were situations in which both parties reached a consensus on their takes on the subjects, but nonetheless, there were occasions where they did not come to an agreement: thus, in one occasion during the class, they were discussing about shopping and the teacher mentioned that most of the women he knows enjoy

doing it, however, at the moment of asking male students if they also liked it or not, they answered that they did which seemed to shock the teacher. In regards to the interactions among only the students, it was evidenced by two types of interventions: one intended to be shared out loud with the whole class and the other seeking to privately reach their nearest classmates. An example of the former was when one student made a comment out loud about boarding schools and many of the students showed their agreement loudly. Referring to the latter type, it was found that when discussing topics like sexism, students preferred to share their thoughts with peers than answer directly to the rest of the class or the teacher.

As a result of these interactions and postures toward the topics presented in the book, the teacher and the students shared their opinions through the use of critics. In the case of the teacher's contributions, it was observed that they were given from different perspectives such as sociocultural, religious, inner, and exhortative. In terms of the sociocultural standpoint, the teacher commented on expectations that society has upon gender-normed behaviors related to physical appearance (e.g. "male students can't have long hair at school"), preferences (e.g. "[...] people say pink for girls and blue for boys."), and relationships (e.g. "there is a stigma that we are born to get married and to have children.", and that "this society expects people to get married at a very young age"). He also made statements concerning social movements adding that it was important that people did not reach "extremes" or fall into generalizations about groups of people; for example, the misconception that "all gay people are the same". Additionally, he expressed his discrepancies on some cultural dilemmas involving Colombian culture being unable to trust men to take care of children and forcing this responsibility upon women, as well as Indian culture allowing female minors to get married to elderly men. In relation to the religious angle, the teacher remarked on

the role that religion played in the creation and reproduction of social stigmas exemplified by the rejection of women who have more than one partner and the appraisal of men who do the same.

Regarding teachers' contributions from his inner stand, it was found that they involve matters like friendship and stereotypes. Even though these topics were mentioned before from the sociocultural perspective, it is important to clarify that the current ones came from a more subjective point of view of the teacher's reality and experiences. In respect of friendships, when the classroom was discussing a reading exercise that portrayed men's friendships as more superficial than women's, he declared "I actually disagree, I think men's friendships are more real". Also, he added that in the case of a friendship between a woman and a man, people usually assume that it is a romantic relationship and that not all men look at women merely for sex when talking about relationships. In a different situation related to stereotypes, a discussion emerged when the text stated that women were cleaner and tidier than men, the teacher said he considered this idea to be sexist expressing "I know women that are very disorganized even more than men". As well, at the moment of talking about the stereotype of women being keener towards going shopping, the teacher claimed that most of the women that he knows, enjoy doing it. Finally, from an exhortative outlook, it was seen that in some instances the teacher made comments or suggestions including how things like hairstyles or tattoos shouldn't be designated to a specific gender; how generalization should be avoided; and that students should not be "[...] so narrow-minded and look for other types of relationships, not only men and women".

On the other hand, the contributions of the students were presented from an inner and sociocultural viewpoint. From the inner approach, the students brought to the conversation topics related to gender roles specifically about the delegation of the responsibility of the upbringing of children to women, not only within the household but also in the educational aspect; in fact, one

