

Chose and EFL textbook and discuss the ways in which it represents men and women. Your discussion should focus upon linguistic representations, but may also include consideration of non-linguistic features (e.g., visual representation of the sexes).

1. Introduction

Do men and women display linguistic differences? Graddol and Swan (1989: 8) write about the different life experiences of men and women which lead to different ways of speaking, some of which often go unnoticed: "...differences between women and men seem such a natural and obvious part of our existence that we are usually unaware of their full extent. The way we talk is one of these all-pervasive and unobtrusive aspects of gender behavior."

There are several stereotypes about differences in language used by men and women. Montgomery (1986) provides examples of these 'folk-linguistic beliefs' – extensively embraced beliefs which may not be supported by research:

Women, it is said, are less assertive (more tentative) in their speech than men; ...they use fewer taboo forms and more euphemisms than men, that they talk more than men, or conversely that they talk less than men; that they are inclined to gossip; that they are more conservative in their speech and at the same time more sensitive to matters of correctness; that their speech is more polite, and so on. (Montgomery, 1995: 151)

It was the feminist movement in the 1960's which started the drive for research of male/female language and the results were used as testimony to the oppression of women by men (CELS coursebook: 34). Since then, it has been a topic of much research, and there is now enough evidence to conclude that there are differences between how women and men speak. "Linguists agree that sex differences are pervasive" (Cameron 1985: 59). What are some of these differences? Can these differences be found in ESL textbooks? And how do they present men and women?

In this assessment task I will focus on how both men and women are represented linguistically, and to a lesser degree visually, in the textbook American Headway 2 (AH2). The findings will be compared with the research findings, and some explanations will be offered. Lakoff's 'features of women's language', along with other research results on men's and women's speech, will be reviewed and compared with the tapescript of AH2. Elements, such as uncertainty, gender bias, dominance of conversations, interruptions, deletion of nonessential elements, and occupation titles will be analyzed, and some subjective impressions and insights will be explored.

It will be shown that AH2 fails linguistically in some aspects because it omits linguistic elements and depends too much on contrived language. However, although it is sometimes at odds with linguistic research which represents natural spoken discourse, its

well thought out use of contrived discourse generally represents a relatively accurate, unbiased, and balanced outlook of the sexes. It is arguably unrepresentative and misleading for a text to be completely linguistically gender neutral. Although AH2 attempts neutrality in some contexts, it also does an adequate job of representing both men and women realistically, with differences, in a variety of situations.

2. Women's Language and Confidence

Robin Lakoff (1975) in Holmes (2001: 285) asserts that women use language which reinforces their relatively inferior position and that they are 'colluding in their own subordination' by how they communicate. She suggests that the language women use and the language used about them is a manifestation of women's ancillary standing in American society. She pinpoints several linguistic items which she asserts are used more frequently by women, which she believes evinces women's 'uncertainty and lack of confidence.'

Lakoff's list can be categorized into two groups: hedging or reducing devices used to ease the strength of an utterance; and boosting or intensifying devices which increase an articulation's force. She argues that both hedging and boosting demonstrates a speaker's lack of confidence. "Hedging devices explicitly signal lack of confidence, while boosting devices reflect the speaker's anticipation that the addressee may remain unconvinced and therefore supply extra reassurance." She suggests that women use hedging devices when uncertain and intensifying devices when wanting to be taken more seriously as listeners may not pay enough attention to them (Holmes, 2001: 287).

2.1 Lakoff's Features of 'Women's Language'

Lakoff (1975) in Holmes (2001) proposes that women's speech can be identified by linguistic features such as:

1. Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g. *you know, sort of, well, you see.*
2. Tag questions, e.g. *she's very nice isn't she?*
3. Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g. *it's really good?*
4. 'Empty' adjectives, e.g. *divine, charming, cute.*
5. Precise colour terms, e.g. *magenta, aquamarine.*
6. Intensifiers such as *just* and *so*, e.g. *I like him so much.*
7. 'Hypercorrect' grammar, e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms.
8. 'Superpolite' forms, e.g. indirect requests, euphemisms.
9. Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g. *fudge, my goodness.*
10. Emphatic stress, e.g. *it was a BRILLIANT performance.*

Deborah Cameron (1985: 57) states, “There is in sociolinguistics an implicit assumption that where women’s speech differs from men’s, it is the behavior of the women rather than the men that requires explanation; men are the norm from which woman deviate.” This is true of Lakoff’s research.

