THE ISSUE OF GENDER IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS' HEBREW TEXTBOOKS FOR THE ARAB SECTOR IN ISRAEL

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ABSTRACT: *The educational system in the 21st century is still a sociological representative preserving the social and gender structure in society. The school is a 'greenhouse' for strengthening and refinement gender stereotyped identity already in young age, by teaching and imitating the behavior described in the textbooks This article examines the status of women and female students in the Hebrew textbooks in the elementary school studied in the Arab sector in relation to two aspects: the method of teaching of the Hebrew language in the past and in present time, in relation to women's status. The examination was made by texts and illustrations of textbooks.This study examined the third grade book of 'Mifgash' (meetings), it also tested 11 texts in four textbooks from the series of "Ivrit Laderech" (Learning Hebrew) from the third to the sixth grade, in which women have a central leading role.*

KEYWORDS: elementary school, gender, Hebrew, Arab sector, stereotypes, textbook.

INTRODUCTION

The perceptions of prejudice and "stereotypes" are already embedded to children from young age even during the phase of infancy. These perceptions are largely transmitted subtly and unconsciously, representing norms and attitudes common in society and culture. It is evident especially in schools, where only fathers, for example, are allowed to accompany armed their children in their trip and the role of the mothers is to sew curtains. The teacher constantly yet unconsciously associate boys (students) with being troublemakers, wise, courageous, while the girls are treated in relation to cleanliness, obedience, listening and assessing others. This grading extends the boys' active identity and the girls' passive one. A proof of this present condition is emphasized in a study from the year 2002, which had examined the extent of gender –sexual stereotypes in the Israeli textbooks. The findings of this research have exposed the frequency of generalizations and stereotyping of gender in the textbooks, thus, only emphasized the social status -quo regarding this subject.

Historical perspective on the development of the Arab education system has been developed already in 1948 in the establishment of 'The Committee of the Arab Education in the Ministry of Minorities' and in 1958 with the opening of The 'Arab Education Department' in 'The Ministry of Education' with the collaboration of 'The Prime Minister Office'. In the past, most texts were taken from the Arab countries, Lebanon or Egypt (grammar textbooks which are still learned in Egypt high schools (alwadah alnhao).

In the past, the Arab language was the native speaking language among the Israeli minority, and the Hebrew language was considered a foreign one. Today it is considered second language. Some schools in the Arab sector were teaching Hebrew in the second grade, today, by the order of the Chief Inspector for Arabic language, the decision was reversed and the

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Hebrew language is learned once again in the third grade, as it was in the past. This decision results from the absence of coherent curriculum adjusted to the second grade. Curriculum in Arabic language for the Arabic sector was approved in the year 1981.

In cooperation with 'The Department of Gender Equality' within 'The Ministry of Education', it had begun to examine and approve textbooks which were written by gender specialists, and to develop training programs and workshops in the subject, and to appoint guides (Ministry of Education, 2002). In addition, 'The Gender Institute' was established in the Arab College in 2008, it began conducting various researches on the subject of gender' equality and the representation of boys and girls in Arabic and Hebrew language curricula, and other subjects of nature studies, heritage, etc., and even the subject killing of Arab women in general and on the basis of desecration of family honor in particular.The researcher had conducted various studies on the subject in Arab society such as youth position on the subject of working and education of women. This article examines how women are reflected in the elementary schools Hebrew textbooks of the Arab and Druze sectors and whether there is an improvement in women's status in comparison to the past. **The research question is: How do women are displayed in the elementary schools Hebrew textbooks which are learned in the Arab sector?**

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Gender:
Meshonis (1999) defines gender as cultural concept that emphasizes human traits and qualities of both genders, and their great impact on us. The concept of gender has been changed throughout history and cultures. Another definition of gender makes a distinction between men and women on the basis of social, psychological and cultural criteria. Gender creates the notion of "woman" and "man" throughout processes of social interactions our entire lives. The individual learns what we expect of him/her, and acts and react by these "laws", and in this way, understands and maintains the notion of gender at the same time. In other words, it is common to restrict the use of the concept "gender" only in cases it is required to distinct between people on a biological basis, especially in the fields of psychology, sociology or education. However, a distinction by gender identifies a person's gender in means of outward characteristics and certain elements of behaving. It is social-cultural definition, in contrast to a biological meaning of the word "gender". The use of term "gender" cancels or reduces the influence of the traditional assumption that supports the notion of the necessary, inevitable analogy between the biological chronological age and the psychological one. Namely, the parallel is between masculine to manhood and feminine to womanhood (Malach-Pines, 1997).