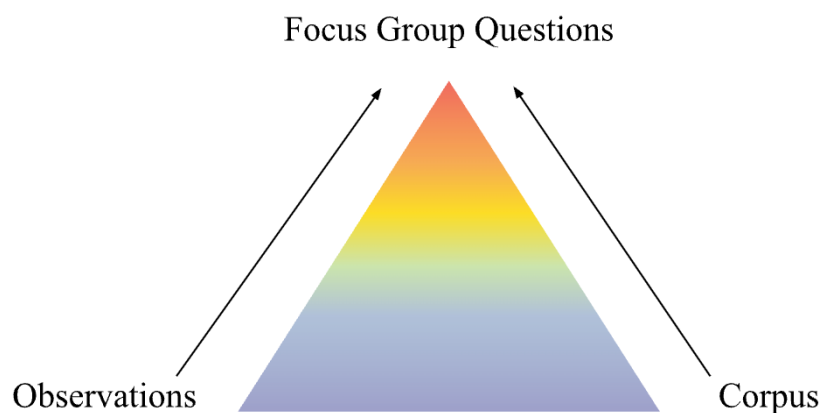
of the students said that the majority of teachers are women, or at least that is what he noticed in the kindergarten levels. In addition, they addressed some stereotypical behaviors of women and men involving relationships, and unhealthy traits. In respect to relationships, the students complained about the expectations that society has about marriage and how they should not be generalized because not everybody has the same goals in this aspect. Besides, one student criticized when women are supposed to ask for permission to go out to their boyfriends; in fact, she claimed that “that’s stupid”, and added that it is a similar situation to men judging women based on the way they are dressed. In terms of stereotypical behaviors, a female student commented that she believed people are always expecting women to be talking all the time, then most of the students agreed on the idea of women nagging more than men. Finally, when reflecting on plastic surgery or esthetic procedures, a student stated that neither women nor men are more prone to get them because “it is not based on gender but on the person that we are referring to”. From the sociocultural outlook, the students pointed out some common beliefs present in the current society. For example, one student mentioned that women being better than men in the teaching profession is still a recurrent assumption. Furthermore, when the textbook portrayed women being more competitive than men, students disagreed with that idea and said that it is “associated equally with both”. Ultimately, while commenting about the friendship between a woman and a man, a female student argued that “If you have a boyfriend and you have a male friend, people are going to say you are a bitch” referring to society relating this relationship to an affair. To conclude, even though there was interaction in the classroom from both sides, it was evidenced that there were more interventions from the teacher’s side.

6.3.3 First triangulation

With the material collected to this point of the research, it was carried out a first triangulation of the information with the data collected from the corpus and the observations (see *Figure 3.*) in order to gain more insights about the subject and with the purpose of creating the questions for the focus group that was the next data collection instrument to be conducted.

Figure 3

First Triangulation of the Information.



Note: The figure shows the three set of data that was used for the first triangulation.

6.4 To recognize teachers' and students' reactions toward heteronormative discourses

A first draft of the questions for the focus group was created and presented to the director of this research project. Then, a final revision was carried out with the director to refine these questions which led to the changing of wording as they contained bias and were not clear enough to avoid ambiguity. The questions that made it to the final version of the document for the focus group were divided into four categories in order to create a logical sequence so they would go from less to more specific approach, and were presented as follows:

- Opening questions:

- “How often do you use the book in class?”
- “What do you think of the book’s contents?”
- “Do you feel that the contents are adequate to the level that you are at?”
- “Do you find any differences between this content compared to the ones in previous semesters?”
- “What is the thing that calls your attention the most? and why?”
- Transition questions
 - “Do you consider that the book represents the diversity of the current society? we mean, do you consider that the book is inclusive?”
 - “Do you remember any exercises of the book or situations (related to inclusion) that were presented in the class? Which one and why did you relate it to that?”
- Specific question
 - “How did you feel at the moment you approached these exercises in class?”
 - "When you encountered this type of exercises in class, did you bring them into the conversation or simply let them pass?"
 - "What prevents you or motivates you to discuss these topics in class?"
- Closing questions.
 - "Are you comfortable with how these topics are addressed in class, or do you think things should change?"
 - "The next time you encounter similar content to what you've discussed, would you react in the same way as you've described, or would you do something different?"

In between each of the categories, some extra space was allotted for possible questions that could surge during the conversation. Also, in the questions that involved mentioning particular

exercises from the textbook, it was pointed out that they would be showcased at the moment to evoke participants' memories or experiences at the moment these extracts were discussed in the classroom.

