Textbooks
FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

A critical analysis of learning materials
used in South African schools

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CAROLYN MCKINNEY

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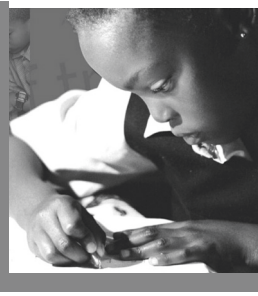

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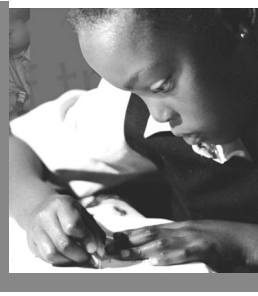

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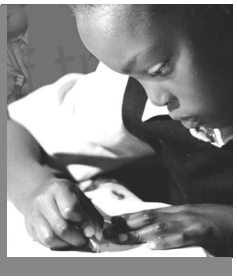


Preface

This paper is part of a wider research project on school integration that we initiated at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2002. Part of the background was a perceived need to better understand the ways in which racial legacies were and were not being overcome through the integration of schools. The project was conceived broadly as being to investigate:

- the unfolding role, character and dynamic of integration in South African schools – its connections to deeper historical, international and new contemporary social patterns, practices, images and representations on an international and local scale;
- the ways in which teachers, texts, managers and policy-makers consciously and creatively make sense of and actively address the challenges posed by integration; and
- 'best practices' in terms of innovation and alternatives to dominant reproductive practices.

We began the process with a colloquium in October 2003. The intention was to draw together existing work in the area and stimulate new research questions and approaches to questions of race, racism, diversity and integration in our schools. The HSRC published the colloquium proceedings in 2004 as *Reflections on school integration*, edited by Mokubung Nkomo, Carolyn McKinney and Linda Chisholm.

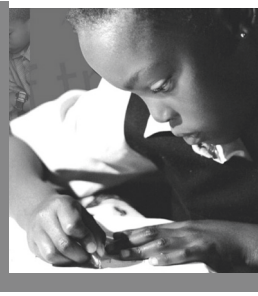
The colloquium addressed a range of issues including international and local perspectives and assessments on contemporay ways of thinking about and acting on racism in schools. Participants included academics, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), statutory bodies and members of government departments, and international organisations. At this colloquium, it emerged that a deeper understanding of what goes on in schools could be gained through additional research on what is taught, by whom it is taught and how. Families and communities are vital influences on ways in which children think about race, but so too are schools: the textbooks used, the teachers who teach and the degree of integration of learners and teachers.

As a follow-up to that colloquium, the HSRC commissioned three additional studies: one on learning support materials (LSMs) and textbooks in schools, another on teacher education and a third on national patterns of integration of schools.

This study on LSMs by Carolyn McKinney (currently based at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg) is the first in the series. We hope it will stimulate further research as well as actions in the field to improve the nature, use and availability of a wide range of learning support materials in schools.

Finally, we wish to thank the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation for the generous grant which made the research and this publication possible.

Linda Chisholm and Mokubung Nkomo
HSRC and University of Pretoria
20 September 2004



Executive summary

Recognising the powerful role played by textbooks, or LSMs, in shaping the apartheid curriculum in the past, this study aims to explore the extent to which textbooks currently in use in South African schools reflect and reinforce the post-apartheid vision of a non-racist, non-sexist, equitable society. It was conducted in the context of the new Constitution, recent educational policy and the Revised National Curriculum Statement which overtly promote the values of democracy, social justice, equity and equality, including non-racism and non-sexism. The study aims to answer the following questions:

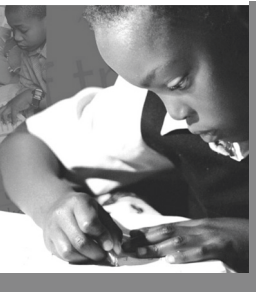
- To what extent are textbooks currently being produced and in use appropriate for the diverse learners in South African schools?
- How do texts in use in schools actively address the challenges posed by integration as well as constitutional imperatives for the recognition of diversity?
- What tools are available for teachers who may wish to challenge racism and different forms of exclusion through textbooks in use in schools?

In answering these questions, the study focuses on representation of the social world in LSMs and defines diversity in relation to race, gender, social class, rural/urban location and disability, recognising the limitations of this definition. The study argues that LSMs play a central role in socialising children and in legitimating cultural norms. If schooling is to promote democratic values and facilitate inclusion, all learners should be able to find themselves and their social worlds represented in the books from which they learn. A total of 61 textbooks in use in South African primary schools were analysed. Textbooks selected include Grade 1 reading schemes (51 readers, 111 stories) and ten Grade 7 Language and Natural Sciences books.

The analysis of Grade 1 readers revealed inequity in gender representation and significant under-representation of rural, poor and working-class social worlds, though racial diversity was better represented. The predominance of nuclear families was also noted. The representation of gender, race, social class and rural/urban location was particularly problematic in imported reading schemes. Grade 1 readers presented almost no opportunities to raise or address issues of racism, sexism, poverty, disability and other forms of social exclusion in texts.

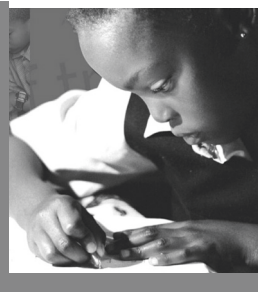
Grade 7 Language texts again revealed gender inequity with males generally over-represented and rural settings as well as poor and working-class characters under-represented. While there are signs that publishers are taking steps towards better representation of race, social class and rural learners, there is definitely need for improvement here, as there is in providing learners with opportunities to explore social diversity and problems of exclusion. Representation in relation to gender, race, social class and rural/urban location (but not disability) was generally better in the Grade 7 Natural Sciences texts than in Language texts, though it is still in need of improvement.

The report highlights the problematic finding that disabled people are invisible in almost every text analysed, whether at Grade 1 or Grade 7 level. It makes specific recommendations for guidelines to be developed in relation to representation and diversity for publishers; for the development of national criteria for textbook selection and the creation of a unified national list in the Department of Education; and for enabling educators to work with existing LSMs where representation is problematic. It also suggests areas for further research.



Abbreviations

DoE	Department of Education
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
LSMs	Learning support materials
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
SAHRC	South African Human Rights Commission
Unesco	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Introduction

Diversity is one of the greatest challenges facing democratic South Africa, with its wide range of people (in terms of 'race', ethnicity, language, culture, religion and social class) and its deep legacy of social inequality. Apartheid education in South Africa was notorious for its role in enforcing social inequality and white supremacy (Christie 1985; Nkomo 1990) with schooling being powerfully abused to shape and distort the values, attitudes and identities of all learners. Teaching methods, curriculum content and textbooks played a central role in this process. Textbooks, in particular, were key in justifying and promoting an apartheid ideology which was racist, sexist and classist. The radical role which post-apartheid education thus has to play in the restructuring of South African society and in creating a democratic ethos is unquestionable.

Recent educational policy, as well as the Revised National Curriculum Statement, take up this challenge, overtly promoting the values of democracy, social justice, equity and equality, including non-racism and non-sexism (Department of Education [DoE] 2000, 2001, 2002). There have been a number of initiatives designed to promote human rights, anti-racism and anti-sexism in education including the setting up of the Race and Values Directorate in the national Department of Education (DoE), the establishment of a special sub-committee on human rights to ensure the integration of values into the revised national curriculum (Chisholm 2003: 10; see also DoE 2000), and the creation of anti-racism and human rights in education networks by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) (Manjoo 2004). There have also been specific recommendations for a focus on LSMs in addressing human rights in the curriculum. For example, one of the recommended activities for the education sector of the *National Action Plan and Strategy to Combat Racism Discussion Document* produced by the SAHRC is 'to produce text-books free from bias, distortion and prejudice' (2001: 8–9). And, in relation to gender, both the Gender Equity Task Team report (Wolpe, Quinlan & Martinez 1997) and Truscott (1994) recommend that attention be paid to identifying sexism in textbooks and to writing appropriate gender-sensitive materials.

In the light of such policy and recommendations, an important question to ask in 2004 is whether democratic values are reflected in schools, classrooms and textbooks, or LSMs. Recognising the powerful role played by LSMs in shaping the apartheid curriculum in the past, this study aims to explore the extent to which textbooks currently in use in South African schools reflect and reinforce the post-apartheid vision of a non-racist, non-sexist, equitable society. It therefore aims to answer the following questions:

- To what extent are textbooks currently being produced and in use appropriate for the diverse learners in South African schools?
- How do texts in use in schools actively address the challenges posed by integration as well as constitutional imperatives for the recognition of diversity?
- What tools are available for teachers who may wish to challenge racism and different forms of exclusion through textbooks in use in schools?

In answering these questions, this study focuses on representation of the social world in LSMs and defines diversity in relation to race, gender, social class, rural/urban location and disability, recognising the limitations of this definition.

It must be acknowledged that a representational analysis such as the one carried out in this study investigates only one dimension of several in relation to LSMs in South African schools. Clearly the procurement and delivery of LSMs is a priority area for the national

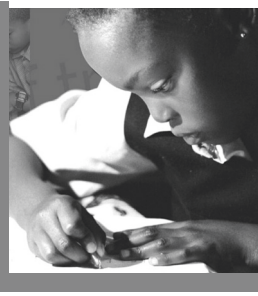
DoE, as discussed in the annual report for 2002–2003 (DoE 2003). Over the past two financial years, there has been an emphasis on the increase in budget allocations for LSMs in all provinces and the national department has been involved in monitoring of provinces in relation to timely procurement and delivery of LSMs in time for the start of the school year. However the success of this has been uneven, with all but two provinces under-spending on LSMs in relation to budgeted allocations in 2001–2002 and not all provinces managing to get materials in schools at the start of the year. As the DoE reports:

> there is concern about the fact that some provincial departments seem reluctant to indicate the true nature of problems relating to procurement and delivery. Negative information is not always divulged. (2003: 24)

What happens to LSMs when they do arrive at schools is another area for investigation, as is the selection process involved. A further key dimension is the responses of educators and learners to the materials from which they teach and learn. While they are beyond the scope of this study, such areas are in need of investigation.

The report is divided into four main sections:

- Part 1 discusses the assumptions and debates underpinning the study and situates these in relation to current research on diversity in South African schooling, particularly on the process of desegregation in schools. It reviews previous studies analysing representation in textbooks both in the developed and developing world.
- Part 2 presents the methodology employed in this study, including details of the texts sampled.
- Part 3 presents the findings of the analysis of the textbooks as well as discussion of findings.
- Part 4 presents a brief conclusion and discussion of implications and recommendations arising from the study.



1 Representation in textbooks

1.1 Desirable representation: real or ideal worlds?

Before one analyses representation of the social world in textbooks, it is necessary to determine what kind of social world it is desirable to represent. The most significant issue to consider here is to what extent textbooks should represent reality as it is (for example the demographics of the population in relation to race, social class, gender and disability; continuing racial segregation; traditional, stereotypical gender roles) and to what extent they should represent an ideal world (for example showing equal numbers of men and women in professional roles; children of all races playing and living together). In my view there are good arguments to be made on both the side of realism and of idealism but these depend on what it is that would be represented either realistically or idealistically. In relation to this, I would argue that the human rights principles underpinning the Constitution and the values of the DoE should play a central role in determining the forms of representation that are appropriate in LSMs.

For example, while we are well aware of the fact that racist practices continue, and thus are part of the reality of social life in South Africa, we would certainly not want racist behaviour or practices to be portrayed in children's readers unless the purpose is explicitly to expose racism and to deal with the issue. While this may seem obvious in relation to racism and racist stereotyping, it is less obvious in relation to sexism and gender stereotyping. The reality argument would say that if there are few women in professional and managerial roles in the workplace, then it is legitimate to represent the workplace in this way; and since there are relatively few men involved in childcare and taking on domestic responsibilities, we should not represent men as active in this domain. Our responses to these examples in respect of race and gender are in themselves an indicator of how we may be strongly critical of racism and racial stereotyping but not of gender stereotyping and sexism.

One assumption underpinning the analysis in this study is that all learners should be able to find themselves and their life worlds (or social worlds) represented in the books from which they learn. This is an argument for the partial representation of reality: characters in textbooks (children and adults) should reflect the demographic make-up of the South African population in relation to race, gender, social class, rural/urban location and disability at least. This is an important way of creating an enabling learning environment where 'all learners feel valued and welcomed in the classroom, irrespective of racial, [gender], class, religious and language backgrounds' (DoE 2002: 4 my addition) as outlined by the *Values in Education Programme of Action*. In a context where 75 per cent of schools are attended by black learners exclusively, a figure which the population demographics of South Africa ensure is likely to remain unchanged, and where publishers clearly seem to develop textbook series for particular markets, should there not then be textbooks representing exclusively black characters? On the other hand, in a context where there are very few schools that are exclusively white, and where this number will decrease and eventually cease to exist (for example in Gauteng only 34 per cent of ex-white schools had less than 10 per cent black learners enrolled in 2002 [Sujee 2004]), are textbooks that represent an exclusively white or white-dominated world appropriate? The argument for books depicting an exclusively black world is much stronger – as this is the reality in the majority of schools, and to some extent, in a range of rural and township settings – than is that for representing exclusively white worlds.