3. Hedges or Fillers

The tapescript of AH2 (see appendix 1) revealed that women used significantly more hedges and fillers than men (see table 1). The results found in AH2 would be, according to Lakoff, an accurate representation of women’s use of hedging devices and their tentativeness in conversation. Although it has been 30 years since Lakoff’s findings, the research has still not determined who uses more hedging devices or what reasons speakers have for using them. Some researchers found that women use three times as many hedges as men, and others reported no differences (Holmes, 2001: 288). Others say that hedging devices are not necessarily a sign of uncertainty. Graddol and Swan (1989) point out that researchers may view speech with a ‘double standard’, and Holmes (1986) in Graddol and Swan, 1986) adds: “one (female) person’s feeble hedging may well be perceived as another (male) person’s perspicacious qualification.”

Table 1: Comparison of Hedges and Fillers between Sexes.

Hedge or Filler	Number of times used	
	Men	Women
Well	17	27
So	4	7
I think	1	3
Kind of	1	3
As a matter of fact	2	0
Total	25	40

3.1. Intensifiers

One pair of researchers recorded male witnesses in court and found that they used more ‘women’s language’ features than women who had higher occupational status and expertise. They proposed changing the label to ‘powerless forms’ suggesting that these forms were used more by those of lower social status, and not only woman (Holmes 2001: 288) Correspondingly, it was the men in AH2 who used more boosters than women (see table 2).

Table 2: Comparison of Intensifiers between Sexes.

Intensifiers	Number of times used	
	Men	Women
Really	9	7
So	10	6
Just	1	0
Total	20	13
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Intensifiers + hedges		
Total	45	53

The total number of intensifiers and hedges is 45 for men and 53 for women. This supports Lakoff's predictions that women use more hedging and boosting devices than men, but does not necessarily mean that they have less confidence than their male counterparts. Holmes (2001: 288) states, "Overall, however, Lakoff's predictions were borne out. In a range of contexts it was reported that women did use more hedging and boosting devices than men. But a more detailed analysis sometimes showed that these forms were not always expressing uncertainty."

3.2. Tag Questions

Holmes (2001: 289-90) also points out the misdirection in regarding all tag questions as indications of uncertainty. In addition to uncertainty, tags may: (1) be used as facilitative or positive politeness devices which better accommodate a listener by creating an easier access into a conversational; (2) reduce or soften criticism or directive and show concern; (3) be used as confrontational or coercive devices (see examples below).

(1) Margaret: "Andrew this is our new neighbor, Frank. Andrew has just changed jobs, haven't you?"

(2) Claire: "That was a bit of a daft thing to do, wasn't it?"

(3) Superintendent: "... you'll probably find yourself before the Chief Constable okay?
Constable: Yes, sir, yes, understood."
Superintendent: "Now you er fully understand that, don't you?"

Table 3 is based on a 60,000-word corpus sample with evenly balanced quantity for male and female speech obtained from a variety of contexts. It showed that women indeed used more tags, but for the purpose of polite or affective functions. Men expressed more uncertainty with their tags. Only one example of a tag question was identified in AH2, and that was of a man expressing uncertainty: T 13.8 “Did you have a nice weekend? You went away, didn’t you?” Considering that there are over 10,000 words in the tapescript of AH2, in relation to the percentage of distribution of tag questions found in the corpus research, tag questions are considerably under represented. AH2 fails to produce an accurate representation of spoken discourse on this account. Regrettably, it is therefore impossible to make an assessment of how men and women are represented in this regard.

Table 3: Distribution of Tag Questions by Function between Sexes.

Function of tag	Women	Men
	%	%
Expressing uncertainty	35	61
Facilitative	59	26
Softening	6	13
Confrontational	-	-
Total	100	100
N	51	39

Source: based on Holmes 1984a: 54

3.3. Rising Intonation

Brend (1975) in Wardhaugh (2002: 319) states, “...the intonation patterns of men and women vary somewhat, women using certain patterns associated with surprise and politeness more often than men.” Similarly, Lakoff says that women sometimes use statements with rising intonation to answer questions instead of a firm statement with a falling intonation. She associates this rising intonation to uncertainty, however this has not been confirmed by other researchers (Dubois and Crouch, 1975, Cameron et al., 1989, and Brower et al., 1979) in (Ward 2002: 319).