Lorber (1994 in: Shahar, Karako & Ben Artzi, 2002) claims that gender is very common and the distinction is invisible, to the extent that we assume that it is oriented in our genes. People find it difficult to conceive gender as human product that is based on human social interactions. The biological differences between humans such as: gender, skin and color are rigid signs in constructing social statuses and associations.

Stereotype:
A stereotype is a widely held, fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person due to one's nationality, ethnicity, profession and gender. A stereotypical reference

ignores the individual and treats one's features by society norms or feelings towards his/her group of affiliation [1]. Stereotypes are prejudices and stigmas every society; the problem is that they are reflected in very young ages (Karasany, 2005).

Sexual stereotypes between men and women:

Pinnes (1998) claims that sexual stereotypes are common, rigid and conclusive patterns of thinking, which refer typical attributes and conduct on a biological basis, regardless the individual's real state (p. 93). The origin of these stereotyped conceptions is in socialization processes, in which parents deliver their messages and expectations to their children already in young age, in this manner create and continue the difference between genders' character and skills (Sharon, 2000).

In addition, according to Feldman (1981 in: Shahar & others, 2002), sexual stereotypes are acquired already in early childhood, in fact, children in preschool associate exciting, honorable and powerful professions to men, while women are associated with less powerful skills and profession. In this social process, there are other aspects that people tend to stereotype men and women: by character, traits,

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For example, independence is considered masculine feature while tenderness is considered a feminine one. In the subject of genders' role, man is the head of the family while the woman takes care of the kids and the house. The appearance of men also differs of this of women; men have wide shoulders while women have curves. Persons & Hills (1984 in: Sharon, 2000) define the difference in genders' stereotyped roles between men and women by associating instrumental roles to men, men are the functional leaders of the family, taking care of their family's economy and secure, the family's representatives, while women have expressive roles, they provide solidarity, minimize stresses and create a warm and protective environment.

Studies that were conducted in Israel by Ziv, Epstein and Littan (1972, in: Sharon, 2000) found that Israeli teenagers associate stereotype to both genders: men are wise; maintain mechanic skills, courageous, fit to business, realistic, politicians and dexterous. while women are loving, understanding, crying, whiny, weak, timid, dependent, moral, coward, insecure, neat, mouthy, and superficial. The researcher Malach-Pinnes (1998) in her researches on the subject of stereotypes assessments, once again proves that masculine features include stereotypes of being powerful, ambitious, self-confident, rational, decisive and in-control, while the female ones are of being delicate, helpful, assisting, emotional, unconfident, unambitious. It appears that sexual stereotypes have a clear social function aimed to maintain social status. This society encourages and nurtures conduct and psychological characteristics by gender manners, in order one will perform the roles they are expected of (by society). The difference between the genders in the periods of infancy and preschool is emphasized primarily by societies that encourage gender differences, and consumption habits (the type and color of clothing or special toys), or by establishing special norms and views.

The perceptions of sexual stereotypes psychologically:
An early childhood is the period of beginning the development of cognitive, emotional and social development; hence**,** hidden messages transferred by the nursemaids are the dominant and affecting, and would eventually shape the views and aspiration of boys and girls of themselves and society of them (Schecter, 1999, p. 28). Raziel (1993) emphasizes that young children are affected by varied cultural factors surrounding them: movies, books, everything they absorb becomes part of their worldview. One of the serious argument of the feminist movement is that perception of reality and imagination in young age is not complete until the age of five, a child finds it difficult to differentiate reality from imagination. This process is dangerous, for a perceiving of a story as real leads the child to absorb it into his inner world, thus, the subservient passive and obedient description of women become legitimate and common for the child. Studies and observations prove that children in early age already acquire behavior and sexual stereotyped perceptions which affect their life in the future, such as boys should play ball and girls dolls (Schecter, 1999).