Another argument underpinning the analysis is that LSMs should not only represent the diverse demographic make-up of South African society, but they should contribute to bringing about the ideal world envisaged by our Constitution. This is particularly important in relation to gender roles where textbooks can play a role in subverting gender stereotypes and validating gender equality by showing equal numbers of male and female professionals (for example managers, doctors) even though this doesn't reflect the reality of the workplace, and by depicting men alongside women as active in taking care of children and running the home. One might want to debate the issue of the representation of gender equality further within the African context. In their study of gender representation in textbooks from southern Africa, Brickhill, Odora Hoppers and Pehrsson argue that '"equality" between men and women, in the sense of gender-neuter (or unisex) approaches to *all* domestic roles or occupations for example, is simply not a realistic frame of reference in Mozambique, Zambia or Zimbabwe' (1996: 1). But alongside this, Brickhill et al. argue that the notion of 'culture' being used to justify social and economic discrimination against women cannot be defended nor tolerated. In their study, Brickhill et al. concede that representation of unisex/non-differentiated gender roles in the southern African country context cannot be expected, but nevertheless judge gender stereotyping against:

> the diverse reality of African men and women: A reality where women play an acknowledged role in history and politics, are increasingly the heads of the household, constitute over 50% of peasant farmers, are performing a variety of income-generating occupations and are increasingly accepted in all professional occupations, but where custom and culture still respect special and different roles for men and women in community and family. (1996: 11)

This is not a simple issue to resolve, particularly in a context like South Africa with its contradictory messages on gender roles. On the one hand, non-sexism and gender equality is strongly espoused (as expressed in the representivity of women in the Cabinet), but on the other hand, society is deeply patriarchal. However, constitutional principles as well as the values of the DoE make it desirable to represent an ideal world in relation to gender equality.

1.2 Diversity in South African schooling

Current research on diversity and racial integration in South Africa's schools, which has tracked change in desegregated schools since 1991, presents a picture of limited or minimal changes in the practices and cultures of such schools and an absence of co-ordinated programmes to address issues of diversity and inequality such as racism and sexism (Carrim 1998; Naidoo 1996; Sekete, Shilubane & Moila 2001; Vally & Dalamba 1999; Zafar 1998). Racism and racial intolerance have been uncovered in some schools (Vally & Dalamba 1999) as well as a dominant assimilationist approach whereby black learners are construed as the 'other' and are expected to conform to the dominant, unchanged 'white', 'coloured' or 'Indian' culture of the school (Carrim & Soudien 1999; Soudien 1998; Zafar 1998). In a recent overview of research on racial desegregation in schooling, Soudien writes that:

> …'integration' in education in South Africa can be argued to be a process of accommodation in which subordinate groups or elements of subordinate groups have been recruited or have promoted themselves into the hegemonic social,

> cultural and economic regime at the cost of subordinate ways of being, speaking and conducting their every-day lives. (2004: 112)

Significant in this process is the role of the middle class as a dominant social grouping. Desegregation has largely involved demographic changes and the integration of black learners into middle-class schooling alongside the post-apartheid expansion of the black middle class, rather than the social integration of different races in one school. This suggests that race is being mediated through class with social class overtaking race as a marker of privilege (Sayed & Soudien 2003).

Alongside such processes of desegregation in schooling, we must recognise that the overwhelming majority of schools are exclusively black African (75 per cent) and will remain so, as pointed out above. The majority of learners are also attending schools in rural areas and despite the hegemony of the expanding middle class, are predominantly working-class and poor. In relation to gender, while enrolment ratios for girls and boys show equality, the lack of implementation of the recommendations of the Gender Equity Task Team (Wolpe et al. 1997) regarding other aspects of gender inequity in education is also cause for concern.

1.3 Textbooks and socialisation

The powerful social function of textbooks in socialising children, and in legitimating what counts as cultural norms and officially sanctioned values and knowledge, is clearly documented. Allan Luke writes that:

> Textbooks act as the interface between the officially state-adopted and sanctioned knowledge of the culture, and the learner ... Problems in ascertaining what will count as a common culture notwithstanding, textbooks are a specialised means for the ritual introduction of children into a culture's values and knowledge. (1989: 64)

As curriculum theorist Denis Lawton has argued, like curriculum, textbooks always present a 'selection from culture' (in De Castell, Luke & Luke 1989). The importance of this selection is brought home by Michael Apple (1989) who argues that the curriculum is defined by texts in use, rather than by official curriculum statements.

Luke alludes to the crucial questions of what constitutes common cultural knowledge and what the dominant, hegemonic knowledge in a particular society is. Another way of putting this might be, what selection from culture is privileged in particular textbooks? De Castell et al. argue that what counts as 'authorised cultural knowledge' (1989: vii) in contemporary nation states characterised by diversity must reflect the diversity of communities, groups and social formations. This is imperative for a socially and culturally diverse country such as South Africa. However, in relation to this, one cannot ignore studies of social class in schooling which have emphasised the role of schools as sorting agents in the reproduction of class structures (for example Bowles & Gintis 1977). While such analyses have been critiqued for being overly reductionist and determinist, not least in ignoring the role of agency in relation to structure, they are nevertheless important to consider in an educational context such as South Africa where middle-class ways are hegemonic or at least privileged (see the discussion above, Soudien 2004; Sayed & Soudien 2003) and where apartheid education played a central role in reproducing racial inequality and racism. While principles

of equity should inform what counts as authorised cultural knowledge, the emergence of a new de-racialised middle class fiercely protective of its interests makes it important to examine how this might be playing itself out in relation to the design of textbooks and to the selections from culture privileged in this process. Apart from the dominance of the middle class, the lack of implementation of recommendations of the Gender Equity Task Team in post-1997 should also alert us to the possibility of gender stereotyping and sexism in LSMs. In the context of inclusion and exclusion of marginalised groups in schooling, Subrahmanian identifies learning materials as one of the key factors contributing 'to reshaping the identity of the learners' (2003: 6). The extent to which children are able to identify with the selections of culture in textbooks, including the representation of the social world, impacts on their ability to take on the identity of learners, and to feel the sense of belonging within the school context necessary for success.

1.4 Studies of representation in textbooks

1.4.1 North America

Several studies have been conducted examining cultural representation in textbooks in countries of the 'North' and 'South'. I will begin with a brief review of research on texts from North America and the United Kingdom before moving on to discuss studies conducted in African countries and in Pakistan. Many studies have focused on children's readers, or first books. This is in response to the social function readers play in 'legitimating particular values, assumptions and principles reflective of particular, historically rooted social interests' (Taxel 1989: 40; see also Freebody & Baker 1985). Research on textbooks has most often focused on gender (Brindle & Arnot 1999; Evans & Davies 2000; Freebody & Baker 1985; Witt 1996), and less so on the representation of 'race' (for example Clawson & Kegler 2000; Hallinan 1994; Sleeter & Grant 1991).

In a detailed analysis of Gray's popular *Dick and Jane* basal readers developed in the post-war period, Luke argues that the texts can be cited as archetypal cases of textbook stereotyping and as 'blatantly classist, sexist and racist' (1989: 86). Luke analyses the roles played in the readers by members of a white, middle-class, nuclear family: Mother and Father, Dick, Jane and baby Sally. He shows how females (Mother and Jane) never initiate actions and are frequently observers – a typical example of this would be a construction like 'Dick kicked the ball; Jane looked on.' The books illustrate the gender socialisation process through the character of toddler, Sally, who provides amusement in not 'getting it right' in relation to gender roles. One example of this is when Sally brings her ripped dress to Father for mending, cause of great mirth. Luke emphasises the fact that such texts are a product of their time and are hardly surprising as reflective of social relations in many homes. How far have we come then in the representation of gender in children's readers?

In a recent review of studies of gender in children's readers pre-1980, Evan and Davies report that women and girls were consistently under-represented as main characters. They also report 'extreme stereotyping of female characters when shown, [as well as] very few depictions of women in occupational roles, and negative displays of feminine characteristics' (2000: 257). Evan and Davies' own study focused on the representation of masculinity in primary reading books, and found an improvement in the numerical representation of girls but continuing sexism in the 'manner in which males and females are depicted through personality traits' (2000: 268). They found that while girls may be

depicted with stereotypically male qualities, boys are typically not shown with female characteristics: while girls are not socially sanctioned for 'acting like boys', boys are certainly sanctioned for acting 'like girls' and labelled as sissies. They conclude that 'male characters are being portrayed the same way they were 20 years ago' (2000: 267). Their findings confirm those of Witt who analysed characteristics of male and female characters in Grade 3 readers and concluded that:

> It would appear that in the publishing world, a decision has been made that male characters in children's readers are only appealing when they exhibit traditional masculine behaviours. (1996: 314)

In a rare study combining analysis of the representation of gender, race, disability and social class, Sleeter and Grant found that white Americans made up 50 to 80 per cent of characters in textbooks and that social-class diversity was largely absent, with an overwhelming dominance of middle-class characters or 'people wearing clothing, occupying houses, and using speech commonly associated with the middle class' (1991: 91). Of 14 books, four showed equal numerical representation of females and males while ten showed a predominance of male characters ranging from 55 to 75 per cent. Sex-stereotyped roles were common, 'with females as worriers, nurturers, concerned about their appearance, afraid and needing males to rescue them' while 'males appear brave, needing to prove themselves, and desiring power' (1991: 90). Disability was virtually absent in the textbooks. Sleeter and Grant thus conclude that 'treatment of diversity in textbooks has not improved much over the past fifteen years or so' (1991: 101). A recent study of race in American Government College textbooks by Clawson and Kegler produced equally disturbing findings, with poverty portrayed as an exclusively 'black' problem as well as a perpetuation of 'other stereotypical images of the poor' (2000: 179).

1.4.2 Textbooks in developing countries

Gender has also been the main focus of studies of representation in textbooks in the developing world including:

- the portrayal of girls and women in Kenyan textbooks (Obura 1991);
- gender aspects of primary school textbooks in Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe (Brickhill et al. 1996); and
- an analysis of gender in Pakistan textbooks (Mattu & Hussain, 2004).

The aim of the Kenyan study was 'to examine the messages on the role of girls and women in society passed on to girls through school textbooks' (Obura 1991: 6). Obura argues that in a context where books are scarce and opportunities to engage with mass media are limited, the textbook operates as 'Africa's mass medium for children' (1991: 10) and thus is a powerful source of authority. Obura's study examined textbooks across a range of curriculum areas including Maths, Science, Agriculture, Social Science and Language and found consistent gender bias across all. In relation to Science, the study focused on the extent to which textbooks reinforced the alienation of females from Science and found that this was indeed the case:

> as the textbooks are addressed to higher classes, masculine context, masculine words ands masculine illustrations multiply . . . men are associated with modernity and development while women are associated with domesticity and low technology. (1991: 42)

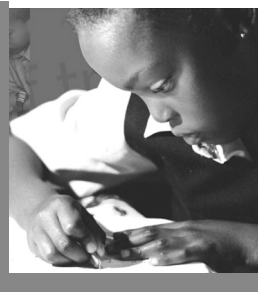
In Agriculture, the fact that women are responsible for 80 per cent of food production in Africa is largely not reflected in textbooks, where the practice of agriculture is represented as a male domain, while Social Science textbooks teach about the dependence of women on men. One further aspect of social representation Obura discusses is the exclusive representation of nuclear families in Language textbooks, where the mother does all of the domestic work, ignoring the reality that domestic workers are employed to do housework in many homes.

The analysis of gender aspects in textbooks from Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe again revealed consistent gender stereotypes with women being confined to the domestic sphere and only represented outside of this in the roles of nurse and sellers of fresh produce at the market. On a more positive note, the researchers found boys and girls depicted doing things together on Mozambican book covers. They emphasise the importance of this, as book covers send out messages not only to learners but to their parents as well – here that school is for both girls and boys. There were a few examples of assertive female role models, and females in the roles of doctor and carpenter, but these were in the minority. The study of texts in Zimbabwe emphasised the exclusive representation of the nuclear family, with women engaged in domestic work while the men are never shown in domestic work nor child-care roles. In the analysis of the Zimbabwean texts, the point is made that gender stereotyping is most pronounced among adults, while children were often shown in gender neutral roles 'with not-so-subtle undertones of boys in assertive, action-orientated roles and girls in supporting or domestic roles' (Brickhill et al. 1996: 21). As discussed above, Brickhill et al. question whether we can expect the representation of gender equality 'in the sense of gender-neuter (or unisex)' approaches to all roles in a context 'where custom and culture still respect special and different roles for men and women in community and family' (1996: 11). In their view, we cannot expect to get away from different gendered roles. However, their concern is that the diverse reality of African men and women which includes the role of African women in politics, as farmers and heads of households, in a variety of income-generating and professional occupations, should be represented in textbooks in southern Africa. Brickhill et al. also highlight the need to address ways in which stereotypes are perpetuated through cultural beliefs in African contexts.

The study of textbooks from Pakistan highlights the disjuncture between public statements on women's rights and the patriarchal reflections of masculinity and femininity. This study emphasises the 'false division of space into the domestic, which is associated with women, and the public which is thought to belong solely to men' (Mattu & Hussain 2004: 92). The authors conclude that the message conveyed by these texts is that women's only legitimate role is in performing household tasks and caring for the family. They also point to the way in which many stories portray males as active and rational, while females are portrayed as passive and irrational and they emphasise that such stereotypical representation of masculinity and femininity has negative effects for both boys and girls. As if the evidence of gender stereotyping in school texts across the world is not already overwhelming enough, a Unesco study of research on textbooks over the period 1990–1999 again highlights the consistent under-representation of girls in relation to boys as well as gender stereotyping in books from Swaziland, Costa Rica, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Yemen and Zambia (Unesco 2000).

1.5 Conclusion

Unlike most of the studies reviewed above, this study focuses on a range of diversity issues in analysing representation in textbooks: race, social class, gender, rural/urban location, and disability. It is also concerned with the opportunities available to challenge racism, sexism and other forms of exclusion in LSMs. This study thus raises critical questions regarding what kinds of values, knowledge and culture are being presented in textbooks as well as what kind of society is being represented. The new values that have been enshrined in the Constitution and in educational policy are not necessarily dominant in mainstream South African society. With the deracialisation of the education system and introduction of a single curriculum in the post-apartheid context, one would expect to see a change in textbooks in terms of the underpinning assumptions made about their model readers or users and a broader representation of lifestyles and cultures as well as democratic values. However it is not unlikely that one might find contradictory values and assumptions, reflective of a society that is in a state of flux.



2 Methodology

2.1 Selecting textbooks for the study

2.1.1 Learning areas

It was decided to focus on textbooks in use in Grade 1 and Grade 7, that is, the entry and exit points of primary education.[1] For Grade 1, reading schemes (readers) were selected. As the first school texts that children encounter, and given the dearth of reading material in many homes, the first *books* that many children encounter, such texts are particularly important in the socialisation of children in school. In Grade 7, the focus is on the two curriculum areas of Language and Natural Sciences. The former learning area provides some continuity with the Grade 1 focus and the latter is important because of the limited numbers of girls, poor and working-class learners continuing with Science and Technology in the senior years beyond Grade 7.

