

RESEARCH CLINIC

General information

Supervisor:	Prof. dr. Judi Mesman & Dr. Lotte van der Pol & Antoinette Kroes (MSc)
Title of clinic:	Representation and stereotypes in school books and learning materials
Number of students:	Max 4
Major (<i>if applicable and approved by the Major Convener</i>):	NA
(Pre)requisites (<i>if applicable</i>):	Because the materials are in Dutch, only Dutch-speaking students can apply.

Research context

We are working with publishers of Dutch educational materials, analyzing their content for representation and stereotypes regarding gender ethnicity. These publishers are committed to using these analyses to reduce implicit messages reinforcing stereotypes and interethnic stereotypes in future editions of these materials. In the past we have analyzed materials for the first grade of secondary school, specifically the learning materials for Dutch and Math lessons (see: reports on [GENDER](#) and [ETHNICITY](#), and [media reports](#) about these studies). This year, we will take on books for language and math for grade 3 of elementary schools (children aged 6-7 years). We have already received a large set of instruction books as well as books used to practice reading ('avi-boekjes') from the publishers involved. In addition, we have the opportunity to study the decision processes around the choice of reading books for particular schools. Do issues of diversity and representation play a role there, and if so how? How are books with diversity themes interpreted by those in charge of selecting books? Can they accurately identify the key messages from these books, and how do they affect their selection decisions?

Students' tasks and activities

LEARNING AIMS

- Understand the main theories and empirical findings regarding gender and ethnic diversity messages in learning materials
- Acquire skills in systematic coding of gender stereotypes and ethnic diversity in learning materials
- Acquire skills in constructing and interpreting survey and interview results about the role of diversity themes in book selections for schools

TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES:

- February:
 - background reading and discussion
 - training in coding gender and ethnic representation and stereotypes
 - Design survey and interview

- March-April
 - coding of the learning materials
 - analyzing survey results
 - conducting and transcribing interviews

- May-June
 - Conclude analyses
 - Write brief report about the results

DELIVERABLES AND ASSESSMENT

Students pass the research clinic if they have:

- Coded the assigned set of books and delivered the coded data as instructed
- Conducted the survey and interviews with book selection professionals according to protocols
- Conducted preliminary analyses of the collected data
- Written a satisfactory brief report about the results

Note that the study will be conducted in a team, and the precise task division will depend on preferences within the team so that some might spend more time on the books and other more time on the survey and interviews for example. Most importantly, the tasks will fit within the 5 EC workload for a research clinic. All tasks are supervised by one or more research team members.