Children and gender
Gender has a key role in how people define their world and experience it. It is common in every society and culture, thus, the expectation from boys and girls differ and they are treated differently. Therefore, children learn cultural stereotypes which are typical to certain gender's conduct and characteristics (Saruf, Cooper & Dehurt, 1998), Additionally, acquiring of stereotypes is learned in early age and concerns all spheres of activity, whether it is the child's activity, preference or social landscape. There is a clear distinction between the type of games boys and girls play already in young age, it becomes obvious when each gender prefers to play with his own kind, own species (boys with boys..etc.) (Fabes, Hanish &, Martin, 2003). In other words, children in young age adapt typical conduct that fits their chronological age and begin to learn the gender roles which society and culture have determined, and develop emotional commitment towards their kind. this occurs as a result of cognitive development in this age, for example, boys are seen as more aggressive, competitive, ambitious and self-confident, professional and knowing how to get results, while girls are perceived as sensitive towards others, kind and emotional (Saruf, Cooper & Dehurt, 1998).

This sociological development results in the parents' culture, thus, studies prove that parents take a significant part in their children's gender- socialization in various life aspects: clothing, toys, differential interaction and different expectations differential (Sroff and others, 1998). This means that children arrive elementary school already with some gender load (burden) in accordance with one's environment, and in kindergarten or elementary school the gender difference are intensified (Martin , 1998). The research of Heyman & Legare (2004) prove this assumption, for they found out that there is a gender belief that boys are better than girls in mathematics and are more aggressive physically than girls, while girls are better than boys in writing and tending to be more pro-social, in addition, they discovered that gender beliefs are stronger among teenagers, thus, teenaged girls tend to associate writing and spelling to girls and aggression to boys on larger numbers than girls in young age, this may be related to the fact that children in kindergarten tend to evaluate themselves more positively.

There is no doubt that society and culture have a dominant impact on implementing gender issues, for example, gender distinction of dressing code, different games for boys and girls

already in young age eventually lead children prefer playing with their own kind most of the time (Sarof, Cooper and Dehurt, 1998).

Graham and others (Graham et al,1998 in: Cole, Cole, & Lightfoot, 2005) claim that in middle childhood period, gender belief and gender conception become clearer, the researchers found that six-years olds spent approximately 68% of their time with their own kind as compared to 90% in the age of 12. Furthermore, researchers indicate of some gaps regarding gender rigidity, for example, playing catch, etc. In middle childhood girls tend to socialize in small groups of 2 to 3 members, while boys gather on larger groups.

The lack of gender equality in Education and textbooks:
One of the reasons which explain the problem of gender inequality between women and men is a lack of education towards equality in school[2], although the awareness for the importance of gender equality by rights and opportunities has been increased during the recent years, still, the Israeli society suffer from gender stereotyping, thus, pink is still the color that is associated with girls and blue for boys, by gender, as part of developing of an identity.

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1.   Gender Equality starts in School (1995), Faces38: P.22
The Israeli Education System is still captive in sexual perceptions and stereotypes which reinforce the girls' low self-esteem in some aspects, and intensify the growing gaps and poor academic achievements of both genders (Schechter, 1999). There is a possibility that this policy of the 'Ministry of Education' results out of the assumption that school is based on equality, thus, teaching for equality is obvious and granted. In contrast, some people claim that awareness towards gender equality is not natural and in order to prove it, Education should initiate systematically the   process [3]
Fishbein (2011, p. 9) chooses to quote in her article the elementary school of "Givolim School" (in Ramat –Gan) headmistress - Hani Kashi, a school which has developed a unique program to promote gender equality under the guidance Miriam Shechter. According to the headmistress, "the Ministry of Education invests in promoting gender issues, yet, the forms of the Office are still written in masculine gender form, although women constitute the majority of the educational system".
According to the program of 'Na'amat' & 'Israeli Teachers Association' in 1992, the Education System should expand and enhance curricula of gender equality already in early childhood of kindergarten. Efforts should be taken to modify stereotypical attitudes of women and men's roles in society and within the family. [4] Researches worldwide and in Israel prove that teachers do not treat girls and boys equally, girls
are not exposed equally to opportunities, do not treated equally in terms of investment and appreciation, and are not exposed equally to similar experiences (Shechcter, 1999, p. 28).