A format with the final version of the questions was created as well as a layout of the session (*see Appendix K*) which included the following items:

- The general objective of the research project,
- The place and date of administration of the focus group,
- The name of the moderators,
- The aid tools used which in this case was the digital version of the textbook,
- The order for the administration and a guide for the moderators that included the presentation of the moderators, a short introduction to the session mentioning the purpose of the meeting, a presentation of the participants, the time allocated for it,
- A brief explanation of how the focus group would work, the mentioning of the recording of the session and the consequent elimination at the end of the project,
- The application of an icebreaker for the participant to feel more comfortable before starting with the questions.

6.4.1 Putting the focus group into action

After the refinement of the support document for the focus group, consent forms were created to get the participants' permission to be involved in this stage of the research project. The same consent format of the observations was used, however, the distinction between the participants' was not the same, as the teacher and the students would be treated as equals. This instrument was applied during a spare class that the professor willingly yielded for this project, and, right before starting, the forms were explained to the participants in order to clarify any doubts

or questions that they might have had at that moment. Then, these documents were filled out before starting with the execution of the instrument.

Subsequently to this, the participants were asked if they had a preference in terms of the language used during the conversation to avoid barriers at the moment of expressing their ideas or experiences to which they expressed their leaning towards the Spanish language. Three recording devices were placed around the classroom in strategic positions as an aid for the respective transcription of the interventions. Participants, including the teacher, sat down in a “u” form facing the moderators in order to facilitate the understanding of their contributions. While discussing some of the questions, the extracts U8-E1 and U8-E4 were brought to the conversation so they were showcased on the screen using technological aids which helped to initiate the discussion as some of the participants did not remember these exercises: in fact, some students even pulled out their own material to reread and look to these extracts. Moreover, as it was anticipated in the construction of the instrument, new questions arose during the interventions regarding the vocabulary used in the book, their opinions towards teachers that talk about content not included in the textbook, about hypothetical situations in which other students would show negative reactions towards these contents and how they would react to this, and how they would react to a teacher that does not bring to the conversation these subjects.

Upon concluding the focus group session, the next step involved transcribing the audio containing the focus group information. The audio was divided equally among the three researchers. It's important to mention that having the information split into three separate audio files allowed for cross-verification from different auditory perspectives. Lastly, the transcription process was carried out manually, without the use of any transcription tools, due to some audio distortion caused by the interview environment (*see Appendix L*).

6.4.1.1 Transcription and data analysis. The next step after transcribing the focus group was to carry out the respective document analysis. For this analysis, an Excel spreadsheet was utilized, where each of the researchers placed the transcribed information. The information was organized in the following way: at the top were the questions posed during the interview, and beneath each question, there were the multiple responses given by both students and the teacher, as well as the questions that arose as a result of the participants' answers. Once the information was added to the spreadsheet, the next step was to categorize it, which was done through a color-coding system (see Appendix M).

Initially, the idea was to create a category for each question since the thematic thread was similar. However, upon reading the subsequent questions, it became evident that there were parts of the responses that could complement the idea from the previous one. For this reason, the decision was to not create a category for each response. As it became apparent that the responses complemented each other across questions, the information was analyzed to identify differences and similarities. After a thorough analysis and review of the information, it was then grouped into categories.

6.4.1.2 Emergence of categories. In total, twelve categories surfaced, which were: Students' reactions to exercise topics, Feelings towards the exercises, Intentions of the textbook, How topics are addressed in class, Reactions to things not in the book, Reaction to a teacher who does not problematize, Speaking barriers, Perception of the textbook, Contextualization of the book, What the teacher adds (referring to the information not found in the book), Gender roles, and Reactions they would have if they encountered something similar (referring to how they would react the next time they encounter similar content).