Five examples of rising intonation were found in AH2, all of which were produced by women: T 6.1: Yeah? T 6.7: The seasons? T 6.7: One hour? T 9.4: 150? T 10.8: For me? All of these examples are associated with surprise or attempts to accommodate the other speaker. This corresponds with Brend’s research of women as more polite and accommodating than men, and is thus a somewhat accurate representation of reality. Men may simply be more reserved with their outward expression, whereas women may use expression to make others feel more comfortable. There are no examples in AH2 of either men or women showing uncertainty with rising intonation. Although this exclusion may not accurately reflect natural discourse, it arguably represents both men and women equally as confident.

3.4. Empty Adjectives

It is debatable whether the adjectives Lakoff uses as examples of ‘empty’ adjectives are in fact ‘empty’, with little meaning. In certain contexts and situations, they might have profound meaning and in others very little. Perhaps when a word becomes so overused that it becomes a cliché it begins to sound ‘empty’. Although none of the adjectives Lakoff specifically identifies in her examples are found in the AH2 text, the comparably similar adjectives *nice* and *wonderful* are used 4 times each and *sweet* once. Of the nine examples, six are spoken by women, again a significant majority. It may be argued that some of the following (notably 1, 4 & 6) could be regarded as examples of emphatic stress. There were no other examples of emphatic stress found in the text.

1. (Woman) T 6.8 Wasn’t that movie *wonderful*?
2. (Woman) T 7.5 We wanted to move to a *nicer* area.
3. (Woman) T 7.6 It’s *nice* to be here.
4. (Woman) T 8.4 In winter the weather is *wonderful*.
5. (Woman) T 8.4 And don’t forget our *wonderful* fruits and vegetables
6. (Man) T 8.4 One of the *niciest* things to drink.
7. (Woman) T10.8 A present! For me? That’s so *sweet*!
8. (Man) T 14.9 Have a *nice* weekend.
9. (Man) T 14.9 Thank you for a *wonderful* evening.

3.5. Hypercorrect grammar

An example of hypercorrect speech might be, ‘To whom are you speaking tonight?’ Substandard speech might include a phrase such as ‘He ain’t no fool.’ Wolfram and Fasold define subjectively *standard*, *superstandard* (or *hypercorrect*) and *substandard* (or *nonstandard*) speech: They say of a listener that:

“If his reaction to the form (not the content) of the utterance is neutral and he can devote full attention to the meaning, then the form is standard for him. If his attention is diverted from the meaning of the utterance because it sounds ‘snooty,’ then the utterance is super-substandard. If his attention is diverted from the message because the utterance sounds like poor English, then the form is substandard.” (Wolfram and Fasold (1974) in Wardhaugh (2002: 54)

Milroy (1980), Chesire (1982) and Russel (1982) prove that the traditional sociolinguistic view that women use the standard form of language more than men is an oversimplified generalization: “Other factors like social context and social roles determine linguistic production. And variables like communicative networks, neighborhood, local work organizations, living conditions, and above all power relations, influence linguistic production” (CELS Sociolinguistics coursebook: 35).

There is neither examples of hypercorrect nor substandard speech in AH2. The entire transcript consists of standard speech. The authors of AH2 write in the introduction to the teacher's manual: "Grammar is a given high profile. It is not disguised. The grammatical systems of English are presented, practiced, tested and explained." And add, "It is our belief that the understanding of the grammar of English is one of the key enabling skills for language learners." Emphasis, then, is placed on correct speech and this standardization of the language does not wholly represent natural spoken discourse. Therefore, a true representation of gender differences in this respect, if there are any, cannot be gleaned from an analysis of this language element.

4. Dominance of Conversation

A stereotype of women often held by men is that they talk more than men. However, Spender (1978) in Swan and Graddol (1989: 73) opines, "A talkative female is one who talks about as often as a man. When females are seen to talk about HALF AS MUCH AS MALES, they are judged as dominating talk." Swan and Graddol point out the magnitude of stereotypes associated with men's and women's speech:

"Stereotypes of women's and men's speech are plentiful and they seem to have an extremely long history. They reflect popular images of women's and men's language, perpetuated through proverbs, jokes, journalism, literature and even by serious language scholars. One of the striking features of these stereotypes is the way they rarely favor women, who are consistently portrayed as chatterboxes, endless gossips or strident nags patiently endured or kept in check by strong and silent men." (Swan and Graddol, 1989: 2)

One interesting analysis of cartoons from thirteen issues of the *New Yorker* magazine revealed that men spoke twice as much as women when both were represented (Kramaer, 1974) in Wardhaugh (2002: 322). Although not an actual record, it represented the writer's, and a portion of society's perception of reality. Holmes (2001: 293) points out that regardless of the popular stereotype which portrays women as tirelessly talkative, most research evidence shows the opposite. "In a wide range of contexts, particularly non-private ones such as television interviews, staff meetings and conference discussions, where talking may increase your status, men dominate the talking time."