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2.   Gender Equality starts in School (1995), Faces38: P.22
3.   Gender Equality starts in School (1995), Faces38: P. 26

In addition, research prove that female and male teachers let boys speak in class three times more than girls (Falah Faraj, J, 2013)), it was necessary to raise the awareness of teachers towards this issue, in order to create equal opportunity for girls in class. In the preparatory workshops which were taken place in the 'teachers room' in 'Givolim' school, it was decided to incorporate gender equality in the curricula, thus, in Bible lesson to emphasizes feminine hero characters, to change word problems in mathematics by addressing both genders equally , in order to meet equality and be freed of gender stereotypes. In history lessons it was decided to focus, in detail, on episodes related to female leadership, and in science, to focus on women with remarkable scientific achievements. Also to treat the Memorial Day from female angle, to use texts written by bereaved mothers and sisters, and to dedicated Woman's Day to gender issues, such as women's status in the third world, women in sports, etc. (Fishbein, 2011). It is recommended that issue of gender equality will be learned in all subjects of study in all ages and on social and emotional level. If the Education system would focus on this issue already in early age period, there is a great chance to change positions and attitudes in the family, to create gender equality and to eliminate stereotypes (Swan, 1995, p. 118).

The pre-school teacher has an extremely important role of implementing justice and social equality in the curricula. In other words, the teacher is required to educate pre-school children the issues of gender, by highlighting the message to parents that school refers great importance to subjects of respect of others and to the existence of difference and social diversity. These values might assist parents to open up to teachers (Asher, 2009). Furthermore, it is insufficient mainly to mention the topic on the board in class, for the family experience exists on daily basis, and should be reflected through dramatic game, arts and creative works, throgh discussions and dialogues in class with the kindergarten teacher. Hence, the kindergarten teachers and school teachers hold a moral and social responsibility to ensure a better and safer educational environment for their students, to ensure that family members' silence is out of will and desire in privacy rather than fear from homophobic reactions (Asher, 2009). Salmma (2008) indicates that children stories in the Arab sector convey sexual stereotyped messages that prefer boys rather than girls; the boy is described as brave, strong, a ruler, etc., while girls and women are the caretakers, nannies, less dominant or wise.

Sexual stereotypes in children's literature:
Education as an 'agent' of society considers textbooks one of the most important tools to convey moral values. The textbooks serve two programs- the visible one and the hidden one (Swan, 1995). Studies which were conducted in Israel on children's textbooks and teaching methods in early childhood, reveal unbalanced stereotyping- both of women and men (Sharon, 2000, p. 18). Baruch (1994) who studies reading books and textbooks for children in young age, mentions the fact that witches are always ugly and old, the princess is always beautiful and passive, the prince is always brave, beautiful and competitive, and the step-mother is always mean, thus, children already learn from these stories gender roles and behavioral patterns that are expected of them in the future. As a result, girls receive a stereotyped education and eventually become passive women who would stay at home, engaged in housekeeping and raising the children, while their husbands would take the active role, seeking for higher positions and material potential paycheck (Sharon, 2000, p. 62).
Children's literature in Israel have not meet the 21st century standards, most of the books retain traditional division of roles whereas boys are active and the girls are passive (Roth,

2013, p. 104). According to Renana Green Shukron –the head of the Department of Children's Literature in David Yelling College of Education in Jerusalem, "many of the new books still maintain the traditional stereotyped role division between boys and girls, whereas boys are active, the leaders, and the girls are pretty and passive. These stereotypes in literature reflect society and therefore reality, yet, it is also an 'agent' (means) for socialization: adults' tool for delivering norms and values to children and gender expectations, that is to say, how "men" and "women" should act or look"(in: Rott, 2013, 107). She adds that the role of genders is delivered in the books not only through key figures and characters, but also through illustrations, which are actually a visual presentation, the dressing codes of boys and girls for example. The boys in the illustrations are more active, and the presence of male characters is larger than those of female ones. Hence, the social value of boys and men's activity is greater than those of girls and women's (In: Rott, 2013, 107).