6.4.2 Focus group memos

Out of these twelve categories, eleven were utilized for creating memos. The last category, *Reactions they would have if they encountered something similar* was not used as the information provided by the participants did not offer relevant insights for the research. Furthermore, from these categories, three memos were generated (*see Appendix N*), each containing three to four of the aforementioned categories; they were organized as follows: 1. *Students' reaction towards the content* which included *Students' reactions to exercise topics, Feelings towards the exercises, Intentions of the textbook, and How topics are addressed in class*. 2. *Classroom challenges* which included *Reactions to things not in the book, Reaction to a teacher who does not problematize, and Speaking barriers*. 3. *Transforming textbook's content* which included *Perception of the textbook, Contextualization of the book, What the teacher adds, and Gender roles*.

After completing the creation of these research memos, the insight obtained from the focus group is summarized as follows:

6.4.2.1 Students' reaction towards the content. Findings revealed that students were constantly reacting to the content presented in the textbook from two different angles: i. feelings and ii. actions. i. When students were asked about how they felt while dealing with exercises concerning gender critical points such as types of families, gender roles and relationships stereotypes, they used words such as “outdated”, “absurd”, and “subjective” and agreed that there was an intention behind the content of the textbook; in fact, during the discussion about a reading exercise regarding stereotypes where students had to fill out with either men or women, one student pointed out that it was subjective because there were not right or wrong answers, however, another student replied: “but you could tell the intention they had when writing it” and then elaborated that “if it didn't have an intention, we wouldn't know what the right answers were right away”, referring to the predisposition that the text creates with the reiteration of female stereotypes. Adding to the conversation, the teacher stated that “yes, indeed, it portrays a lot of sexist conceptions”. Finally, another student commented that it is surprising that these topics are included in the textbook, even though the book is very old-fashioned.

Interestingly, after this interaction concluded, one female student decided to check this exercise in the textbook and found out that it had the right answers which she shared out loud with the rest of the group. The professor followed up by remarking that the exercises did have answers, however, he never tells students that there is a right or wrong answer, instead, he encourages them to differentiate between opinions and facts. In addition, one male student expressed that the exercise “was showing us stereotypes present in society but that doesn't mean it is actually like that”. Then, another student responded that the way the exercise was written was very suggestive and he did not realize it had correct answers, which seemed “completely absurd” to him. Subsequently, a female student verbalized she did not understand the exercise especially when she encountered

quotes such as “women are suckers for approval”, adding “When I found out I was like ‘What the fuck?’”, and argued that the way the exercise was made felt like it was “roasting” her. and was “harsh” and “biased”. Furthermore, while discussing students’ feelings towards the pictures shown in the book about family types, one female student concluded that “90% of the situations portray women in the kitchen or taking care of their kids”, and even though one of the researchers pointed out that there was a picture that showed a man taking care of a kid, they agreed that there still was a depiction of a mother figure in the kitchen.

ii. On the other hand, when students were asked about the actions they took while addressing similar exercises in class, most of the time they let them pass unnoticed as they acknowledged that these were wrong misconceptions; for example, one student said “We already know that these topics are worn-out and also wrong, it’s like ‘yeah, good, whatever’”. Another one added that “it is not that we ignore them, we already know that it doesn’t relate to our days”, he also mentioned that “it’s more like assuming it’s wrong”. From a different perspective, a student indicated that “I suppose there is no outrage either because the hegemonic order of the book is not followed but rather it is treated in another way as debating is encouraged. So, there is none because they are not telling me that this, referring to what the book says, is what I should learn ". And he concludes that there was no discomfort as there was room for criticism. Besides, one student claimed she believed that sometimes they do not introduce these issues into their discussions. It was not a situation where she consciously thought about it and made an effort to address the problem. Unintentionally, they ended up changing their perspectives, but it was not a conscious decision, instead, it happened naturally and without premeditation.