2.1.2 Sample

Texts were selected for analysis through one of two distinct processes. Firstly, large educational publishers were approached directly to provide information on national best sellers in the Grade 1 Language learning area and Grade 7 Language as well as Natural Sciences learning areas. Several leading publishers were approached. Titles were selected from the information supplied by them. In one case, all the readers for Grade 1, of a series that is used in more than a thousand rural schools, were selected for analysis. The focus was on learner books and not teacher's guides.

Secondly, information on LSMs currently in use in the sample of rural schools randomly selected for the qualitative research in the Nelson Mandela Foundation Rural Schools Research Project, co-ordinated by the HSRC, provided another source of titles for selection and analysis. This sample of rural schools included two in each of the three provinces Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal. The popularity and wide usage of a number of the books in the sample is indicated by the extent to which books have been reprinted. Where appropriate, this is indicated in the discussion of texts.

- A total of 61 books were analysed: 51 Grade 1 readers consisting of 111 stories (all in English, but two full schemes/series are available and used in other languages; one series specifically for English Additional Language). The readers made up six different reading schemes. Reading schemes could be one longer book consisting of several stories or up to 20 separate books consisting of one story each.
- Six Grade 7 Language textbooks (all in use and best sellers reprinted several times, some recently published): three English Additional Language books were analysed in detail; two isiXhosa First Language books and one Afrikaans Additional Language book were analysed on the basis of visual images only.
- Four Grade 7 Natural Sciences textbooks (in use and best sellers): content analysis of visual images only.

Full details of the titles analysed are given in Appendix 1. Although all texts analysed are commercially published texts in the public domain, it was decided not to identify publishers of titles in the analysis. This is because the sample of titles from each publisher is relatively small and certainly not representative of their entire offering. This is thus not an attempt to evaluate and compare publishers, nor to recommend particular titles.

1 This is the case if one acknowledges the limited provision of Grade R (reception year) in most primary schools.

2.2 Methods of analysis

Content analysis was the main method employed in analysing the textbooks. This included both quantitative and qualitative aspects. For the quantitative analysis, characters were identified and counted according to the race, gender, social class, and disability of characters in three categories:

- on the book cover;
- as main character/s of the story; and
- of all characters and images in the book.

Whether the story was set in a rural or urban setting was noted. Firstness and prominence (i.e. the character that is mentioned and shown first in the book and in lists of names [for example Benny and Betty: black male is listed first]) was also identified. Types of families (nuclear, extended, other) represented were also noted.

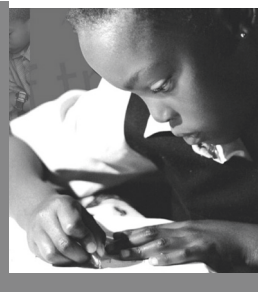
In the qualitative analysis, attention was paid to:

- what kinds of activities different characters were engaged in;
- whether characters of different racial groups were shown interacting together and in what roles; and
- the general content of texts and themes and ideologies addressed.

The potential tools for challenging racism, sexism and different forms of exclusion across the Language texts in English was also assessed.

Both visual images and written text were analysed in the Grade 1 readers and Grade 7 Language texts in English. However, the analysis of the Grade 7 Language texts in isiXhosa and Afrikaans as well as of the Grade 7 Science books was limited to a visual analysis (due to linguistic and time constraints). Please see Appendix 2 for the analytical frameworks developed for the different levels and learning areas.

Underlying the analysis is the assumption that discourse is a social practice which is produced through a combination of the text, interaction with the text and the social context surrounding the text (Fairclough 1989, 1992; Thesen 1998). It follows from such a view of discourse that the particular selections and choices made in the construction of texts (whether these are news reports, media or textbooks as in this case) are not arbitrary, but motivated. Such texts are always a representation and encoding of the social world in which they are produced and consumed. This analysis is concerned with identifying and evaluating the selections that have been made to represent a particular social world to South African learners, and the social values that are promoted. Whether these are in step with post-apartheid constitutional and educational values is an important consideration in the study.



3 Findings and discussion

3.1 Analysis of Grade 1 Readers

3.1.1 Gender – quantitative analysis

In analysing the representation of females and males in the different readers, numerical representation is a telling indicator of the overall representation of the two genders. This was assessed in relation to:

- gender representation on the covers of the books;
- gender composition of the main characters of stories;
- gender composition of all characters; and
- total number of male and female images in the books.

The general trend, with some exceptions, is the over-representation of males in relation to females. Four of the six reading schemes represent either boys or girls on their covers with a minority of covers representing both boys and girls together. Of the majority of covers depicting either males or females, there are many more boys on covers than girls. Three of the schemes have double the number of covers depicting males than females (see Table 1). As far as main characters are concerned, five of the six schemes present many more males as the lead characters than females (See Table 2). In Scheme 5, of 34 main characters, only 5 were girls while 24 were boys. In the only scheme (Scheme 4) presenting more girl lead characters than boys, this difference was marginal (5/9). Gender representation in main characters is particularly significant because it is these characters who are the main 'sayers' and 'doers', and who are often the heroes of the story. In the story at least, the world revolves around them.

Table 1: Gender representation on cover of book

Cover of book	Male	Female	Both	No. of covers with human characters
Scheme 1	7 (58%)	3 (25%)	2 (16%)	12
Scheme 2	5 (55%)	2 (22%)	2 (22%)	9
Scheme 3	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)	5
Scheme 4	0	0	0	0
Scheme 5	0	0	1	1
Scheme 6	8 (38%)	12 (57%)	1 (5%)	21
TOTAL	22 (46%)	18 (38%)	8 (17%)	48

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Figure 1: Gender representation on cover of book

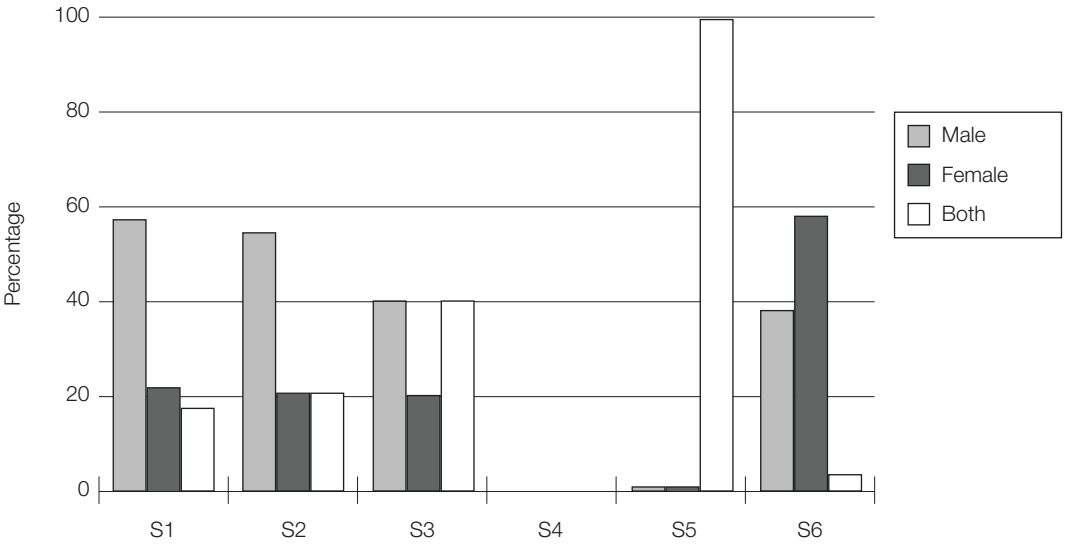


Table 2: Gender representation in main characters

Main characters	Male	Female	Both	No clear lead	No. of main characters across stories
Scheme 1	11 (65%)	6 (35%)	0	0	17
Scheme 2	6 (60%)	1 (10%)		3 (30%)	10
Scheme 3	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	0	5
Scheme 4	4 (44%)	5 (56%)	0	0	9
Scheme 5	25 (74%)	5 (15%)	4 (12%)	0	34
Scheme 6	10 (63%)	0	4 (25%)	2 (12%)	16
TOTAL	59 (65%)	18 (20%)	9 (10%)	5 (5%)	91

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

In counting the total number of male and female characters in the readers, the gap between male and female was much smaller, with near equal representation in Schemes 1, 2, 4 and 6. Although small, these gaps still favoured males in all but one of the schemes (see Table 3). Finally, in the total number of images in the readers, males were consistently represented more than females with the exception of one scheme where the gender balance was more or less equal (Scheme 6 – 50,3 per cent female: 49,6 per cent male). It is interesting to note that although the gap between representations of females and males narrowed in the total number of characters, this gap is widened again in the total number of images. Thus, even where the number of male and female characters is fairly balanced, male characters are still over-represented in the images, making the boys numerically more dominant in the readers (see Table 4).

Figure 2: Gender representation in main characters

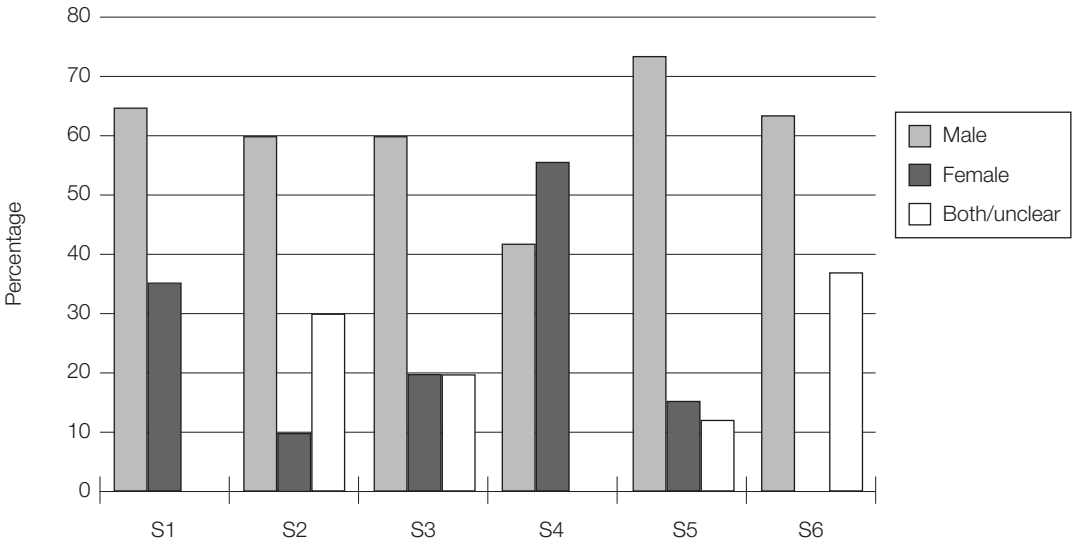


Table 3: All characters — gender

	Female	Male	Unclear	Total
Scheme 1	49 (49%)	50 (51%)	0	99
Scheme 2	12 (48%)	13 (52%)	0	25
Scheme 3	15 (37.5%)	25 (62.5%)	0	40
Scheme 4	34 (47%)	39 (53%)	0	73
Scheme 5	9 (24%)	29 (76%)	0	38
Scheme 6	64 (53%)	54 (45%)	2 (2%)	120
TOTAL	183 (46%)	210 (53%)	2 (1%)	395

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Figure 3: All characters — gender

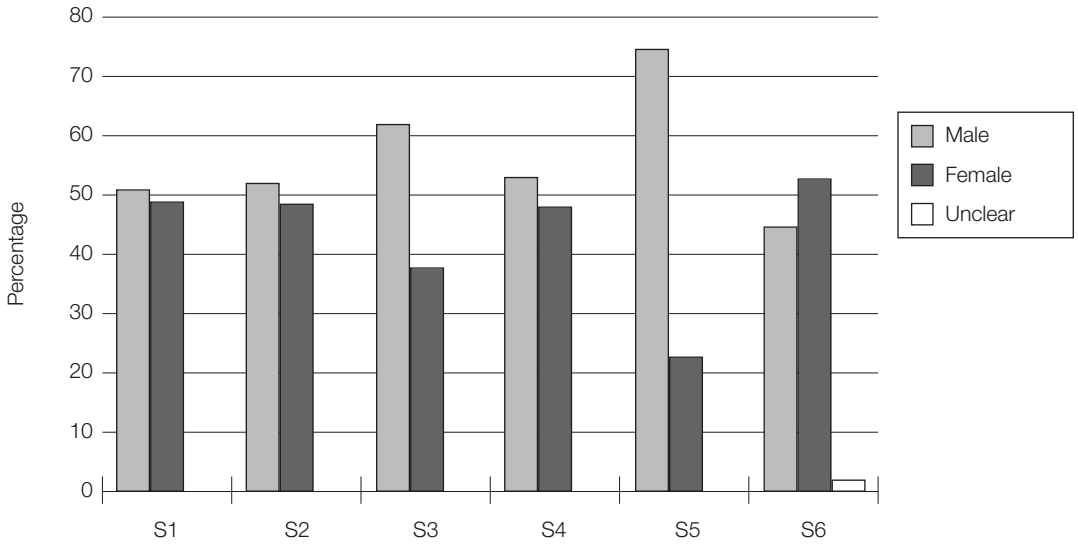


Table 4: Gender — total images

	Female		Male		Unclear	Total
Scheme 1	141	(44%)	183	(56%)	0	324
Scheme 2	38	(39%)	59	(61%)	0	97
Scheme 3	62	(38%)	101	(62%)	0	163
Scheme 4	56	(40%)	83	(60%)	0	139
Scheme 5	129	(38%)	208	(62%)	0	337
Scheme 6	280	(50.3%)	276	(49.6%)	0	556
TOTAL	706	(44%)	910	(56%)	0	1616

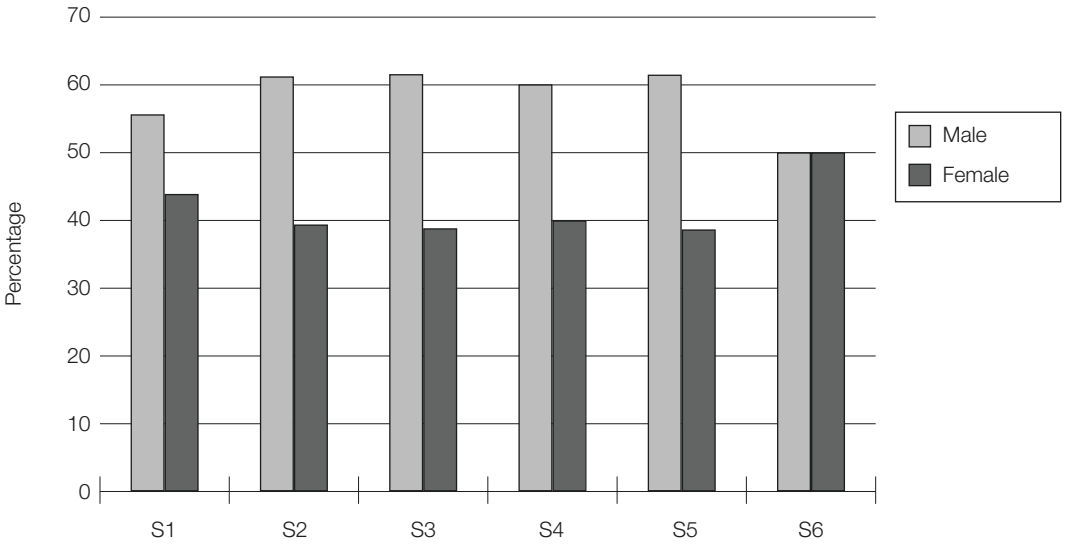
Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

3.1.2 Gender roles in the readers

In a qualitative analysis of the roles played by boys and girls, men and women, in the readers, results ranged from fairly non-stereotypical and equal representations, which included some subversion of gender stereotypes, to consistent gender stereotyping.