The female character in children's literature:
Textbooks and children's reading books are full of sexual stereotypes which describe women as inferior in relation to men, by ability and roles. These stereotypes prevent the possibility for social equality between genders and convey and preserve the younger generation with messages of discrimination and deprivation of women (Meller, 1991, p. 89). The traits that characterize women are various: they are cheaters, dandy, anxious, hesitant, devious, subdued, depressed, snitch, manipulative, insulting and cowardly, ill-fated, offended, chatty, obedient, jealous, liars, conniving, needy and dependent, while men are characterized as powerful rulers (Kransi, 2005, p. 199). Dr. Galia Sheinberg, the Head of the Department of Literature at Gordon College explains that at the early stage of Hebrew literature from the late 19th century, women were designed to be at-home, mothers and homemakers, therefore girls in this literature play with dolls, assist their mothers to clean and cook, and there are no athletic women or women working in construction, engineering or medicine (doctors) (in: Rott, 2013, p. 107). Women in children's literature are loving, warm, forgiving and understanding of children, emotional, dedicated, anxious and dedicated, and the girls are insecure, dependent, whining, small, emotional, prone to mood, naughty, pretty, gentle, consistent, dreaming and knowlegible (Sharon, 2000).

The female character in the fairy tale is static and stereotyped, like a marionette- transparent and automatic. Due to the tendency of the narrator to describe shortly and directly, the daughter is described young or kind, the step-mother as mean and nasty, and the dominant characteristic is immediately highlighted positively or negatively (Karsany, 2005). Bettleheim (1987, In: Karasany, 2005, p. 200) claims that the female character in the tale is dichotomies - she is either good or bad, usually the bad is ugly and the good is beautiful. The description is exaggerated in the split figure of the mother-she is either good or bad, biological or a step-mother. The tales leave great impression on young children; they adopt some components of the tale, including the gender stereotypes and gender social roles. Thus, children get the wrong idea of women's characteristics- they are either good, kind, weak and helpless, or bad-ugly or powerful. The male figure is usually young, handsome, protecting of the weak woman and rescuing (Karasany, 2005, p. 213).

The female figure towards a modification:
 Today, the awareness towards the great effect of children's fairy-tales, textbooks, TV shows and books has grown. The educational system and culture have become tremendously aware

to their great impact on children's perception and values, including sexual stereotypes. Simultaneously, the awareness towards women status in Israel and worldwide has grown, alongside with the struggle against prejudice and inequality. What was important and solid fact in the past is reexamined and revalued in the present (Karasany, 2005). 'The Committee of Women's Status' presented in 1976 to The Ministry of Education and curricula- developers new recommendations based on researches to re-edit in reading books and textbooks the status and image of women and men. In addition, in the year 1984 the Director-General of the Ministry of Education published a Circular demanding changing stereotypical approach and provide equal opportunities for both genders in reading books and textbooks (Sharon, 2000, p. 18).

According to Dr. Galia Sheinberg, at the end of the 20th century, with the growing development and awareness to women's status and role in society, a reversing of roles within the family had occurred. Furthermore, "A feminist reading has become very popular, concentrating mainly on women's action and history in western culture. This kind of reading reveals that women were victims of circumstances. In order to face stereotypes in children's literature, and to promote women's status, feminist reading is not enough, new texts should be developed, texts which would focus on new opportunities to women's strives, to empower women and girls, by creating a new model of women, a model girls would be able to identify with and to strive to, in children's literature it means creating strong, brave and independent image of the female character (Rott, 2013, p. 107-109).

One could argue that women in Education hold the key to social change (very few men work in this profession these days). A change in attitude in Education towards boys and girls in early childhood, will eventually design equal concepts and norms to the entire society, and will contribute to maximize realization of the potential in skills and abilities of both genders (Shechter, 1999, p. 29).

The study
The aim of this chapter is to examine the image of women figures in elementary schools' Hebrew textbooks in the Arab and Druze sectors, and whether an improvement in women's status has been made in comparison to the past.