Additionally, students were not comfortable with how the content was presented by the book, nonetheless, they sympathized with how the teacher complimented the topics; in fact, one

student affirmed that “Although it is not explicitly stated in the book, you can find a solution in class, or you can expand on the topic in class”. Afterward, one student assured that elaborating on topics beyond textbook material “depends on the teacher” because, as another student asserted, if the book was being taught by an inexperienced instructor who strictly follows the book's content, in such a scenario, they are essentially passing on the cultural aspects conveyed by the book.

6.4.2.2 Classroom challenges. Both the students and the teacher encountered impediments or barriers at the moment of discussing sensitive subjects related to gender critical points. On the students' side, they mentioned that “there’s not much they can do” regarding textbook content, and “If we wanted to change the textbook, for example, it involves a lengthy and complex process, requiring multiple discussions with various parties. So, we simply avoid taking action, even though we know that this shouldn't be the case”.

Furthermore, one student argued that when they started doing the exercise of filling in with women and men (U8-E5), she thought it was quite unbelievable, and added: “To be honest, I found the exercise to be really silly, but I wasn't going to tell the professor something like ‘let's not do this exercise or let's not talk about it’ because he's just doing his job”, for her it was “pointless”. From an alternative perspective, another student said that in the activity about family types (U8-E1), he did not realize that women were always placed in the kitchen, to which a female student replied that it was because “you are a man”. From the teacher’s standpoint, he affirmed that he gives students freedom in their work, but some students prefer clear rubrics to guide them. Then added that it was important to allow students the freedom to express themselves according to their own judgment, recognizing that certain aspects of their work are subjective and can not be imposed. Besides, he acknowledged that many teachers avoid discussing certain topics in class because they fear potential problems; for instance, he had

experienced scenarios where students become upset, especially when topics related to religion, politics, or sexuality are brought up. Despite this, his intention was not to change students' beliefs but to expand their perspectives beyond what they had learned before. He added that some students in the past have expressed displeasure when topics outside the textbook were discussed and that is why some teachers evade such discussions to avoid complaints about changing the book's content.

Furthermore, students believed that teachers should go beyond merely reading a book and adhering to its content. They considered that teachers should also evaluate and analyze the book's material and that they were open to corrections or additions if necessary; "at least that is what a good teacher would do". Moreover, one student added that in a situation where "one person out of fifteen feels uncomfortable with the planned activity, there's no need to change the entire lesson because of one person's discomfort", and he also believed that "individuals who don't want to participate can choose not to, but it shouldn't affect the entire class plan". Likewise, another student remarked that the teachers' responsibility was to teach the content "eclectically", meaning teaching without bias, promoting cultural diversity and the content in the book. Then students complemented stating that it was important for everyone to respect and be tolerant to each other's beliefs, and if one of the students disagreed or did not want to participate, alternative activities could be arranged.

On the other hand, when students were asked about a situation in which the teacher did not problematize or discuss these sensitive topics, they claimed to be concerned about classroom dynamics and addressing issues related to teaching methods. Students hesitated to openly discuss problems with their teachers due to fear of reprisals and power dynamics. In fact, they often chose alternative approaches, such as seeking help from other instructors, rather than confronting

teachers directly about their concerns. The fear of being seen as a troublemaker was a common obstacle to open communication.

6.4.2.3 Transforming textbook's content. Findings indicated that students perceived the book as old-fashioned. Actually, one student commented that he used the same textbook at a language institute four years ago, and it was still being used for advanced courses at university levels. It was also claimed that there was a common practice in Colombia and Latin American countries of using English materials from other countries instead of developing native resources. This was seen as a potential factor contributing to the current state of English proficiency levels, as it overlooked the promotion of local culture and resources in language education. Furthermore, it was evidenced that the teacher did not base his classes only with what the book presented in terms of content and instructions but also brought extra material to enrich his lessons. For example, he mentioned that he does not directly provide answers to their students but rather teaches them to distinguish between facts and opinions. He also noted that for grammar-related questions, he encourages students to check the correct answers, but for cultural aspects, he typically does not provide explicit solutions to the exercises.