Gender stereotyping is often far more entrenched in the representation of adult characters than it is among children. This is certainly the case in Scheme 6, especially in the first two readers (eight stories) which revolve around a nuclear family: Mom, Dad (who is largely absent), and a brother, sister and baby (unknown sex). In these stories, the home is clearly the domain of adult females: Mom, Grandmother and her friends. The mother is depicted as the main caregiver for the children, frequently with a baby on her back and

Figure 4: Gender — total images



cooking and serving food. In contrast to this, the father is frequently absent from the stories, and when present is depicted sitting at the dining table being served food and outside in the garden. He also makes a go-kart for the children. However, both the girl and the boy are depicted helping Mom in the kitchen (for example making sandwiches, carrying the shopping bags) and helping Dad outside (for example making the go-kart). In one story, the boy is shown holding his new-born cousin and the story revolves around his male cousin of the same age feeling neglected with the birth of the baby. The cousin is depicted crying and being comforted: the only representation of a boy expressing such emotions across the readers. In later readers of the same scheme which are set in the school and community rather than the home, gender roles among the children continue to be non-stereotypically represented while adults fulfil more stereotypical roles: for example women are depicted as nurses, teachers, mothers, while men are depicted as principals, doctors, mayors, and community decision-makers. The difference in representation of gender roles of adults and children echoes that of the Zimbabwean texts in Brickhill et al.'s study. Such difference can be interpreted in two ways: either the message is that gender roles are different for a new generation, or that gender roles are more fluid amongst children but that the adult world is more rigidly divided. The latter seems more likely. While subversion of particular stereotypical gender roles is acceptable amongst children, this does not seem the case for adults.

This is a similar trend in Scheme 1 where adult women are depicted as mothers, nurses and teachers, while adult men are depicted gardening, reading the newspaper, riding bicycles and making go-karts. Although there is some stereotyping among the roles and activities of girls and boys (for example one story is about a girl taking care of her baby brother while stories about boy main characters involve riding in/on bicycles, go-karts and aeroplanes), they are generally represented more equally. This is especially so in the school environment where they are shown engaged in the same classroom and play activities. In Scheme 2, where only one of the seven stories with single lead characters is female, the male characters are depicted in the outdoors: playing in the garden, with

dogs, climbing trees, running and jumping. In contrast to this, the single story with a female main character is about how she looks after her baby brother. While there is nothing wrong with stories of girls looking after smaller siblings *per se*, what does seem problematic is that boys are almost never shown in this role: their social worlds are filled with play and freedom while girls are far more likely to be confined to the indoors and responsibility in the domestic space. An extreme example of this is seen in Scheme 5.

Unsurprisingly, if one looks at Tables and Figures 1 to 4 discussed above, Scheme 5 produced the most limited representations of gender, with consistent gender stereotyping of girls and boys, men and women, accompanying the large under-representation of girls as main characters and pictorially. Although the scheme is named Benny and Betty and their friends, Betty doesn't feature much and is always second in the dyad of 'Benny and Betty'. In fact one of the friends, also male, features as the main character of many more stories than Betty does, despite the title of the reader. Activities are also strongly stereotyped according to gender, not only for Betty and Benny but for other children too: girls are involved in helping mothers in domestic work; boys sometimes helping fathers but otherwise playing.

The domestic realm, inside the home, is a space dominated by females, especially adult females, while that outside of the home is inhabited by men and children. Thus Scheme 5 depicts adult women looking after children (as mothers), as teachers and doing domestic work, while adult men are depicted fixing cars, driving cars, buses and trucks, building houses and as farmers. A list of the differential activities that Benny and Betty are involved in shows the strongly gendered nature of their social worlds:

Benny's activities	**Betty's activities**
• helps adult men build hut • feeds hens • plays aeroplane • goes to kraal to see cows • plays with dog • washes face (x2) • chases hens • draws car • helps father in garden and washes car • is released from work to play with Joseph (while Betty continues with domestic work) • plays soccer • plays father • goes to town with father • goes to town with other girls and boys • helps get Joseph down from tree	• helps women carry grass for hut roof • is afraid (of cat) • helps mother • cleans windows, sweeps • washes dishes • sets table with crockery • helps mother with laundry • makes bed • washes clothes • plays mother • sees (finds) Joseph up in tree • buys sugar from shop for mother

The fact that Scheme 5 was first published in 1983 may account for the extent of inequalities in the representation of gender and may suggest that representation of gender has improved in more recent years, though one cannot generalise from one scheme. To support this observation, we should note that Scheme 4, produced by the same publisher

in 2003, shows a vast improvement in the representation of gender. However, what is disturbing is that Scheme 5 is in its 49th impression (most recently reprinted in 2001) and is clearly an extremely popular text in English Additional Language teaching and, as the rural sample showed, is still in use in rural schools.

In Scheme 3, male main characters are dominant, while the activities that boys and girls are engaged in are more equal. Activities that adult men and women are engaged in are more stereotypical (for example Dad: washes car, reads newspaper in armchair, gets angry and shouts at the children, makes a go-kart for the children, makes a swing (together with mom) for the children; Mom: hangs the laundry, washes dishes, makes tea, scolds the children). In one of the five stories in the scheme, however, gender representation is more interesting. The story is about a brother and sister fighting over different toys – first a go-kart which their father makes for them and secondly a garden-swing which they help both their parents to make for them. The girl and boy are both involved in a physical fight over the go-kart with the boy being pushed down by the girl. In the making of the swing, mother and daughter are working with the hammer and spanner while father and son paint the structure. This story seems then to attempt to subvert stereotypical gender roles. However, in another image it is still the mother who is in the kitchen washing dishes while the father reads the paper in his comfy chair. In the last of the stories in the series, the story revolves around a girl who is having nightmares and is comforted by her mother and father. In the entire sample of stories analysed, boys are never depicted as frightened, while girls are, as in this example.

Only one story of 111 provides an opportunity to address sexism. Entitled *No you can't*, it addresses competition between girls and boys, and boys' common teasing of girls that they can do things better (for example run faster, jump higher). However, as in Evan and Davies' and Witt's studies of representations of masculinity, it is the boy who is depicted as competitive and as the opponent against whom the girl must prove herself.

3.1.3 Race[2] – quantitative analysis

In analysing the representation of race and racial diversity in the readers, the quantitative analysis provides an overview. This was assessed in relation to:

- race representation on the covers of the books;
- racial composition of the main characters of stories; and
- racial composition of all characters.

Across all three of the categories, two of the schemes showed a severe under-representation or complete lack of representation of black characters, whether on covers, as main characters or secondary characters. In the remaining four schemes, representation of black characters was much better, ranging from 69 to 100 per cent of images on the cover of the book, 53 to 100 per cent of main characters, and 69 to 100 per cent of all characters (see Tables 5, 6 and 7 below). If one ignores Schemes 2 and 3 (which are discussed in more detail below), black characters are clearly dominant in the readers. Readers where all the characters are black or all the characters are white, or where all the main characters are either black or white, raise questions about the desirability of representing the racial demographics of the country in textbooks.

2 Note that the categories of 'black' and 'white' are used. Black is used inclusively to refer to African, Indian and coloured. Subtleties of 'racial difference' were not easy to identify in the line drawings commonly used.

Table 5: Race representation on cover of book

Cover of book	Black	White	Both black and white	Total human characters
Scheme 1	11 (69%)	5 (31%)	0	16
Scheme 2	2 (22%)	6 (67%)	1 (11%)	9
Scheme 3	0	7 (100%)	0	7
Scheme 4	0	0	0	0
Scheme 5	4 (100%)	0	0	4
Scheme 6	17 (81%)	4 (19%)	0	21
TOTAL	34 (60%)	22 (39%)	1 (2%)	57

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Figure 5: Race representation on cover of book

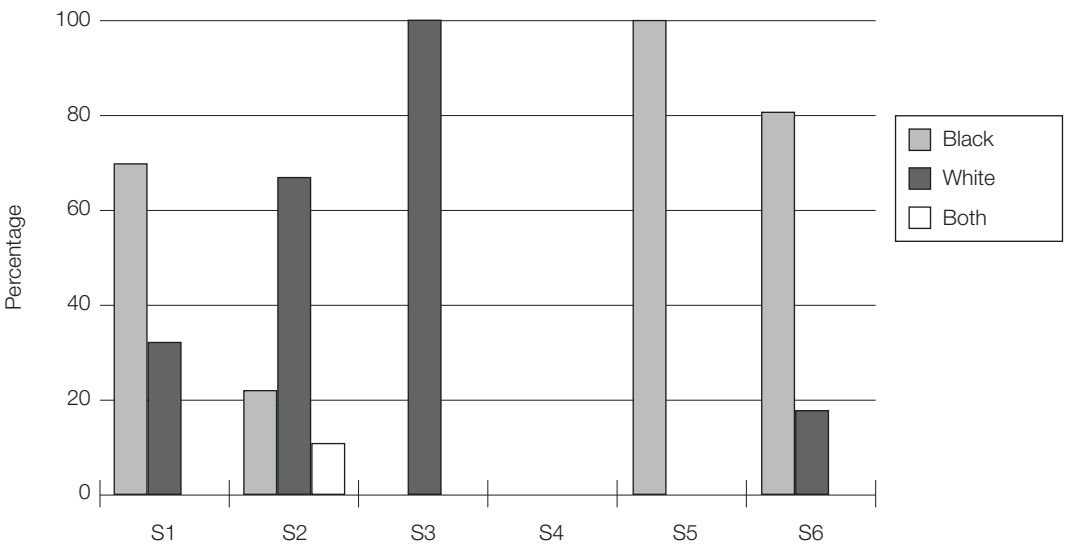


Table 6: Race representation in main characters

Main characters	Black	White	Race unclear	No. of main characters across stories
Scheme 1	9 (53%)	2 (13%)	6 (35%)	17
Scheme 2	2 (20%)	6 (60%)	2 (20%)	10
Scheme 3	0 (0%)	5 (100%)	0	5
Scheme 4	8 (89%)	0	1 (11%)	9
Scheme 5	34 (100%)	0	0	34
Scheme 6	13 (93%)	1 (7%)	0	14
TOTAL	66 (74%)	14 (16%)	9 (10%)	89

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Figure 6: Race representation in main characters