The research question is: How is the woman figure reflected in the elementary schools' Hebrew textbooks in the Arab and Druze sectors?
It is important to note that these textbooks are taught in the Druze and Arab sectors as well. Almost 95% of the schools-Druze and Arab teach the same program/curricula and the same textbooks.

The examination of women's presentation in the textbooks includes an examination of these following variables:
☐ The women figures in the text.
☐ The illustrations of women in the textbooks.
The study refers to two series of textbooks:
1. "Ivrit Laderech" (Learning Hebrew)
2. "Mifgash" (The Meeting)
A. Four textbooks of the new serious of "**Ivrit Laderech**" were examined, from the third grade to the sixth grade:

1) First book of "Ivrit Laderech" of third grade.
2) Second book of "Ivrit Laderech" for the fourth grade.
3) Third book of "Ivrit Laderech" for the fifth grade.
4.) Book Four of "Ivrit Laderech" for the sixth grade.

The research examined 11 texts of this series, in which women are the major characters. It is important to note that I found it difficult to select the texts, for women did not have central role in all texts, in fact, in most textbooks the male character is central.

Lesson	Page	Grade	The female figure	Action	Role
What do you see in the drawing	77	3rd grade	Headmistress Math teacher Gym teacher	Writing on the Board. Reading a newspaper. She has a blue bag	Women in education
Getting ready for the party.	60	3rd Grade part 2	Grandma Mom	Baking a cake for the party. Buying Sahar new white dress & shoes (The woman share shopping with her husband)	Holiday
What does a girl want	60	3rd Grade part 1	Mother Girl	"Is there a pizza? My girl wants a pizza" Is there Lemonade? My girl wants some lemonade? But mom, I don't want pizza" Mom doesn't want some lemonade?	Independent Insubordinate
Grandma and the her two granddaughters	38	3rd Grade part 2	Grandma Dina & Jasmine	Girls, on Monday we'll buy presents for the holiday. What do you to do on Tuesday? But grandma, can we go on Monday,On Tuesday we dance	Lecturing Insubordinat
Grandma's dream	146	4th grade	Grandma	Make a giant omelet and invite all the neighbors to eat.	Cooking
A note from mom.	144	4th grade	Mom	She left a note, I went to visit a cousin Selma, be back soon, love you	Concerning mothers , a source for love & warmth importance of mom at home

Busy girl-friends	109	4th grade	Naama, Zahara, Samia, Alina, Amira and Nadia	Each of them is busy in outdoors activities (gymnastic Club). Zahara: I have a gym class, Samira Nadia, iIlana and Amira work up with me.	-Social activity
Tammy loves soccer.	46-49	5th grade	Tami (the girl)	Tammy loves football, she's chasing the ball all day. Tami watches football with her dad Collects players' cards. Tammy went to the playground.	A hobby
Amira loves birds	4	6th grade	Amira	Amira took a wounded bird and brought it to her room, she bandaged its wounded wing and quickly brought it wheat grains to feed the bird.	cruelty to animals (Compassion-ate Assistant and worried)
Star-fish	108	6th grade	A Girl	I pick the star-fish which are stuck on shore and throws them back to the sea (the girl displays wisdom)	Wisdom

Illustrations
1) Four textbooks from third grade to 6th grade of the serious the new "Ivrith
2. The series of "Mifgash" learned in the 3rd grade, .including 39 lessons.

The class	Page	Figure	Role
Mom	7	Mom	Mom appears, her origin is unknown.
Home	9	Mom	Mother is a teacher/a housewife
Who's coming?	12	Rabab	A friend of Rami , both students
Rami the student	15	Rabab	Rabab is a good student
Amira the student	18	Amira	Amira is a good girl
My brother the student	21	Rabab	A student.
I sing a song	24	Miriam	A mom
Who is this?	27	Elham , Miriam And Amina	Students
New book	33	My sister	My sister goes to school
Good morning	39	Mom	Mom makes a breakfast.
The family.	43	Grandma , sisters, Aunt , Miriam , Aunts Basma And Elham	Meet the family, family tree
Afif and Latif	47	Latifah	Latifa is a teacher of 3rd grade