A total of thirteen conversations in the text tapescript of AH2 took place between one male and one female character. To discern which gender dominates two-person mixed-gender conversations, a word count was taken of all conversations. Because five of the conversations were interviews, they were omitted from the analysis because the interviewee in all cases spoke significantly more than the interviewer. Eight conversations were evaluated (see table 4).

Table 4: Dominance of Mixed Gender Conversations by Word Count.

Conversation	Number of Words	
	Man	Woman
T 2.6 (part two)	124	86
T 3.6	71	71
T 6.1	133	46
T 8.7	88	114
T 9.3	57	59
T 9.4	294	85
T 9.6	50	85
T 13.5	191	130
Total	1008	676

According to the word count of mixed-gender conversations, men on average clearly spoke more than woman with a rate of approximately 1.5 words to 1. Four of the conversations were dominated by men, two by women and two were even. Consistent with the research, this is a relatively accurate representation of men dominating mixed-gender conversations.

5. Interviews

There are two cases in which both a man and woman are being interviewed simultaneously. In each case the woman speaks more words than the man. In T 11.3 the woman speaks 20 words to the man's 11 in response to the interviewer's questions about chewing gum. Well worth a closer investigation is T 7.6 in which two band members are interviewed. Traditionally, lead singers of rock bands are men. But in this case a woman (Suzy) has the prominent lead singer role. Her image in the photo exudes a confident and rough edge which could be considered quite masculine. Her hair is cut short, her nose is pierced and she is wearing dark a vest, T-shirt and pants.

Suzy speaks 186 words to Gary’s 133, a significant difference. A closer examination also reveals a slight but clear dominance of Suzy over Gary in the timing and number of responses to the interviewer. The female interviewer asks seven open questions, that is, they are not addressed to either person particularly. Of the seven open questions, Suzy responds to six – four of which she responds first before Gary, who then follows up on only two of the questions (see table 5). Gary does not respond to two of the questions and in a third when he is asked by the interviewer how many recordings the band has made, he responds, “That’s a difficult question, umm...” The interviewer then interrupts Gary with “Well, about how many?” and Suzy then answers the question instead. Contrary to the research, it is the women who show more confidence and have more control of this conversation, at least in this particular context.

Table 5: An Example of Conversation Dominance in a Mixed Gender Interview.

Interviewer’s Open questions	Responses	
	Suzy	Gary
1. Greeting	First	No response
2. Question	First	Follow-up
3. Question	No response	First
4. Question	First	No response
5. Question	First	Follow-up
6. Question	Follow-up (with correct answer)	Response: that’s a “difficult question.”
7. Question	Follow-up	First

6. Interruptions

Interestingly, within the entire tapescript, the above conversation contains the only instance of an interruption. Holmes (2001: 294) says that there is a “great deal of research evidence” that shows a pattern in which men interrupt women. In one widely quoted

study, students were tape recorded in coffee houses. Same-gender exchange showed little difference in the average number of interruptions – 43% to 57%. But, mixed-gender exchanges showed a strikingly high number of interruptions by men compared to their female counterparts – men 96% to women 4% (Source: From Zimmerman and West 1975: 116) in Holmes (2001).

One might ask why AH2 contains only one example of an interruption when they are often a natural element of spoken discourse. Only the authors of AH2 themselves could answer why they have represented men and women in this way. Perhaps the language in the text is meant as a general framework for students to work with, and not as an accurate reflection of natural discourse. Interruptions, although a reality in American society, are also considered rude, and the authors may want to have the speakers represented in a positive light. Also, because English is now the accepted international language of choice, textbooks must cater to many different cultures, some which may consider interruptions unacceptable. It may simply be too difficult to find real conversations including interruptions which exemplify the target language at hand. Recordings created with interruptions built into the script may also sound awkward.

7. Occupation Labels

An important aspect to consider when making comparisons of men and women is the vocabulary a textbook uses to represent their occupations. In the first chapter we are introduced to Judy Dandridge who is a ‘mail carrier’. ‘Mailman’ or ‘mailwoman’ would be considered gender biased while mail carrier is neutral. In chapter eight we are introduced to 20 different jobs, all of which accept for one – housewife – is appropriate for either male or female. ‘Firefighter’ rather than fireman and ‘sales assistant’ are successful attempts of assigning gender neutrality to job titles.