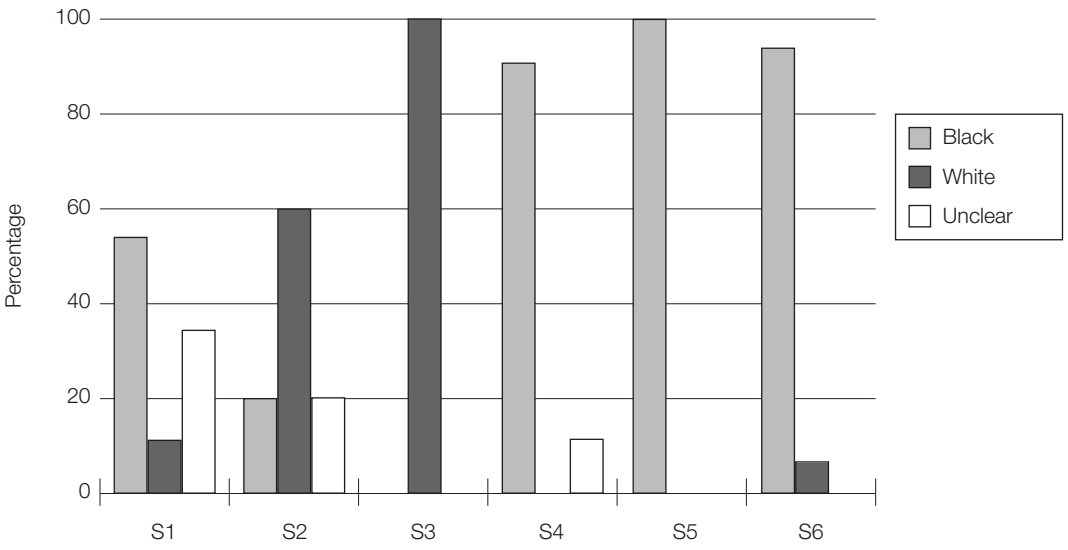
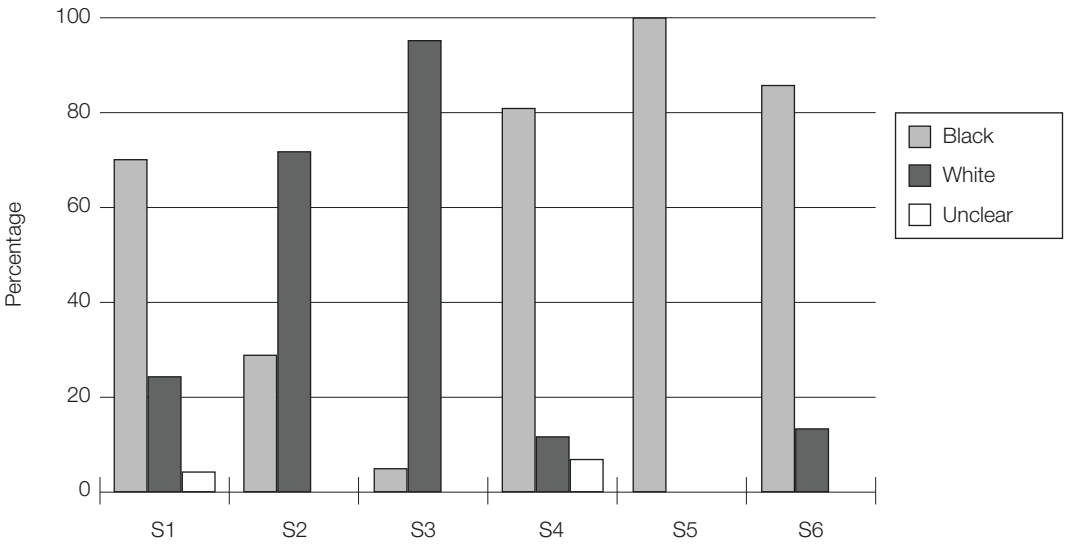


Table 7: All characters — race

	Black	White	Unclear	Other	Total
Scheme 1	68 (69%)	25 (25%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	99
Scheme 2	7 (28%)	18 (72%)	0	0	25
Scheme 3	2 (5%)	37 (95%)	0	0	39
Scheme 4	60 (82%)	8 (11%)	5 (7%)	0	73
Scheme 5	34 (100%)	0	0	0	34
Scheme 6	55 (86%)	9 (14%)	0	0	64
TOTAL	226 (68%)	97 (29%)	9 (3%)	2 (1%)	334

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Figure 7: All characters — race



There did not seem to be any clear distinctions between the roles and activities that black characters were engaged in, in comparison with white characters. As mentioned above, several main characters were black (which in combination with the gender findings means that many main characters were black males) with the social world clearly revolving around them. I did not find any overtly racist representations in any of the readers analysed. As I will discuss under social class below, where poor characters were represented, these were exclusively black but such characters were not depicted in a pejorative way. Significant for the focus of this study, there were no stories which addressed issues of race and racism directly, or which might be used to raise children's awareness about problems of discrimination, where these might come from and how we might address these.

Two of the six schemes seemed to have made a particular effort in depicting racially integrated scenes in stories. In Scheme 1, half of the stories (6/12) with human characters showed black and white characters interacting together: two of these were set in schools; two in a suburban neighbourhood and two in public open spaces (park and beach). In Scheme 6, two of the four readers (8/16 stories) were set in multi-racial settings, one in a school where children interacted together and the other in a community where children and adults of different races interacted together. The latter seems to represent an ideal world in which adults and children from a range of racial and social class backgrounds interact and socialise together. Both these schemes are produced by the same publisher. In Schemes 2 and 3, only one story in each depicts children of different races playing together, and Scheme 5 presents only black characters. Scheme 4 makes some attempt to represent multi-racial interaction in three of 12 stories, one of which depicts different religious celebrations such as Eid, Christmas, Hanukkah and Diwali, thus giving children the opportunity to be introduced to different religious practices and beliefs.

3.1.4 Rural/urban setting

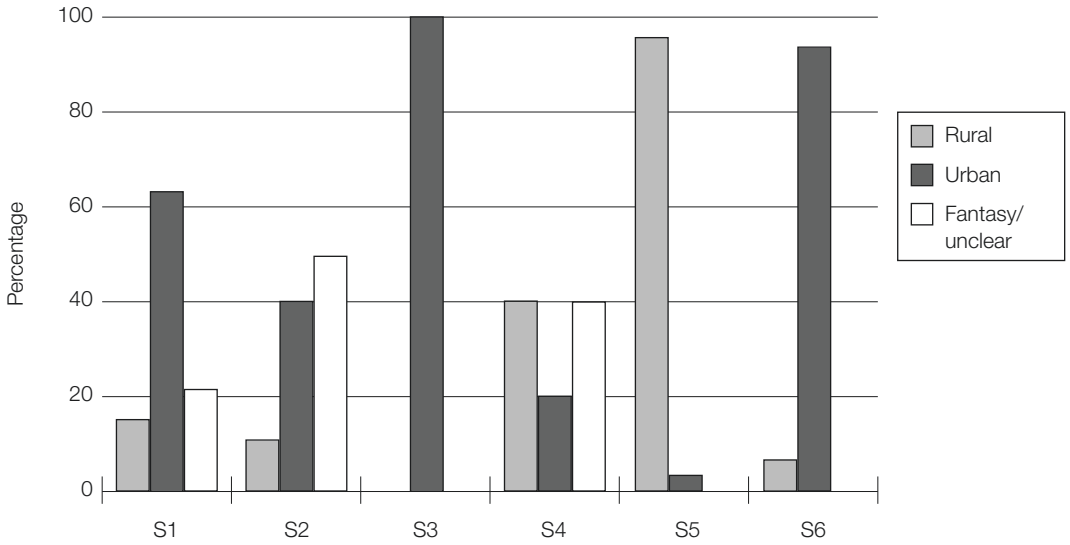
Apart from one scheme (Scheme 5) where virtually all the stories in the reader were set in a rural context, urban settings far outnumbered rural ones. If one excludes this particular reader, 60 per cent of stories were set in urban contexts (often suburbia) whilst only 14 per cent were set in rural areas (see Table 8 below). This is despite the fact that the majority of learners reside in the overwhelmingly rural provinces (Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo). Fantasy or indistinct settings are helpful in that they are not overtly representing the social world of one child over another but they do not make up for the fact that rural children seldom see their own environments represented in the readers.

Table 8: Rural/urban settings of stories

	Rural		Urban		Unclear or fantasy		Total
Scheme 1	3	(16%)	12	(63%)	4	(21%)	19
Scheme 2	2	(10%)	8	(40%)	10	(50%)	20
Scheme 3	0		5	(100%)	0		5
Scheme 4	4	(40%)	2	(20%)	4	(40%)	10
Scheme 5	34	(97%)	1	(3%)	0		35
Scheme 6	1	(6%)	15	(94%)	0		16
TOTAL	44	(42%)*	43	(41%)	18	(17%)	105

*Note: *This is inflated by one reader (Scheme 5) in which all but one of the many stories was set in a rural area; if one removes this scheme from the calculations, it looks like this: 10/70, or 14 per cent, for rural settings and 42/70, or 60 per cent, for urban settings.*

Figure 8: Rural/urban settings of stories



3.1.5 Social class

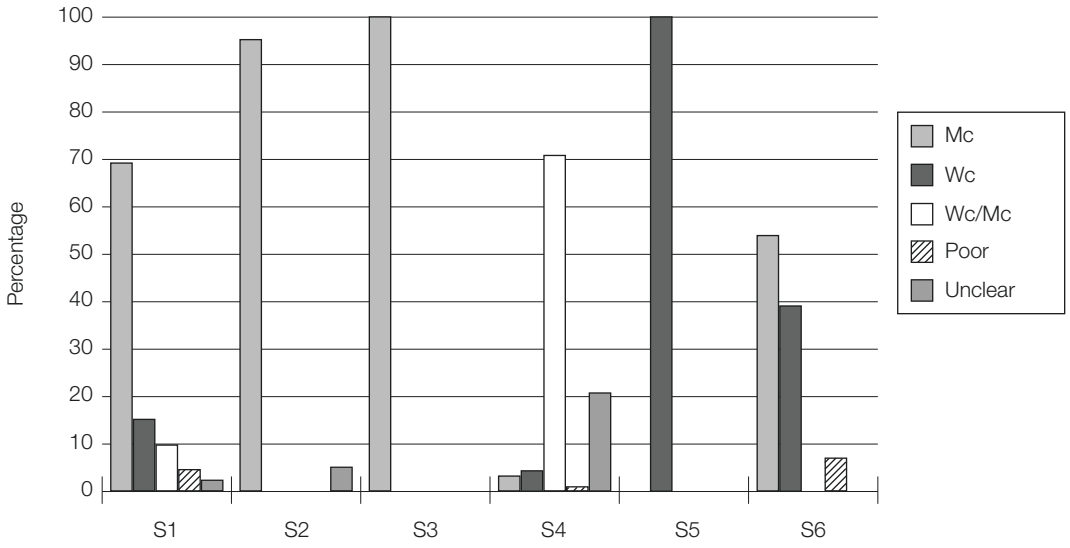
Similar to the over-representation of urban settings, middle-class characters are significantly over-represented in the readers with poor characters almost non-existent (see Table 9 below). Working-class characters are more visible than poor people, with the same scheme that used a rural setting for all its stories using working-class characters in all its stories, but they are still not as common as the middle class. In a country where the majority of learners are poor and working class, the representation of the social world as mainly middle class is clearly problematic. On a more positive note, two of the stories in one reading scheme overtly depict poor children and highlight some of the difficulties these children experience, for example, coming to school hungry and without money for school fees or losing one's home (a shack) in heavy storm and not having running tap water. To their credit, these stories depict such circumstances sensitively and in a way which highlights the privileged lifestyle in which most middle-class children live unquestioningly.

Table 9: All characters — social class

	Middle class	Working class	WC or MC	Poor	Unclear	Total
Scheme 1	57 (69%)	12 (15%)	8 (10%)	3 (4%)	2 (2%)	82
Scheme 2	24 (96%)	0	0	0	1 (4%)	25
Scheme 3	39 (100%)	0	0	0	0	39
Scheme 4	2 (3%)	3 (4%)	52 (71%)	1 (1%)	15 (21%)	73
Scheme 5	0	34 (100%)	0	0	0	34
Scheme 6	36 (55%)	26 (39%)	0	4 (6%)	0	66
TOTAL	158 (50%)	75 (24%)	60 (19%)	8 (3%)	18 (5%)	319

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Figure 9: All characters — social class



3.1.6 Families

Families are represented almost exclusively as nuclear with a mother, father and two to three children (one of whom is a usually a baby) and with the mother playing the major care-giving role. Some stories depict only mothers with children, but not in such a way as to make it clear that the mother is a single parent. Only one story showed a father alone with a child but again this was not explicitly a single parent. Only one reader out of 55 portrayed a child for whom his grandfather appeared to be the main care-giver and in Scheme 6, the nuclear family was occasionally extended to include grandmother. The widespread South African practice of grandmothers caring for children while mothers work, and of single mothers working, is thus absent from readers, which depict a world in which children live with their biological mothers and fathers, and are mainly taken care of by their mothers.

3.1.7 Disability

Across more than a hundred stories and six reading schemes there was only one image of a disabled person – a girl in a wheelchair who is depicted helping her friend tie his shoe laces. The story is entitled *I can do anything* and depicts a boy jumping, hopping, and running fast. Something which he cannot do is to tie his shoe laces, which the girl in the wheel chair is depicted doing for him. Thus the story emphasises what an able-bodied child can do, but attempts to highlight one activity the physically disabled child can do as well. Overall, physical disability is near invisible in the Grade 1 readers.

3.1.8 Imported reading schemes

It is important to note that the two reading schemes which are most problematic in relation to the representation of race, social class and urban/rural locations, Schemes 2 and 3, are imported from other countries. Thus the overwhelmingly white, middle-class urban (and suburban) world they represent is a social world foreign to South Africa. In

Scheme 2, several of the titles are set in fantasy settings or depict animals and nature which goes some way to avoid the problem of representing a foreign social world; however the remaining books are skewed towards a white, male, middle-class suburban world. Scheme 3 consistently uses the same nuclear family suburban setting across the different readers/stories. Scheme 3 is described in the teacher's guide as such: 'The stories reflect the experiences of most 4–6 year olds: having a bath, going to a party, having new shoes, getting into trouble. Children of this age will readily identify with characters and situations.' While this may be true of working-class and middle-class England in 1986 when the scheme was first published (though even this is doubtful), it is certainly not true of South Africa in 2004. The settings and events depicted would be alien to all but a tiny percentage of affluent white (and to some extent black) middle- and upper-middle-class children. This raises a particular problem in textbook production with the distribution of foreign texts which are not adapted for use in the South African setting. Even more problematic is that both these schemes are used in rural schools in South Africa.

3.2 Analysis of Grade 7 Language books

Six Grade 7 Language texts were analysed. Visual images as well as the written texts were analysed in three English Additional Language textbooks while visual images only were analysed in one Afrikaans Second Language and two isiXhosa First Language texts. The textbooks were all published between 1992 and 2004. I will begin by discussing the numerical representation of race, gender, social class, and rural/urban location before moving on to a more extended qualitative discussion of the English Additional Language books. In analysing the latter, I paid attention to the possible opportunities for challenging racism, sexism and different forms of exclusion in the texts as well as the recognition of diversity among learners.

