SESSION 4: DESIGNING THE TOOL
CHARACTERS EMBODIED IN TEXTS
Research shows:

- Gender assessments of curriculum and student textbooks have been undertaken in Asia and elsewhere, and can be important impetus for curricular modifications and revisions at the school level.

- However, there have been limited gender assessments of teacher training materials and other resources used in the teaching practice.

In groups – Look at the sample lesson.
- Reflect upon the methodology / tools you may use to identify (if any) gender biases/stereotypes in the lesson;
- How will you enumerate / collect the data for analysis?
CHARACTERS IN TEXTS AND WHAT DO THEY CONVEY?
The way a character is named is specific to the text

**IDENTIFY CHARACTERS ACCORDING TO:**

- Sex, age, designation, actions, attributes, Relationship (only individual character) with other characters, and position;
Identifying ‘characters’ in Texts

By Proper name
- Nanette, Rani, John, Somchak etc.

By Common/generic nouns
- Singular and generic terms are indicative of individual characters;
  - Examples: Sister, brother, Grandmother, grandfather, chairperson, woman, man, etc.
- Plural and generic terms are indicative of group characters.
  - Examples: Girls, people, students, boys; travelers, businesswomen; etc.

By Designation
- First Name (Proper Name) /surname Or Title
  - Examples: Jane, John, Baruah, Ebbers, Hinds, Burns, etc.
- Family Or Other Relationships
  - Mother, Father, Grandparents, Aunty, Uncles, Friend, neighbours, etc.
- Status ascribed by Social functions, or occupation/courtesy title
  - Student, teacher, market trader, athletes, cyclist, Professor, Dr., Ms, Mrs. Mr. farmer, monk, Athlete, student, etc.

Note: Having an understanding of the culture in context is important and necessary to ascertain character’s sex by their proper name or their status. Additionally, using a gendered common noun or pronoun can help find his/her identity.

Remember!

Characters may also appear through an isolated personal pronoun: I, you, s/he, we, they. But it is not viewed as character;
HOW TO RECORD THE POSITION OF CHARACTERS IN TEXTS?

- Positioning or situating characters in texts:
  - Number each character and take note of the position in texts - e.g. the section, the lessons within the section, or exercises within the lessons, etc.;
  - This will permit to carry out analysis at different scales - the unit of analysis may be the textbook, the section, the course materials, the exercises, etc.
  - Characters must be numbered in order of appearances, from first to the last page, thus the number become higher as the data collection progresses
  - Take note of character’s characteristics and relationships - i.e. their position in the gendered system of the fictional world indicated by hierarchy of appearance or activities:
  - Example: appearance of characters on the cover page - title, the title of the lesson, at the beginning of lessons, sentences (sometimes instead of the character the person’s sex maybe indicated by the pronoun used), in public or private sphere (indicates differential social status), who is initiating a dialogue? Are they taking turns?
TYPES OF CHARACTERS

Representation of Characters in texts

Individual - refer to single character
- Gendered
  - Girl
  - Boy
  - Woman
  - Man
  - Other gender identities
  - Age unspecified
- Ungendered or sex unspecified - generic term or designated by a unisex first name

Group - refer to several characters
- Gendered
  - Girls
  - Boys
  - Women
  - Men
  - Other gender identities
- Ungendered or sex unspecified - determined through use of plural or generic terms
Pedagogical functions & social roles of characters: specific to texts

Characters by Pedagogical Functions and Social Roles

Pedagogical Functions
- Ordinary characters: Mostly anonymous, & identified by forename, kinship/or other bonds, or status
- Pilot characters: Distinctive & Recurring characters (mentioned several times) with identity/or social functions,
- Real, famous characters
- Non-fictional famous personalities

Social Roles
- Main characters/actors: The character who performs or possess something
- Extras: Do not perform but take part in the situation
- Identifying characters: Help define the identity of the main character/actor
To record the locus (private or public) of activities- an indicator of character’s social status
CHARACTER’S ATTRIBUTES: AN INDICATOR OF PERSONAL, OCCUPATIONAL & SOCIAL IDENTITY

Physical attributes
Example:
Heights, weights, skin colour, hairstyle

An object
Example: Clothing, could also be personal, domestic, educational or occupational objects (sample of broad groupings, next slide)

Psychological/personal characteristics
Example: Expression of emotions; passive/active complaint— not participating /activing; or active/leading, creative etc;

Attribute: defined as belong to, associated with or used by characters
How to associate attributes with characters? : indicated by possessive adjectives/ or use of verbs that indicate possessions (have, own, possess, etc.)
CHARACTER’S OBJECTS- GROUPED INTO BROAD CATEGORIES:

- Leisure, recreational or sports equipment or item ("outdoor games")
- Food
- Money
- Education related materials such as: Pen, pencil, exercise books, etc.
- Work related objects or Occupational equipment or items
- Others such as: “domestic animals”, “small household objects”, and “individual means of transport”, etc.
### CHARACTER’S RELATIONSHIPS: INDIVIDUAL & GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-existing</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
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If within one text unit there are two or more characters mentioned but they do not interact with one another

**Unilateral**: if it describes the action of one character towards another

**Reciprocal**: when characters do something together

* *** (next slides: example of grouping of different types of interaction into broad categories)

Characters are compared and can relate to character’s:

- Physical characteristics
- Personal qualities
- Skills/abilities
- Gender parity, etc.
### Types of Relationships and Interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction Type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupational interactions</td>
<td>buying and selling; treating patient; etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational interactions</td>
<td>imparting knowledge to students; students doing science experiments together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratification Interactions</td>
<td>giving a present, rewarding someone, congratulating someone, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative interaction</td>
<td>acting together, helping each other etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective interaction</td>
<td>expressing affection, cuddling, petting etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social interaction</td>
<td>Talking, celebrating, inviting, sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent interactions</td>
<td>quarrelling, fighting, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GROUP WORK:

- Populate the data collection instrument:
- Note (if any) the shortcomings
- Provide your feedback on improving the layout, etc. of the formal structure of the tool for collecting data on gender representations.