		Afifa	Afifa is a teacher of 1st grade
Grade C	56	My sister	A student.
A ball	59	Sarah And Haned.	Sara & Haned are good friends
I work in the garden.	68	Mom	Mom
I love flowers	80	Mom	Mom is taking care of the garden, love nature
Renewed	86	Mom	Mom is a housewife
Basketball	92	Mom	An attorney
Happy holiday	98	Mom	A good mother.
Sammy and the jug	105	Mom	Lecturing as an educational message
The old man and the skin.	111	Mom	Preaching
The woodcutter	114	A woman	A strong woman supportive of her husband.

In the **the third grade** textbook **"Mifgash",** there are 39 lessons. Women/girls are mentioned in 22 lessons, a 56.4% out of 39 lessons. In addition, out of the 22 references, 9 times the female figure fulfils a role of a mother, namely 40.9%. An aunt, a grandmother and a sister appear 6 times. Ten girls appear in the text : Rabab, Amira, Miriam, Elham, Amina, Basma, Lafifa, Afifa, Sara and Haned. The names of the girls are old, belong to the generation of grandparent.

Furthermore, only three had a position:
• Latifa is a third grade teacher
• Afifa a first grade teacher
• The visiting aunt is a lawyer.
• the mother, the grandmother and the teacher's role is to educate and guide, while the girls were passive, subordinate, good and reliable.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion
The examination of the two series-"Ivrit Laderech" and "Mifgash" prove that there is a difference between the approaches of the two series towards gender. This is emphasized by the manner women are presented, their roles, numbers of time they appear in the text, etc.
The textbooks of the series "Ivrit Laderech" indicate of significant improvement in the status of women, in fact, the figures of women appears more active and independent, initiative, decision-making, initiative, sharing family duties with her husband, working in significant positions at work, outside home (work, restaurant, party). The girls in the texts like to read and go to the library, something that was not common in the past, for girls were described as innocent, clueless and indecisive. The most surprising text is "Tammy likes to play football"; for the first time the girl-character is more sportive, playing games of boys, as opposed to the description of girls in the past, where they played only with dolls.

In **"what do you see in the drawing"** p. 77 there are three illustrations of women (teachers) and three illustrations of men (teachers).

Women	Men
A headmistress	An English teacher
A math teacher	A Hebrew teacher
A gym teacher	A music teacher

The Division of roles is equal in gender, there are three female teachers and three male teachers, yet, and it does not match reality. Today in the education in general, and in teaching in particular, most teachers are women. Therefore, the illustration should been composed more of women teachers than men teachers. Another important element in the illustration is the fact that a woman is in a status of managing, a role which was preserved to men only in the past. Recently, it has become more relevant, for women have taken over managing positions at work, especially in schools. . Moreover, if one focus on the division of teaching subjects, Math and Gymnastics are taken today mostly by female teachers rather than men, whereas in the past female-teachers taught languages and spiritual subjects as legacy, while male-teachers taught subject of higher thinking. Here in the text, the situation has reversed, the male figures (teachers) teach languages and the women Math and Gymnastics.

In oother texts as **"Busy Friends", "Ready to Party" and "what a Girl Wants"**, the women appear to be more independent, are busy in outside activities, taking fitness classes, sitting in a restaurant and managing to cope without the help of their husbands. The text of "**Ready to Party**" emphasize this mostly, the women figure is sharing shopping with her husband and in household activities. In these texts the woman figure is more open, active, and represents the image of the 'new generation mother'. She has a job and career assisting her husband with the house providences; she is independent, hanging out of home. Furthermore, in some of the texts as in "**Note from Mom**", she is still presented as a responsible figure, a resource for love and warmth and aware to her importance at home. Also in the text "**Amira Loves Birds"**, the girl is compassionate, helpful and taking care of her environment. One could argue that although the development in the woman's character, she is still described in terms of emotions, being responsible, taking care of her family, a resource for love and warmth for her children, supportive and educating.