3.2.1 Race

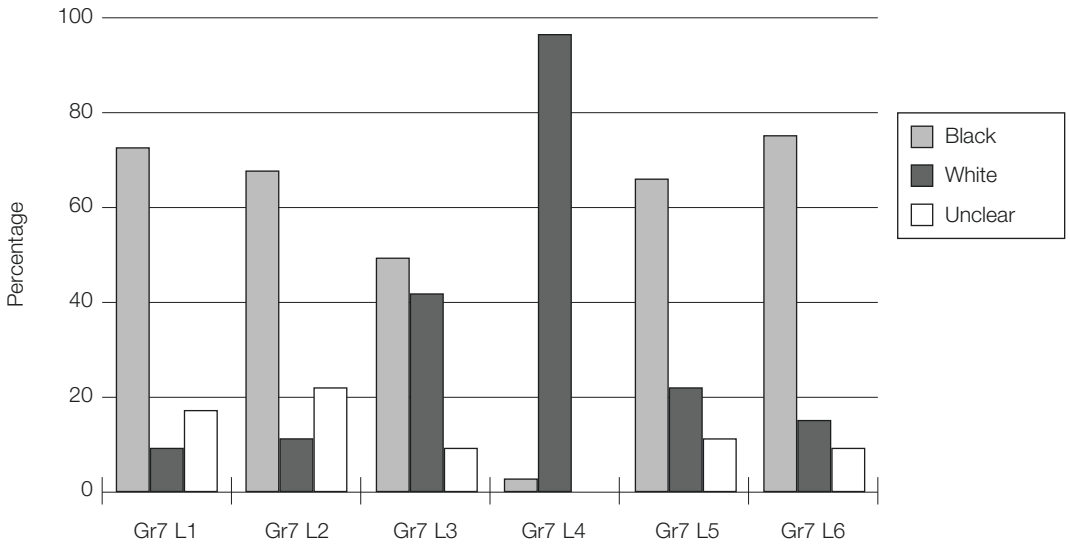
Black characters are well represented as a clear majority in five of the six books. In these five, they range from 49 per cent of characters to 76 per cent, while white characters range from 9,5 per cent to 42 per cent. In one book (Gr7 L3), where the ratio of black to white characters is 49:42 per cent, white characters are somewhat over-represented (see Table 10). In the three English Additional Language texts (Gr7 L1, Gr7 L2 and Gr7 L3) where texts with clear main characters were identified, black characters made up 50 per cent of main characters in Gr7 L3, all the main characters in Gr7 L2 and 78 per cent of main characters in Gr7 L1. The most clearly problematic text in relation to the representation of racial diversity is an Afrikaans Second Language textbook (Gr7 L4), where only 2 of 74 characters, just 3 per cent, were black, while 72 (or 97 per cent) were white. The lack of appropriate representation of racial diversity in the text may be related to the fact that it is the oldest of the sample of six, first published in 1992. However, the edition analysed had been most recently reprinted in 2004, and the fact that this is its thirteenth reprint indicates the book remains a best seller.

Table 10: Language books: all characters — race

	Black		White		Unclear		Total
Gr7 L1	364	(73%)	48	(9.5%)	89	(17.5%)	501
Gr7 L2	232	(68%)	37	(11%)	74	(22%)	343
Gr7 L3	124	(49%)	107	(42%)	23	(9%)	254
Gr7 L4	2	(3%)*	72	(97%)	0		74
Gr7 L5	65	(66%)	22	(22%)	12	(12%)	99
Gr7 L6	181	(76%)	35	(15%)	23	(9%)	239
TOTAL	968	(64%)	321	(21%)	221	(15%)	1 510

*Note: * = Anomaly. Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.*

Figure 10: Language books: all characters — race



3.2.2 Gender

All but one of the six texts (Gr7 L2) show a significant over-representation of males in relation to females. In five books (Gr7 L1, Gr7 L3, Gr7 L4, Gr7 L5 and Gr7 L6), there were almost double the number of male characters than female characters. The worst of the texts, by only a small margin, is Gr7 L1 (see Table 11 below). In the English Additional Language texts, where main characters of stories could be identified, males outnumbered female characters 13:10 in Gr7 L1 and 25:13 in Gr7 L3.

In one book (Gr7 L2), there was a more or less equal use of female and male main characters in texts and some stereotyping in the representation of more male sports stars, but alongside this was an encouraging representation of women in several professional

roles, for example journalist, school principal, newspaper editor and optometrist. This is in line with the near-equal representation of men and women in images and as main characters of texts in the book. Gender role stereotyping varied across the books. In Gr7 L6 there was no obvious stereotyping in gender roles and in Gr7 L5 this was limited (for example where only one of 12 famous political figures was female). In Gr7 L4, where many of the images of male and female showed involvement in sport, the dominance of male images was accompanied by clear stereotyping in the different sports for the genders (for example male: rugby, athletics and cricket; female: tennis, netball, gymnastics and swimming). Men are also depicted fighting as well as rescuing women in Gr7 L4. In Gr7 L3 there is some stereotyping but women are also represented in professional roles, though less often than men as there are so many more male characters. Finally, while Gr7 L1 presents some examples which subvert typical gender stereotypes (for example a boy cooking, a man washing the dishes, a female taxi driver), there are many more reinforcements of stereotypes than subversions. There are many more male political or famous figures than women, girls are depicted in danger and being rescued by boys, females are washing dishes, hanging out laundry and working as typists and several men are depicted watching and playing sport.

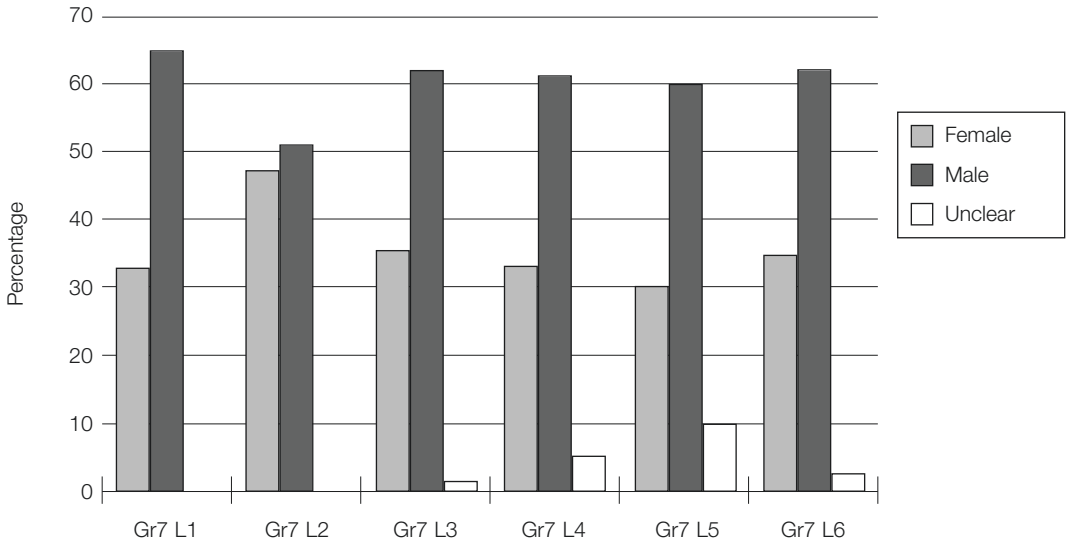
In general, females are much more likely to be depicted as afraid and in need of rescuing than males who generally play the role of rescuer.

Table 11: Language books: all characters — gender

	Female	Male	Unclear	Total
Gr7 L1	172 (34%)	329 (66%)	0	501
Gr7 L2	163 (48%)	174 (51%)	0	343
Gr7 L3	92 (36%)	157 (62%)	5 (2%)	254
Gr7 L4	25 (34%)	45 (61%)	4 (5%)	74
Gr7 L5	30 (30%)	59 (60%)	10 (10%)	99
Gr7 L6	84 (35%)	148 (62%)	7 (3%)	239
TOTAL	566 (37%)	912 (60%)	26 (2%)	1 510

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Figure 11: Language books: all characters — gender



3.2.3 Social class and rural/urban location

Across all six books, middle-class and working-class characters predominated, with poor people entirely absent from two of the books and represented in very few images in the remaining four books. The trend of urban settings predominating was also found across five of the six books. In Gr7 L1, the representation of rural settings was better, with four of 18 units set in rural areas, four in urban areas and the remaining ten units depicting a mix of rural and urban settings (though with urban predominating) or fantasy/unclear settings. However, the social world as represented in the books is generally peopled by working-class to middle-class, urban characters and settings.

3.2.4 Qualitative analysis of English Additional Language books

In an in-depth qualitative analysis of the written texts of the first three books listed in the tables (Gr7 L1, Gr7 L2 and Gr7 L3), the focus was on the recognition of diversity among learners and the potential tools available for challenging racism, sexism and different forms of exclusion. One could argue that the flexibility in the content through which language is taught provides the learning area of Language with many opportunities to deal with social issues in the classroom, and for the infusion of human rights in the curriculum. It is no accident that advocates of critical pedagogy have argued that language and literacy is a productive space in which to address issues of social inequality. However, while each of the three books has different strengths and weaknesses in relation to this, it is only really the first book that makes an effort to address issues of social inequality and social exclusion in the themes it explores. The first book (Gr7 L1) is divided into 18 units which are organised around themes. This thematic approach facilitates the successful focus on a number of different social issues including:

Gr7 L1 **Stories/text topic**	**Social issue**
• Discrimination on ethnic grounds ('Ngobesi family as cowards')	• Ethnocentrism
• Beliefs and practices of female traditional healer	• Cultural diversity, recognition of indigenous knowledge
• Civil rights movement in US and Robben Island prisoners in SA	• Racism, racial equality, human rights
• African folk tales; recipes for *utywala*, *umqombothi*, *amahewu*	• Cultural diversity, recognition of indigenous knowledge
• Celebration of different religious festivals	• Cultural diversity
• Representation of and opportunity to explore rural life, hardships and poverty implied	• Economic and social inequalities

However, while the book makes a good attempt at addressing issues of racism and ethnocentrism, and in representing a social world that is not just privileged, urban and middle-class, it is less successful in addressing sexism as a social issue, and makes no attempt either to represent disability or to address this as a social issue. In relation to gender, we have already noted the strong over-representation of males in the book. This is reinforced in one unit where major players of different liberation movements are introduced (a good representation of black role models), but most of whom are men. In the unit following this, there is a focus on the role that ordinary people play in making history and the first topic and story focuses on the importance of looking at women in history, and not just men. In doing this it introduces the female activist Frances Baard alongside Shaka in the story and raises the question: 'Why do your history books tell you more about men than women?' Considering the focus of the previous chapter on famous men, and the fact that even this unit goes on to explore the role of ordinary people in history, all of whom are men, the effect of this is to render the point about women's role in history tokenistic, an editorial suggestion to counter the over-representation of the men in these units themselves. In at least two further stories in the book which have females as main characters, they are both in victim roles. Later in the book there is also a brief exercise dealing with the stereotyping of men and women, but this is embedded in a unit which otherwise focuses on animals and again reads as tokenistic.

The second book (Gr7 L2) is organised around tasks rather than themes. It takes a very functional approach in which language is viewed as a tool for getting things done. This approach means that there is less opportunity for raising and addressing social issues. One social issue which is explored is that of 'cross-race' adoption where a black child who is adopted by white Afrikaans parents is depicted as searching for her cultural roots. This story is carried across two units and represents different cultural practices of Xhosa, Sotho, Zulu and Ndebele people. While well-intentioned, this representation of culture essentialises cultural difference, falling prey to uncritical multiculturalism (see May 1999). The main character eventually finds her 'Ndebele roots' and is very happy at this and the text suggests that learners ask their teacher if they 'can have a concert of songs and dances. Then you can also show that you are proud of your African traditions' (page 73). One wonders how children of mixed parentage, or who are highly urbanised, or not

practising and knowledgeable about their 'roots' and 'traditions', may feel about this. While the book does not provide many opportunities for dealing with racism, sexism and different forms of exclusion, it is successful in recognising and representing diversity in relation to race, gender, and class, and makes an attempt to represent rural settings. Units are also set in different geographical regions such as the Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. The ideal reader is clearly not white, male and middle-class, but rather male or female, working-class and urban.

Although the third book (Gr7 L3) is also organised around themes, it does not exploit this design feature to provide opportunities for addressing social issues as much as the first book (Gr7 L1) does. Some exceptions to this are that in learning about black South African musicians who went into exile, learners have the opportunity to explore apartheid and the system of racial inequality; the difficulties Louis Armstrong experiences in becoming successful as a black American also provide an opportunity for exploring racism. Apart from this, one unit addresses environmental debates between the interests of the poor and the interests of the wealthy and middle-class. Finally, the book is the only one of all six Grade 7 language books to represent physical disability and to foreground disability in the story of Christy Brown who is physically disabled from cerebral palsy and learns to write using his left foot (the story popularised in the film *My Left Foot*). In line with the over-representation of male characters in the book, many of the texts are concerned with a male world, telling learners about men and their actions.

3.3 Analysis of Grade 7 Natural Sciences books

The analysis of Grade 7 Natural Sciences texts focuses on representation in visual images in the books. Here I will discuss the representation of race, gender, social class, rural/urban settings and finally disability across four books from four different publishers. All of these were first published in 1998 and 1999.

3.3.1 Race

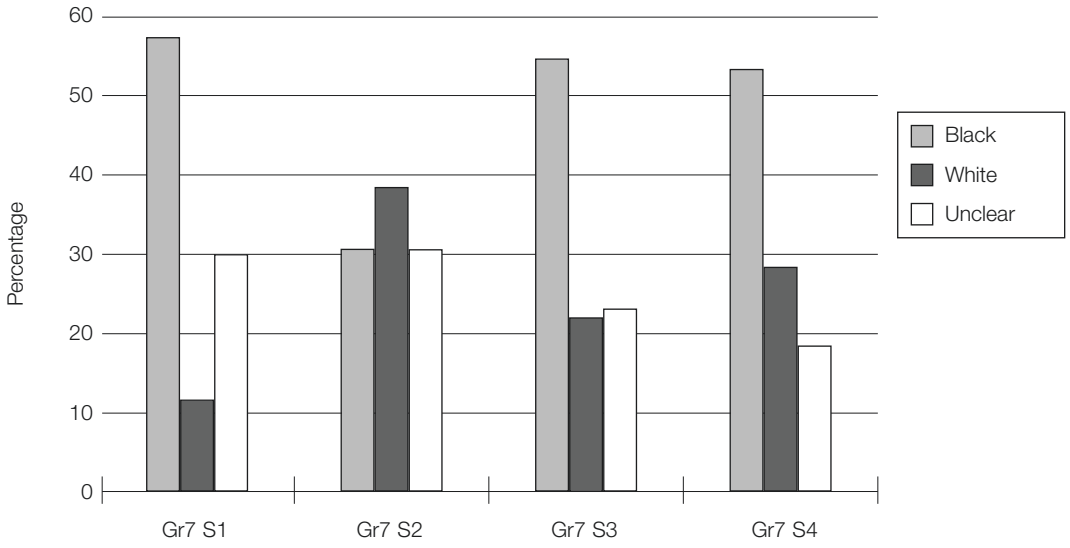
With the exception of one book, where whites were in the majority in a ratio of 38:31 (Gr7 S2), all of the books depicted many more black characters in images than white with no overt racist or stereotypical images. All of the books also show people of different races interacting together, ranging from one to nine images of this kind. These images are mostly set in the school, either in classrooms or on sports fields. Gr7 S1 and Gr7 S4 made particular efforts to show learners interacting together in nine and seven images respectively.