However, AH2 avoids using controversial examples of gender specific titles, such as actor/actress or waiter/waitress, perhaps in an attempt to emphasize the neutrality of all titles. Interestingly, ‘housewife’ is considered a job and is the only title on the list that is not gender neutral. Using this term as an occupation empowers women and is in stark contrast to the negative term ‘unemployed.’ AH2 uses standard vocabulary to represent men and women, and therefore does not push the boundaries by using awkward terms such as ‘househusband’ or ‘houseperson’.

It is worth noting that in the photos of the people portrayed in different jobs (pgs 58-59) there are ten men and only four women (see appendix 2). The jobs of the men are considerably more diversified and specific, whereas the women, according to their dress, are limited to two general categories – blue or white collar. Having more than double the number of men in various work uniforms may give the impression that men are more employed or employable, which is arguably not the case in America, as women represent about half the workforce.

What a person does for a living in American society is considered a very important part of his/her identity. The question, “What do you do?” is often one of the first asked when meeting someone new. Throughout AH2 the reader learns of an assortment of different vocations represented by both men and women. Again, throughout the text, it was found that men were represented with different vocations by twice the number of women (see table 6). It is difficult to verify this 2 to 1 ratio of vocation representation to the real world, but simply by number, men seem to be overrepresented compared to women.

Table 6: Occupations Representing Men and Women in AH2

<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>
Student (3)	Recording artist (2)	Student (6)
Advertiser	Pro baseball player	Mail carrier
Business man (2)	Chef	Office worker
Professor	Scientist	Teacher
Architect	Retired clergyman	Clerk
Teacher	Newspaper peddler	Investor
Electrician	Director	Recording artist (2)
Detective	Plumber	Pop star
Spy	Police Officer	Advice columnist
Store owner	Office worker	Doctor
Waiter	Pro tennis player	Hot air balloonist
Pilot		Novelist
Total:		
23		12

7.1 Representation of Gender Reality

Generally, however, AH2 represents both men in women in many facets of society, including some stereotypically traditional gender roles, as well as more contemporary roles in which it is acceptable for either male or female to fill. For example, in chapter 9 two university students are talking about what life will be like in the future. The young man’s education of science is vastly superior to the young naïve female (a traditional stereotype) who is enthralled by the man’s knowledge on the topic. When he states that “...scientists will understand everything about our DNA. They’ll have a map of all the human genes, about 100,000 of them, and they’ll be able to predict diseases before we get them,” she naively responds, “Is that good?” It is worth noting that the man also dominates this conversation by word count: 294 words to her 85.

From a feminist stand point, this conversation could be perpetuating the belief that men are superior to women in science, while from a parochial view, it is a perfectly natural and accurate representation of reality. AH2 provides a comprehensive representation of both men and women, as there are several more examples representing professional women which clearly outstrip the stereotypical representation of the students in the previous conversation. For example, a female doctor confidently assesses a man's illness and prescribes medicine. As well, men are represented widely and fairly accurately as several of the examples are of real people: from Milton Petrie, a millionaire and considered 'The Most Generous Man in the World', to a homeless man selling papers on the street.

8. Deletion of Nonessential Elements

A study of potential jurors in Tucson, Arizona, found grammatical disparities between women's and men's statements. Men deleted 'non-essential' words more often than women (Holmes, 2001: 291). For example, (a) "I'm employed with the city of Tucson. Aah been there over nine months." *I have* has been deleted in the second sentence. (b) *My name is* "Herb R. Beasley, senior. *I'm the* President of Beasley Refrigeration Incorporated. *I* Do commercial refrigeration..." (c) "My name is Sophia K. Jacobs. I'm employed by Krable, Parsons and Dooley. I've been..." Men tended to produce more utterances like in example (a) and (b), while example (c) was more representative of women. (Note: ***bold italics*** are possibilities in place of deletions)

Eight examples of non-essential element deletions were found in the tapescript of AH2. Analogous to the Tucson study, all utterances were produced by men. In T 6.1 Todd describes Dubai:

Ellen: "And what's Dubai like? When were you there?"

Todd: *It was* "Hot, very dry, *and* very modern. *There were* Lots of really modern buildings, white buildings. *It was an* Interesting place, I enjoyed it."

Ellen: "And Paris?! That's where I want to go! What's Paris like?"