Some of the students highlighted the teacher's methods as they believed that what made the book's activities enjoyable was the way the teacher modified them. Essentially, they expressed that the teacher took the book's core topics but introduced different or additional activities, which made the book more engaging and manageable for students. As a matter of fact, when the participants were asked if they had discussed topics related to gender identity, they claimed that the only time it happened was at the moment they addressed the subject of family types. One student mentioned the term "Homo parental family", however, the teacher clarified that it was not included in the book's list of family types, and that it was him who actually included that family

type with extra material. When questioned about other exercises similar to the one on family, another participant responded that such topics came up naturally in conversation, but there were no specific exercises on gender identities in the book. Interestingly, one student expressed surprise that the term "homoparental" was not included in the book, as she had assumed it would be, and thought it would have been a positive addition. Finally, there was a focus on exercises related to misconceptions about women and men, like the stereotype that women talk too much. This stereotype led to class discussions, nonetheless, participants mentioned that these topics only arose in conversation because they brought them up, but not because they were covered in the textbook.

6.4.3 Second triangulation

The gathered information provided evidence that the textbook used did not reflect the reality of the Colombian current society. It is very clear that the images and illustrations seen in the book were not updated and did not relate to what students see on a daily basis because these textbooks tended to replicate or mimic mainstream cultures different from the Latin American countries, as the publishers of these materials were focused on reaching the largest audience possible by only portraying what is accepted by the majority of societies around the globe (Moore, 2020). Additionally, in terms of *representation*, the textbook normalized conventional beliefs about gender and adhered to traditional gender roles in its images, written content, and activities (Canale & Furtado, 2021).

Regarding students' interaction with the heteronormative discourses present in the textbook, it was found that they tended to unconsciously overlook the contents of the textbook. However, there were some instances where they consciously responded to them with some sort of discomfort, especially females, when dealing with content related to gender stereotypes. But, unfortunately, they did not feel comfortable enough to problematize or challenge the textbook as

most of them expressed that the topics included in it were outdated and did not relate to their realities. Consequently, they delegated the creation of spaces for discussion to the teacher as they expected more than mere information transmission, seeking critical analysis, corrections, and an unbiased approach from him. In fact, students admitted that the hegemonic order of the book was contested when the teacher provided them with spaces for discussion by including extra materials or activities in the class apart from textbook instruction. Nonetheless, despite the teacher's encouragement, some students might have struggled to fully engage in the classroom exchange as they mostly interact among themselves, which is very necessary when dealing with these types of exercises as they could result in the disruption of the purpose of these texts, but these instances did not fulfill the expectations of students as active participants in this process. This could be linked to how the textbook did its *division of labor* in class: it traditionally conveyed established knowledge in a dominant manner, expecting learners to accept it without encouraging them to critically analyze or collaboratively construct knowledge together (Canale & Furtado, 2021).

The role of the professor was seen as more of a mediator, translating textbook's contents to his classroom, adding his own perspective, contextualizing the matters to the students' realities, and promoting a strong interaction of the learners with these topics, sometimes without the students noticing that he was adding more insights about these subjects. In fact, it became evident that the teacher played a transformative role in shaping the class's content by using the textbook as a foundation, but also including extra materials to make the content more relevant to the students' real-life circumstances. Moreover, despite that traditional EFL education syllabi usually avoided topics related to politics, ideology, and social issues, requiring official discourses on EFL teaching and learning to prioritize grammar and vocabulary acquisition, neglecting the political and ideological aspects of learning, the teacher sought to contextualize topics given by the textbook

with the classroom sociopolitical framework and connect it with students' personal experiences. Besides, the teacher played an important role at the moment of creating spaces to discuss topics or exercises that might create any conflict during the lesson (Germán Canale & Victoria Furtado, 2021). By giving them the possibility to either agree or disagree while sharing their perceptions, it demonstrated the great responsibility that the students have in speaking up and sharing their "ideological interests" with their peers as a way to problematize Gender Critical Points. Nonetheless, the responsibility of the creation of these spaces seems to rely only on the teacher as the students did not appear to bring to the conversation topics that need to be problematized unless the teacher is the one doing so. As a result, this placed an additional burden on the teacher, who often fought with the challenge of balancing student autonomy with the need for providing clear guidance and structure while facing the possibility that students might feel uncomfortable or resist topics not found in the textbook.