Table 12: Natural Sciences books: all characters — race

	Black	White	Unclear	Total
Gr7 S1	102 (58%)	21 (12%)	53 (30%)	176
Gr7 S2	31 (31%)	38 (38%)	31 (31%)	100
Gr7 S3	28 (55%)	11 (22%)	12 (23%)	51
Gr7 S4	76 (54%)	40 (28%)	26 (18%)	142
TOTAL	237 (51%)	110 (23%)	122 (26%)	469

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Figure 12: Natural Sciences books: all characters — race



3.3.2 Gender

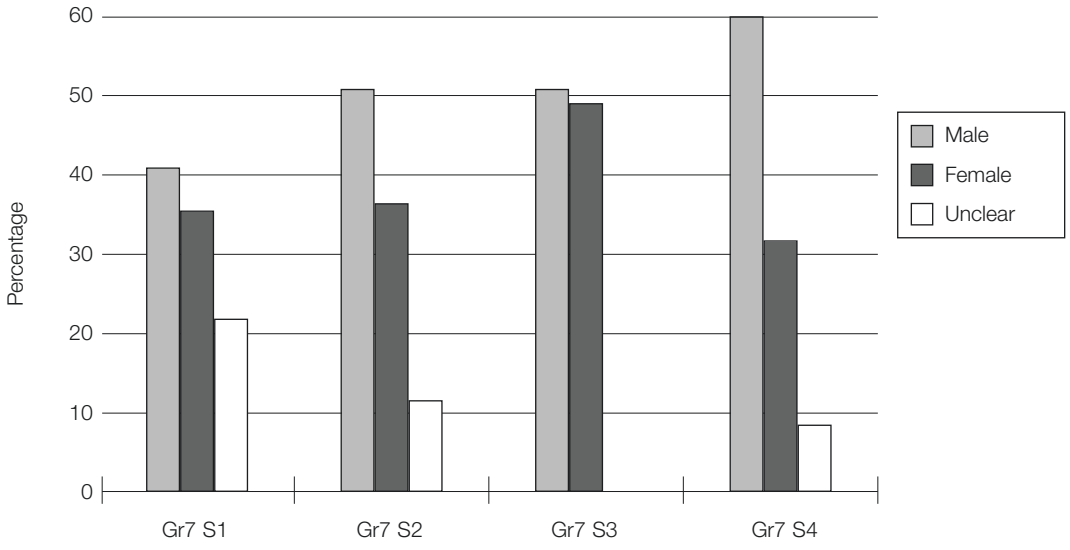
Overall, the gap between numbers of males and females in images in these books is much smaller than in the Language books, with equal representation in Gr7 S3 (see Table 13 below). An exception to this is Gr7 S4 where there are almost double the number of males (60 per cent) in images than there are females (32 per cent). Of course even where gaps are small, these are in favour of males.

Table 13: Natural Sciences books: all characters — gender

	Female	Male	Unclear	Total
Gr7 S1	64 (36 %)	73 (41%)	39 (22%)	176
Gr7 22	37 (37%)	51 (51%)	12 (12%)	100
Gr7 S3	212 (49%) (16–31%)	223 (51%) (31–61%)*	0	435
Gr7 S4	45 (32%)	86 (60%)	11 (8%)	142
TOTAL	358 (42%)	433 (51%)	62 (7%)	853

*Note: *Human characters only – see discussion below.*

Figure 13: Natural Sciences books: all characters — gender



In Gr7 S1 girls are very visible and are depicted as involved and interested in Science in the school setting. Several images show girls conducting experiments. Dr Mamphele Ramphele (who is black and female) is introduced early on in the text as a role model of an applied scientist. Though there is some stereotyping in the roles females and males are portrayed in (for example females: cooking, fetching water, shopping and digging fields; males: mountaineer, astronaut, game ranger, doctors, herding animals, taxi driver), there are also several images of girls and boys playing sport, conducting experiments and of male and female scientists. In Gr7 S2, there is one attempt to represent girls outside of stereotypical roles in an image of girls playing soccer, but generally the book portrays male and female in stereotypical roles (for example female: mother with baby, pregnant woman, male: brick-layer, bee-keeper, doctor, scientist, astronaut). In Gr7 S4, the numerical over-representation of males compared with females is not accompanied by strong gender stereotyping in the images. Both male and female scientists are portrayed and both boys and girls are depicted conducting experiments.

As the book which appears to represent near equality in the numerical representation of male and female (212 [49 per cent] female:223 [51 per cent] male) it is interesting to take a closer look at Gr7 S3. The comparatively high number of images (435) is accounted for by the fact that the book uses two cartoon characters, one an image of a male brain (with a cap on his head) and the other an image of a female brain (with a bow in her hair) to introduce topics, ask and answer questions throughout the book. When these characters are excluded, we are left with 47 human characters, 16 (31 per cent) of whom are female while almost double, 31 (61 per cent) of which are male. The human images also generally depict male and female in gender stereotypical roles (for example male: sport, working in car factory, farmer, planting garden, hunter; female: mother, shopping, cooking, secretary, nurse, collecting water). One exception to this was an image of two men in a domestic role, ironing shirts. It is also important to examine how the male and female brain characters are used in the text. One image of each has been produced with

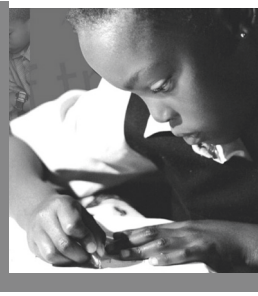
the same image being repeated in each use. The 'male brain' (with cap on head) is always positioned with his arms spread open and with his right arm outstretched with finger pointing to information/facts. Thus he is always in an authoritative pose and is used to point out particular facts more than to ask questions. In contrast to this, the 'female brain' (with bow in hair) is always positioned with her left arm down, right hand up to her mouth with finger touching mouth. She is thus always in a questioning pose and is used to pose questions far more than to answer them or state facts. (There is some irony in the pose of the female brain as the analysis of representation of women and gender stereotyping in advertisements has shown how visual images often portray women as vulnerable, one sign of which is holding or touching the finger to the mouth. This is not a pose commonly used for men – see Waters & Ellis 1996). On closer analysis, the scheme that seems to represent male and female most equally in fact reinforces gender stereotyping and shows many more (human) males than females.

3.3.3 Social class and rural/urban settings

Each of the books made some attempt to represent rural settings. However urban settings clearly dominated in images, with clear settings in Gr7 S1 and Gr7 S4. Both of these used a number of images of learners in schools, (for example conducting experiments, on the sports fields), and in both cases the schools were clearly well-resourced with good facilities to conduct scientific experiments. Gr7 S2, with six rural images to nine urban ones and several where the setting was not specific, was less dominated by the urban environment, and attempted to depict village settings, different kinds of houses and to acknowledge lack of electricity and accompanying hardships in such settings. Gr7 S3 included six rural images, in comparison with 13 urban, and made some attempt to incorporate awareness of indigenous knowledge and of diversity in beliefs (sometimes cultural or religious) about scientific phenomena and about different views on the treatment of illness. While not a sustained approach or theme, the text nodded in the direction of an acknowledgement of cultural diversity. In relation to social class, again there was a limited attempt to represent poor people in three of the four books but generally, the books are populated by middle-class and working-class people.

3.3.4 Disabled

As with almost all the books analysed in this study, there is not a single image of a disabled person in any of the Natural Science texts.



4 Conclusion

This section begins with a brief discussion of the findings presented in relation to Grade 1 Readers, Grade 7 Language and Grade 7 Natural Sciences texts and focuses on the implications of these. It then draws attention to some of the limitations of the study before moving on to propose recommendations for publishers, education officials and teachers as well as suggestions for further research.

4.1 Grade 1 Readers

The representation of gender in Grade 1 Readers is uneven. While there are some encouraging attempts to subvert gender stereotypes and to represent girls and boys in equal numbers, overall, male characters continue to be over-represented as main characters in stories and in the images in the books. This finding echoes that of studies conducted on Readers pre-1980 in North America, and of those conducted in Kenya, southern African countries and Pakistan. In relation to roles, gender stereotyping is especially common in representations of adults and not absent in representations of children, where girls are much more likely to be depicted in the domestic sphere with domestic responsibilities than are boys. Clearly there is much room for improvement in the representation of gender in Grade 1 Readers.

As in other areas of social life in post-apartheid South Africa, it seems that addressing the issue of race and of racial diversity has taken precedence over other social inequalities, notably gender, social class and the rural/urban divide. Though they constitute the majority of the learner population, rural people are barely present in the largely middle-class to working-class, urban South Africa that constitutes the social world of Grade 1 Readers. One exception to the positive representation in relation to race remains in those schemes *imported* into South Africa without any adaptation – these worlds are predominantly white, middle-class, urban and often also male. The fact that such imported schemes are often used in predominantly black, rural schools makes this greater cause for concern.

While rural and poor people are socially marginalised and excluded groups, schooling should be one of the sites which facilitates inclusion, rather than one of those working to further marginalise poor and rural learners, which is what the textbooks seem to do. Apart from the fact that such learners will fail to find their realities reflected in curriculum texts, a worldview of middle-class ways of being and living as the norm is also reinforced for the minority of learners who make up this social group. The argument is not that urban and middle-class environments should not be represented in Grade 1 Readers, despite the fact that they represent the reality for only a minority of the total South African and the school-going population. However, in line with the assumptions underpinning this study, the dominance of urban and middle-class settings and characters alongside the relative lack of stories representing the life worlds of poor, working-class and rural as well as disabled people, is clearly undesirable and does not do justice to the democratic values and principles upon which our curriculum is based. Not only do these children need to see themselves in the books they learn from, but apart from this, children from privileged contexts need to be exposed to the conditions in which the majority of South Africans live as well as encouraged to reflect on the privilege of their lifestyles.

Finally, the invisibility of disabled people (both children and adults) implies that such people do not need to be depicted as part of our social world, and are not part of this

world. Apart from the fact that this misrepresents the social reality, one wonders how disabled children feel learning to read through the depiction of an exclusively able-bodied world in which they play no part and are not even physically present.

The dominance of the nuclear family in readers is also problematic. In a country where the nuclear family is not the norm and where the impact of HIV/AIDS on family structures is significant, publishers should make an effort to represent other kinds of families. Not one story of 111 depicted the very common practice of grandmothers raising children, or single working mothers or fathers. It is interesting to note that gender stereotyping is often worst in stories revolving around the nuclear family and the home. Publishers and materials writers need to think outside the framework of the nuclear family that has dominated children's readers since the post-war series of *Dick and Jane*.

Apart from problems in representation which is not in step with the diverse South African learner body, Grade 1 Readers presented almost no opportunities to raise or address issues of racism, sexism, poverty, disability and other forms of social exclusion in texts.

4.2 Grade 7 Language books

With the exception of one book where black people were completely absent, black characters were generally well represented in the Grade 7 Language texts. In relation to gender, all but one book revealed a significant over-representation of male characters and role models. Disabled characters were invisible in all but one text and middle-class to working-class characters predominated in all books, with few poor people being depicted. Rural settings were marginal in all but one of the texts. The detailed analysis of textual content in the English Additional Language books showed *unevenness* in the opportunities for addressing issues of social inequality. On the one hand, the text which presented the most significant opportunities to address issues of racial inequality and racism, was at the same time the worst offender of the three English texts in relation to lack of representation of girls and female role models. While on the other hand, the text which provided the least opportunities to address issues of social inequality explicitly, faired the best in representation of gender. While there are signs that publishers are taking steps towards better representation of race, social class and rural learners, there is definitely need for improvement here, as there is in providing learners with opportunities to explore social diversity and problems of exclusion.

4.3 Grade 7 Natural Sciences books

Representation in relation to gender, race, social class and rural/urban location (but not disability) was generally better in the Grade 7 Natural Sciences texts than in the Language texts. Black characters were in the majority in all but one book and at least two texts make an effort to depict racial interaction. While males still outnumbered females, the gap was fairly small in all but one text and there is evidence of some attempt in two books at least to portray girls as actively interested in Science. There are also too many examples of gender stereotyping though, and the text using male and female brains is an interesting example of this. The attempts to represent rural settings and poor people are encouraging but are still marginal in relation to the predominantly well-resourced, urban middle-class to working-class settings.

4.4 Limitations of the study

Firstly, a study such as this one will always be limited in relation to the number of texts that are analysed (sample size) and with the grades and learning areas selected for analysis. While I have justified the focus on Grade 1 Readers as the first books many children are exposed to, and Grade 7 Language in relation to this, one could have made other legitimate choices. The extremely labour-intensive process of analysis makes it difficult to avoid limiting the sample. However, this study considered a larger number of texts than several of the studies discussed in Part 1.