Todd: *It's* "Everything you imagine! *It has* Very beautiful, wonderful old buildings but lots of interesting modern ones, too. And of course *it's* very, very romantic..."

In T 10.2 a man talks about food: "I used to love French fries. *And I* Still do. Now I eat everything. Except peppers. *I* Really don't like peppers."

Why do men omit non-essential words more than women? This question is open to interpretation. It was suggested that in the Tucsun study that perhaps women use more redundancy to make less demands on the listener, supporting the case that women are more polite or accommodative. Because deletion happens more in informal situations, perhaps men attempt to make a formal interaction less so (Holmes, 2001:310).

In the first conversation above, Todd is using vivid description, and perhaps he feels his description would be watered down or less forceful with what he perceives as useless words. In the second example, the speaker omits the pronoun “I” which helps to emphasize the action, rather than him. Omitting nonessential elements seems to exude speaker confidence, and this may support Lakoff’s research and explain why it is found more in men’s speech. It could also be that men find using non-essential words more of an effort than what it is worth, whereas women may take more pride in using proper speech.

9. Elements not Found in AH2

The following linguistics elements found in the readings are not sufficiently, or in almost all cases, not at all represented in AH2. These include some of Lakoffs linguistic features of women’s language: Precise color terms; super polite forms; avoidance of swear words (there is only one case of avoidance of a swear word – ‘darn it’); tag questions (only one), and emphatic stress. Others include, prevalence of men interrupting more often than women; feedback of men as competitive and women as co-operative; sexist language (for example, women being referred to as ‘honey’, ‘sugar’ and ‘chick’ and men referred to as ‘wolf’ or ‘stud’ (Holmes, 2001: 305); women’s speech seen as trivial, gossip-laden, corrupt, illogical, idle, euphemistic or deficient; women’s speech as necessarily more precise, cultivated or stylish (Wardhaugh, 2002: 315); women more likely to be addressed by first names or by terms such as ‘lady’, ‘dear’ or ‘baby’ (Holmes, 2001: 320).

10. Discussion

Throughout my several years of teaching ESL the issue of linguistic differences between genders has never come up, but I now realize that it is an important consideration for choosing a textbook and for teaching in general. AH2 is an intermediate level text which uses standard speech, and often contrived to fit nicely into graded grammatical units. As a result, many of the real elements of discourse which have been researched on women’s and men’s language are omitted in the text. In fairness to AH2, this seems to be the norm and not the exception compared with other leading ESL coursebooks.

However, most of the language elements used in AH2 which could be analyzed and compared to the research were well thought out and were analogous to the research. These include women's significantly greater use of hedging devices, rising intonation, and empty adjectives, and men's deletion of nonessential words and dominance of mixed gender conversations. Only very subjective conclusions could be gleaned from an analysis of this text, but it does seem to support the belief by some that women are more tentative, accommodating and polite, while men tend to be more confident and dominate gender mixed conversations.

Although AH2 does not use language considered a purely accurate representation of natural spoken discourse as in the corpus of English, it has been thought through sufficiently enough to give a generally accurate and well informed representation of both men and women. As Carter (1998) points out, 80 % of spoken interaction in English is between non-native speakers. Therefore it isn't always required that learners exemplify the language native speakers (male or female), and it would be an imposition to do so. The standard form of speech used in AH2 to represent men and women is arguably superior to substandard or hypercorrect forms used by some in the real world. And although it may be interesting or important for students to be aware of examples of 'living English', this does not necessitate that they learn it through the medium of a textbook.

11. Conclusion

Overall, AH2, linguistically and visually, represents a positive image of both men and women as being competent, intelligent and confident individuals (often professionals). Both genders represented in AH2 are the kind of people who students would strive to emulate. The authors do a good job at presenting both men and women as equals, yet without concealing real differences, giving credence to at least some stereotypes. Complete avoidance of gender bias is virtually impossible, yet there is clearly no evidence of misrepresentation or intentionally blatant gender bias of either men or women throughout the text. That is, AH2 is written neither with a feminist slant nor with patriarchal tendencies. The authors of AH2 successfully represent men and woman with neutrality, while in accordance with reality. This could be attributed to the fact the authors are represented by both sexes. The representation of gender differences in speech will likely continue in textbooks as Coates (1986) in Gradoll and Swan (1989: 9) ruminates: "Linguistic differences are merely a reflection of social differences, and as long as society views women and men as different – and unequal – then differences in the language of women and men will persist."

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