7. Conclusions

The results of the analysis of the corpus strongly align with previous research on the same topic, confirming that the textbook contains heteronormative discourses. According to Moore's taxonomy (2020), it was evidenced that the types of discourses found were *Heteronormative Marginalization*, and *Heteronormative Erasure*, the most common being the latter. In addition, as heteronormative discourses are not limited to queer inclusion but also involve the reproduction of gender roles, a new category was added labeled as *Gender Role Appraisal*. Following Canale's and Furtado's *Politics of Representation* (2021), it was observed that the textbook reinforces conventional ideas about gender and assumes heteronormative perspectives as the norm in its content, and exercises as graphic and textual depictions perpetuate traditional values and behaviors associated with those discourses. Furthermore, gender-related discussions were typically absent

from the textbook's discourse, where heteronormativity was taken for granted. In fact, even though the textbook proposed a thematic unit aimed at discussing gender stereotypes, it failed as it addressed it as any other average topic that could be used in class to elicit students' participation instead of challenging these notions throughout the whole textbook. Regarding *Queer Inclusion*, the textbook only depicted one picture of a Drag Queen, however, it was not explicitly mentioned, making it ambiguous, and demonstrating that including queer representation is not enough if it is not done in a well-balanced way. This meant that through a deliberate exclusion of diversity in its textual content and graphics, the textbook appeared to perpetuate the prevailing ideological perspective in EFL curriculum and materials.

The data analyzed concerning the interaction between the students and the teacher with the heteronormative discourses inside a class environment as well as outside in a different setting was compiled into the following categories: *Contextualized topics*, *Class development*, *Taking stands*, *Students' reaction towards the content*, *Classroom challenges*, *Transforming textbook's content*.

Regarding *Contextualized topics*, the research highlights a concern relating to the persistent dependence on English learning materials from abroad in countries such as Colombia and across Latin America, potentially neglecting the promotion of local culture and resources in language education. Also, students expressed surprise at the textbook's prolonged use, even at advanced university levels, highlighting the need for more up-to-date and culturally relevant English materials in language education.

In the case of the teacher, the data revealed his pivotal role in contextualizing and challenging stereotypes discussed in the classroom. The teacher utilized real-world examples, often rooted in Colombian culture, to illustrate the impact of these stereotypes on society. By highlighting the legal recognition of diverse family types in Colombia and using inclusive

language in discussions about romantic relationships, he fostered an open and inclusive classroom environment. Moreover, the teacher's insights into gender stereotypes and regional variations in Colombia provided students with a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between cultural norms and individual perceptions. These comparisons extended to international cultures, such as contrasting practices in India, encouraging students to critically examine and question the societal norms and stereotypes that shaped their worldviews. In this manner, the teacher fostered an atmosphere of reflection and discussion that allowed students to challenge and broaden their understanding of these issues.

In terms of *Class development*, the study emphasizes the intricate classroom dynamics that evolved among participants in the learning process, including the teacher, students, and the textbook. This dynamic involved using the textbook exercises as a foundational framework for class development and then supplementing them with additional information to enhance the session's topics. The teacher effectively merged the textbook content and the material he brought to create a space for robust classroom discussions, involving not only the teacher-student interaction but also fostering peer engagement. This interactive moment in the class frequently relied on reiteration to encourage student participation through general and specific questions, aimed at understanding their perspectives on various subjects.