Secondly, it should be pointed out that the analysis of Grade 1 and Grade 7 texts discussed in this study cannot produce a recommended list of titles. On the one hand, the limited sample of books taken from different publishers which is not representative of their full range would make it unfair to promote one publisher over another. Titles were selected to represent the range of texts in use, rather than to accurately represent different publishers. On the other hand, the unevenness within texts themselves makes it difficult to recommend texts. For example, the Grade 7 Language text which fared best in addressing issues of race and racism, fared the worst in relation to gender; and the Grade 1 Reader which fared the worst in representation of gender, fared the best in representation of rural settings.

Thirdly, a study of representation in LSMs cannot tell us anything about textbooks in use in the classroom, including the reception of such texts by educators and learners. Since meaning is created in the process of interaction between text and reader, rather than merely residing in the text, this is an important area for investigation. Similarly, an assumption of this study has been that LSMs are widely used in classrooms; but this in itself needs to be investigated. For example, anecdotal evidence tells of schools where boxes of new books gather dust in store-rooms; schools where very few texts are available; and schools where educators resist new LSMs.

4.5 Recommendations

This study sets out four different kinds of recommendations:

- for publishers in improving the development and revision of LSMs for diverse learners;
- for education officials in taking diversity issues into account in evaluating and selecting LSMs;
- for teachers in working with existing materials where representation is problematic; and
- suggestions for further research.

Firstly, there is an urgent need for clear guidelines to be developed for publishers which at a minimum encourage:

- equal representation of male and female with specific avoidance of sexism and gender stereotyping;
- representation of racial diversity in relation to population demographics and avoidance of racial stereotyping;
- representation of a range of social classes, including poor and working-class people in sizeable numbers;

- representation of disabled people;
- representation of rural settings; and
- representation of family structures other than the nuclear family, as discussed above.

Such guidelines should apply to the main characters of stories, and other texts, role models represented and general images across the text. Particular effort should be made in Language texts to raise and/or address issues of racism, sexism and other forms of social exclusion in an engaging way. The guidelines will need to be implemented by and thus distributed to all involved in the conceptualisation and development of LSMs, including editors, writers and illustrators. Anecdotal evidence suggests that unless specific guidelines are given to illustrators, for example, general instructions such as 'playground scene' may well encourage the reproduction of stereotypes and perpetuate the invisibility of rural, poor and disabled learners. Publishers and distributors of LSMs should also be encouraged to avoid using imported textbooks without any adaptation for the local context. While such texts may be much cheaper to produce and there are economic pressures to do so, we cannot afford the costs of further excluding children who are already marginalised.

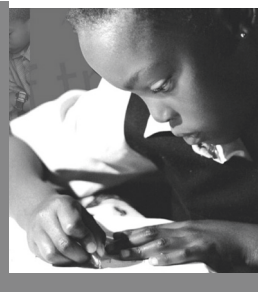
Secondly, there is a clear need for national criteria for textbook selection and evaluation and for the creation of a unified national list rather than disparate provincial lists as is current practice. Such a streamlined national process, which creates a list of textbooks from which provinces can make selections, will avoid the current situation where a text can be selected for the list in one province while rejected in another. (This is not the first time such a recommendation has been made; see DOE 2000.) Of course, issues of values and representation are not the sole criteria for selection, but they should be included in a general framework for evaluation. The criteria should focus on the appropriateness of texts for South Africa's diverse learners and should be linked to the same criteria suggested for publishers (as outlined above). Publishers will be much more likely to take issues of representation and values seriously if the national DoE does so, and importantly, if these are known to be criteria against which the texts will be evaluated for inclusion on national and provincial lists.

Thirdly, there is also a need for guidelines for teachers in working with existing materials where representation is problematic. This can be done with learners across the range of ages and levels. Here work in critical literacy which foregrounds issues of language, power and representation in texts is particularly relevant (see Comber 1993; Janks 1993; O'Brien 1994). Critical literacy work provides suggestions for looking at issues relating to social inequality, and in relation to gender, race and social class in particular, even with young learners. One might facilitate an activity with learners in which they conduct their own mini-analysis of some of the texts they learn from in order to analyse whose worlds are dominant in textbooks and why this may be the case. O'Brien (1994) and Comber (1993) provide inspiring examples of work with children in the early years of primary school in which the children are involved in challenging gender stereotyping and sexism in stories and re-writing these texts, or re-creating endings. Such work is valuable in undermining the authority of texts which should not go unchallenged.

Finally, this study recommends that further research be conducted in the areas of:
- distribution and use of LSMs;
- the process of selection of textbooks; and
- constraints on local publishers in producing texts appropriate for diverse learners.

In relation to distribution and use of LSMs, we need to know whether textbooks are being distributed to schools and what happens to them if and when they get there. What are educators' and learners' responses to texts and to representations in them? How are textbooks used in the classroom? As far as textbook selection is concerned, we need to know who selects textbooks and what the criteria are (both informal and formal and assuming that this will vary widely across different sites). This has important implications for the process of disseminating evaluation guidelines in relation to diversity. At present it seems there are a wide range of practices in textbook 'selection' including a sponsor dictating texts, publishing sales representatives choosing for schools, provincial officials selecting books, and finally educators and heads of learning areas selecting texts themselves. The question of why certain texts which are blatantly sexist in their representation of gender and gender roles, or racist in their exclusion of black learners, continue to be as popular as the number of reprints they have been through suggests, needs to be investigated. More support from publishers, and effort in providing training to teachers to use newer, more appropriate materials may go some way to alleviating this problem. It would also be useful to know what the most widely used or popular texts are and why this may be so. Lastly, while not really a recommendation for a full-scale research project, we need to engage in dialogue with key members of the publishing industry to ascertain what some of the constraints are on producing appropriate texts, both in relation to representation and in offering opportunities to address social inequality and forms of exclusion.

Textbooks have come some distance in the journey away from Christian National Education. However, we clearly still have some way to go in producing as well as encouraging the use of LSMs which actively address challenges posed by integration as well as constitutional imperatives for the recognition of diversity in South African education, and which provide teachers with tools to address different forms of social inequality and exclusion.



Appendix 1

List of titles analysed

Grade 1 Language – Readers

Maskew Miller Longman

New Day-by-Day English Grade 1 Reader (2003) Maskew Miller Longman: Cape Town [15 stories].
Benny and Betty and their Friends, Standard 1 Reader, Day-by-Day English Course (1983 [49th impression, 2001]) Maskew Miller Longman: Cape Town (used in Grade 1 schools in Eastern Cape).

Oxford Reading Tree: Stories x 6

The Toy's Party (1986 [this edition, 2003]) Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
New Trainers (1986 [this edition, 2003]) Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
A New Dog (1997 [this edition, 2003]) Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
What a bad dog (1986 [this edition, 2003]) Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
The Go-kart (1986 [this edition, 2003]) Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
The Dream (1986 [this edition, 2003]) Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.

Sunshine Books Level 1 (Wendy Pye Publishing, New Zealand; published and distributed in South Africa by Reading Matters; 20 books in several official languages [English and Xhosa in sample]; first 16 titles also in Eastern Cape rural school sample)

Run! (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
On the Ground (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
I have a home (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
I can Jump (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Water (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Little brother (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
The monkey bridge (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Spots (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Snap! (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Stepping stones ((first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Up in a Tree (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Time for Sleep! (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Paint the sky (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).

My dog (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Camouflage (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Yuk Soup (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
I can do anything! (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
Let's have a swim! (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
The weather chart (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).
"No you can't!" (first published in South Africa, 1999) Reading Matters: Braamfontein (Wendy Pye Team, New Zealand).

Juta & Co. Ltd

Ace Grade 1 Readers: (4 Readers with 4 stories in each: 16 stories)
Ace Literacy Reader 1 Myself (1998 [2nd edition, 2002]) Ace Publications (Juta): Cape Town.
Ace Literacy Reader 2 All in the family (1998) Ace Publications (Juta): Cape Town.
Ace Literacy Reader 3 Our School (1998) Ace Publications (Juta): Cape Town.
Ace Literacy Reader 4 Our Community (1998) Ace Publications (Juta): Cape Town.

Star Stories (translated from Afrikaans; 19 stories)

Wash day (1997 [second impression, 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
Shells (1997 [second impression, 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
What's the matter, Baby? (1997 [second impression, 2002]) Juta: Cape Town.
I Spy (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
Why does King Lion Cry? (1997 [second impression, 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
Stoffel and Tess (1997 [second impression, 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
S.P.C.A (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
A potato monster (1997 [third impression 2003]) Juta: Cape Town.
*Walking in the fores*t (1997 [second impression, 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
Have you seen my pet? (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
If I had an aeroplane (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
Stop that mole! (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
Bicycles in Africa (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
Barry was sick (1997 [fourth impression 2002]) Juta: Cape Town.
In our garden (1997 [third impression, 2002]) Juta: Cape Town.
Waiting for the bus (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
Pockets (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
The Wheel (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.
The trouble with wishing (1997 [second impression 1998]) Juta: Cape Town.

Grade 7 Language books

Visual and textual content analysis

Alexander, R, Baker, P, Makuzeni, J, Salzwedel, V and Stokes, J (1998 [14th impression, 2004]) *Day-by-Day English Learner's Book 7,* Maskew Miller Longman: Cape Town (all female authors).

Mosala, B, Paizee, D and Peires, M-L (1997 [reprinted 12 times, this edition, 2004]) *New Successful English Grade 7*, Oxford University Press: Cape Town (all female authors).

Wallace, B, Thomson, C and Maltby, F (1999 [reprinted 2000, this edition, 2000]) *Language in my World Grade 7*, Juta: Cape Town (all female authors).

Visual analysis only

Jonck, U and Vorster, C (1992 [reprinted 13 times, this edition 2004]) *Afrikaans is Maklik Afrikaans – Tweede Taal Standerd 5,* Lexicon Uitgewers: Gauteng (Heinemann).

Mangxola, T, Mhlauli, N and Mhlabeni, K (2000) *Isiseko Incwadi yomfundi IsiXhosa Isigaba 7*, Juta: Cape Town.

Mdekazi, NJ, Kabanyane, TN and Booi, CN (1999 [reprinted 5 times, this edition, 2002]) *Imvaba KaXhosa 7* Nolwazi Educational Publishers: Gauteng (Heinemann).

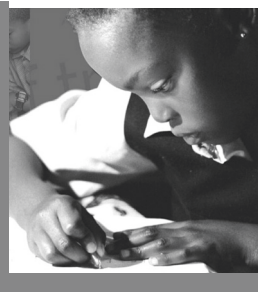
Grade 7 Natural Sciences books

Avis, Jane, Ramahlape, Khalipha and Morrison, Karen (1998) *Heinemann Outcomes Science Now Grade 7 Learners' Book*, Heinemann: Sandton.

Brookes, DW, Cronje, F, Shongwe, N and Ziervogel, A (1999 [this edition 2004, fourth impression]) *Science for our world Grade 7 Learner's Book*, Nasou: Cape Town.

Davies, N, Kariem, V, Lightfoot, J, Rijsdijk, C and Robinson, M (1999) *Successful Natural Science Grade 7*, Oxford University Press: Cape Town.

Jones, R, Thoma, R, Hodges, M and Johnston, P (1999 [third impression, 2003]) *Hands-on Science Learners' Book for Grade 7*, Juta: Cape Town.



Appendix 2

Analytical frameworks

Grade 1 Readers
Book scheme and publisher, year:

Analysis of:

Visual	
What is on the cover?	
Total no. of characters in book	
No. of girls in pictures and actions	
No. of boys in pictures and actions	
No. of black, white, coloured, Indian & actions	
No. of disabled and actions	
No. of rural/urban	
No. of upper-, middle-, working-class and poor	
Images of families	
Setting	

Textual	
Total no. of characters in book	
No. of girls and actions	
No. of boys and actions	
No. of black, white, coloured, Indian & actions	
Lead characters, attributes and actions	
Character traits	
No. of disabled and actions	
No. of rural/urban	
No. of upper-, middle-, working-class and poor	
Representation of families/households	
Setting	
Firstness, prominence, subject positions, nouns and adjectives, doers and sayers	

Comments:
Themes, ideologies: _____

_____

General story content: _____

_____

Grade 7 Language – English Additional Language
Book scheme and publisher, year:

Analysis of:

Visual	
What is on the cover?	
Total no. of people in unit	
No. of females in pictures, actions/roles	
No. of males in pictures, actions/roles	
No. of black, white, coloured, Indian & actions	
Are people of different races interacting together?	
No. of disabled and actions	
No. of rural/urban	
No. of upper-, middle-, working-class and poor	
Images of families	
Social settings	

Textual	
No. of females referred to: actions/roles	
No. of males referred to: actions/roles	
No. of black, white, coloured, Indian & actions	
Are people of different races interacting together?	
Theme of unit?	
– ideologies and messages?	
– social issues explored?	
No. of disabled and actions	
No. of rural/urban	
No. of upper-, middle-, working-class and poor	
Representation of families/households	
Social setting	
Firstness, prominence, subject positions, nouns and adjectives, doers and sayers	

Comments:
Recognition of diversity among learners? _____

_____

Potential tools for challenging racism, sexism and different forms of exclusion?

_____

Grade 7 Language – non-English
Book scheme and publisher, year:

Analysis of:

Visual	
What is on the cover?	
Total no. of characters in book	
No. of girls in pictures and actions/roles	
No. of boys in pictures and actions/roles	
No. of black, white, (or other)	
Are black and white interacting together in any images? No. of images	
No. of disabled and actions	
No. of rural/urban	
No. of upper-, middle-, working-class and poor	
Images of families	
Setting	

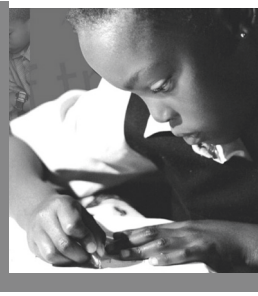
General comments: _____

Grade 7 Natural Sciences
Book scheme and publisher, year:

Analysis of:

Visual	
What is on the cover?	
Total no. of characters in book	
No. of girls in pictures and actions/roles	
No. of boys in pictures and actions/roles	
No. of black, white, (or other)	
Are black and white interacting together in any images? No. of images	
No. of disabled and actions	
No. of rural/urban	
No. of upper-, middle-, working-class and poor	
Images of families	
Setting	

General comments: _____



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