The improvement in the image of the female figure does not include only women but also the character of the girl. The texts **"Grandma and her two Granddaughters", "Tammy loves Soccer", "The Starfish", and" What a Girl Wants"** prove of this change.
In the text "Grandma and her two Granddaughters" Dina and Jasmine are not subordinate to their grandmother, they disagree with her and standing on their own, yet at the end of the story they accept willingly their grandmother's instructions. Jasmine and Dina love to read and dance, it is a symbol for self-fulfillment.
In the text of "**The Starfish**" the girl appear to be smart, with a strong desire to save the world.

In the text of **"What a girl wants"** the **girl is** independent, asks for herself what she wants (sitting with her mother at the restaurant, without her father, outside home). In the text **"Tammy loves football**" the girl is sportive. It is a revolutionary notion; the girl plays in a masculine game and not dolls, unlike the past. Although the boys reject her in the beginning by saying "football is not a game for girls", she insists playing, following her dream and hobby.

Unlike the improvement in status and appearance of the mother and girls, the figure of the grandmother is still traditional and stereotyped, she is always in the kitchen, cooking, as in the texts of "**Grandmother's Dream**" and " **Grandma and her two Granddaughters"**. The Grandma represents the old generation, the preservation of traditional holiday celebration, yet, her figure is highly important to the family.

There are texts that the Grandma takes the role of an educator, she instructs her granddaughters but at the end of the story they willingly accept her instructions. Also in the text **"Preparing for the Party"** the woman takes the role of baking the cake for the party. The findings in examining the third grad series of **"Mifgash"** (a series which is prior to "Ivrit Laderech") prove of a different approach, here women are associated with more traditional roles, the figure of the woman is of a caring mother for her children, she appears in this manner more than half of the lessons, except for three instances, where the women figures have a career: Latifa is teaching the third grade, Afifa the first grade and the visiting aunt is a lawyer. It is needed to point that the role of the women figures in this series is to educate, the girls are passive, obedient, kind and reliable.

SUMMARY

There is substantial improvement in the image of women in the textbooks; the woman figure is presented as independent, responsible, active, support the household providing alongside her husband, a headmistress, active outside her house, a developed character with an emphasis of her emotional side. The girls are independent, insubordinate, decisive, ambitious, and sportive – self fulfilled. The figure of the 'grandmother' is still traditional, her role sums up in cooking and preparing the holiday meal for the family. The woman's role and appearance as the central figure is still relatively smaller than the male figure. This is also was emphasized in the findings of the 'The Committee of the Arab Education' which was found out that only some of the children's textbooks present women as active, yet, they are still less powerful than men (Ministry of Education, 2002). Karasany (2005) has also found that the male figure is more dominant than the female one in roles. According to Meller (1991), children textbooks and reading books are one of the most important sources for socialization and providing of socio-cultural values-hidden or overt, in young age. Socially speaking, children's literature, reading and textbooks contribute to the social development of the child and to the creation of set of values and ideology by social norms.

Therefore, reading of stories and textbooks full of sexual stereotypeswould lead a child to use them, hence, to maintain social inequality for women. The education system- as an 'agent' of socialization, should choose textbooks that encourage sexual equality between genders. In the past, women were presented as passive, obedient, homemaker, needy and undeveloped, with insignificant roles of cooking, sewing, etc. (Meller, 1991; Shahar & others, 2002).Today, the education system has grown awareness towards the subject of sexual inequality in textbooks and to the issue of women's status in Israel, thus, it requires modifying prior discriminating curricula, and to initiate systematic methodological education The textbooks I have studied made me realize that the figure of woman has changed, her status was proven, she appears to be independent, responsible, ambitious, active, and disobedient. Additionally, the woman plays significant role in managing (she is a headmistress), an educator (a teacher), actively sportive, in other words, fulfilling her destination and will, contributing to society.

An Improvement in women's status would lead to rational young generation that supports gender equality and believes in women's power and strength in all aspects.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- It is important to enhance the appearance of women as central figures with powerful roles of a doctor or a pilot in textbooks.
- Women should always be presented as equal to men.
- The traditional status of the grandmother must be improved, to gain a higher status.
- Boys and girls should be presented equally in textbooks.

FUTURE RESEARCH:
To examines the status of women and female students in science textbooks in the elementary school and in high school .

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