In reference to *Taking Stands*, while the teacher's efforts were evident in promoting discussion, it is notable that many students tended to offer brief responses, such as agreement or disagreement, without elaborating on their insights, despite the opportunities for deeper engagement. Nonetheless, the observations in the classroom showed active engagement and a rich exchange of ideas among both students and the teacher, fostering critical thinking and challenging

societal norms. This collaborative dialogue within the classroom fostered a deeper understanding of the subject matter, ultimately empowering students to question and explore complex topics.

With respect to *Students' Reactions Towards the Content*, the study highlights the multifaceted engagement of both students and the teacher with the textbook content, which encompassed both emotional and behavioral dimensions. Emotionally, students exhibited strong reactions to the textbook exercises that delve into topics like gender, family, and stereotypes. They labeled these exercises as outdated, absurd, and subjective, often perceiving an underlying intent to perpetuate harmful stereotypes. This emotional engagement fostered a critical examination of the textbook's portrayal, with students expressing their concerns and frustrations. However, their emotional responses stood in contrast to their behavioral reactions as most students tended to passively accept these textbook exercises, often choosing to let the misconceptions they encountered go unchallenged. This passive approach could be attributed to the open and encouraging classroom atmosphere, where debate and criticism were welcomed, and it was at this point that the teacher played a significant role.

In terms of *Classroom challenges*, the study sheds light on the delicate balance that both students and the teacher must strike when addressing sensitive topics related to gender-critical points in the classroom. Students often found themselves limited in their ability to influence the textbook content, recognizing that effecting change could be complex and time-consuming. While some students might have considered certain exercises trivial, they tended to refrain from voicing their concerns, often out of respect for their instructors and the perception that certain activities may appear “pointless”.

The teacher, on the other hand, faced the challenge of offering students a degree of freedom in their work while acknowledging the necessity for clear guidelines. He understood the

importance of avoiding certain topics that might lead to controversy but also emphasized the significance of expanding students' perspectives. Besides, he acknowledged that the book could serve as a foundational framework for classroom development but should not be an inflexible doctrine, encouraging students to challenge the material's limitations and biases. In spite of that, while open discussions about these concerns were crucial, students tended to shy away from confronting teachers directly, possibly due to fears of potential repercussions and the perceived power dynamics within the classroom. Instead, they might seek assistance from other instructors. This fear of being labeled as “troublemakers” or dissenters had the potential to impede open dialogue within the classroom.

As for *Transforming Textbook's Content*, it was the teacher who acted as a bridge between the textbook content and the students, enriching the lessons by incorporating additional materials and encouraging critical thinking. The teacher's adaptability and modifications to the textbook's core topics played a key role in making the activities more engaging and manageable for the students. While the textbook might have lacked specific content on gender identities, discussions on these subjects did emerge in the classroom, although it was primarily the teacher who initiated these conversations, not the book itself.

In essence, it is important to highlight that even though the textbook did not provide enough spaces to address heteronormative discourses, it was students and teachers who resisted and contested them. Future research can focus on adding more data to the triangulation by analyzing the teacher's resource book as it suggests how the content should be introduced to the class by the educator. As well, it would be interesting to include exercises that involve the receptive and productive language skills that were not included in this research such as Listening and Writing. Moreover, this study could be replicated with a different classroom that also uses the same

textbook in order to compare the results and see if there are any differences in how other participants react and interact with the discourses.

This research project was intended to provide insights about the interaction of teachers and students with heteronormative discourses as the majority of previous studies only focused on the analysis of heteronormativity in EFL textbooks' content, leaving aside to how this content is performed, discussed or disregarded in a classroom setting. The results of this study can help students, professors and university boards to realize the necessity of creating and using contextualized materials that reflect the gender diversity present in society, contesting heteronormativity and prioritizing the creation of spaces of discussion. Regarding this matter, we align with other authors in recognizing that while it's impossible for textbooks to encompass every aspect of diversity, it remains crucial to make the effort (Canale & Furtado, 2021).

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