The Stories Told by Dictionaries: Representation of women and men in lexicographic illustrations in Seychelles Creole

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Introduction

A dictionary presents the lexicon of a language. It is an essential reference and learning tool used in schools and libraries (Rasmussen, 2010; Walz, 1990; Willinsky, 1987;), and an authority for people of different age and various social groups (Shulist, Proctor and Oman-Reagan, 2016). Alongside defining the words of the language, a dictionary transmits socio-cultural facts and communicates a certain system of values (Gershuny, 1974; Wiegand, 1983). With its considerable potential in shaping and promoting ideas or attitudes, how free from bias is the dictionary?

This paper sets out to explore representations of women and men in textual examples in *Diksyonner Trileng: Kreol Seselwa, Francais, English* (2017) by C. Gillieaux (further referred to as DTKSFE), the most comprehensive Seychelles Creole (SC) lexicon to date. The purpose of this analysis is to identify patterns of treatment of men and women reflected in dictionary entries, and to determine to what extent these patterns relate to gender stereotypes.

Historically constructed gender stereotypes include typified expectations of appropriate behaviours and attributes of men and women (Mills, 2008; Smith, 1985). In this vein, for example, men are viewed as active, empowered, rational and intellectually endowed, while women are deemed as passive, dependent, emotional, with a focus on physicality. Such patterned attitudes are rooted in pervasive, androcentric society models and result in the marginalization and vulnerability of women (Mercer, 2018; Mills, 2008). However, apart from economic and socio-cultural factors of gender inequality, a significant part in promoting bias is played by linguistic factors (Smith, 1985). The relationship between language and gender has been extensively explored since the 1960-s and took different directions, one of which is the study of gender representations in reference materials, including dictionaries.

Research on sexism in dictionaries mainly focuses on biased representation of women. There has been a claim that women`s experiences are not properly captured and accounted for throughout history because it is 'his story', not 'her story' (Kramarae and Treichler, 1996, p.13). So, alongside research on generic factors of gender representation in lexicographic practice (Graham, 1975; Shulist, Proctor, and Oman-Reagan, 2016; Whitcut, 1983), a number

of studies focus on linguistically promoted bias in particular dictionaries (Gershuny, 1974, 1975, 1977; Fournier and Russell, 1992; Rose, 1979; Tenorio, 2000; White, 1989) or compare manifestations of sexism in various parts of the dictionary entry, such as, definitions versus illustrative examples (Fournier and Russell, 1992). Some papers suggest strategies to avoid biased gender representation in dictionaries (Whitcut, 1983) or computer-based tools and search systems for a more comprehensive analysis of systemic sex-role stereotyping in big databases (Fournier and Russell, 1992).

Gender related dictionary criticism is coupled with actions aimed to improve the gender bias in lexicographic sources. The dictionaries adopt anti-sexist approaches to headwords (changing from generic 'man' to 'human' or 'person' with resulting references like 'salesperson', 'chairperson', 'humankind') and descriptions (dropping the generic 'he' and using the inclusive 'they' or 'he or she') (Luck, 2020; Whitcut, 1983). Initiatives to eliminate sexism in informative materials include prescriptive documents (Non-Sexist Code of Practice for Book Publishing, 1982); periodic revision of dictionaries, and related projects addressing particular dictionary issues, such as the 2019 petition by Maria Beatrice Giovanardi to Oxford English Dictionaries to change the Oxford Dictionary's sexist definition of 'woman' and to remove sexist examples and offensive or discriminating definitions of women (Wood, 2019); or the creation of alternative dictionaries which promote women`s experiences and perspective (Kramarae and Treichler, 1996).

Sexist bias in dictionaries is more often found in the textual examples traditionally used to illustrate the lexical items rather than in the definitions (Fournier and Russell, 1992). Illustrations serve to show how the word is used: they demonstrate the word`s grammatical features, syntactic combinability, lexical collocation, stylistic value, etc. (Creamer, 1987; Dolezal, 2000; Drysdale, 1985). However, apart from providing usage patterns, textual examples open 'windows on culture' (Newell, 2000, p.8) and place the lexical item in the social context. Thus, the sentence illustrating the word *milticolor* 'multicolour' in DTKCFE, (1) *Paviyon Sesel i milticolor, rouz, zonn, ver, ble ek blan* 'The Seychelles flag is multicolour, red, yellow, green, blue and white', informs the reader about the design of the Seychelles flag. Another example, illustrating the verb *ekors-e* 'to bark, to peel up', (2) *Bann madanm i ekors kannel avek en pti baton* 'Women peel cinnamon with a small stick', not only mentions the island-specific artifact and occupation, but also shows that the action is habitually performed by women. Such potential of illustrating textual material in lexicographic entries to go beyond linguistic agenda and serve educational purposes has been recognized since the early dictionaries as a powerful ideological tool (Dolezal, 2000; Schreyer, 2000; Vrbinc and Vrbink, 2016), enhancing lexicographers` role in communicating socio-cultural perspectives, including gender models, and putting emphasis on the necessity to avoid re-enforcement of biased attitudes.

As a part of lexicographic philosophy, the concept of the illustrative example (Sinclair, 1984) is implemented differently. One of the approaches is to cite the extracts of already existing texts (popular literature, linguistic corpora) for illustrations. This approach is considered to be natural, as it captures language in use, and thus is more illustrative, supported by Sinclair`s (1984) statement that 'usage cannot be thought up - it can only occur' (Sinclair, 1984, p.4). However, the extent of the authenticity of the quoted material is lessened by the fact that lexicographers have to take a decision as to which extracts to choose as illustrations. Besides, being taken out of their immediate context, the cited examples may lose clarity and coherence. Another approach to lexicographic illustration is to deliberately create or invent examples. Production of contrived sentences based on a linguist`s personal experience is justified and used for certain types of dictionaries as a more practical method, better satisfying the average user`s expectation and capabilities than the literary quotation (Lovatt, 1983). In both cases, illustrative examples play a crucial role, especially in multilingual dictionaries, mediating both language and social parameters of the word 'for a foreign audience removed from the cultural and linguistic environment of which it [the language] was an integral part' (Ibid, p. 216).

The problem of sexism in language is a cross-cultural phenomenon (Blaubergs, 1980). However, while there are a number of studies focusing on lexicographic sexism in English dictionaries (Fournier and Russell, 1992; Gershuny, 1974, 1975, 1977; Graham, 1975; Shulist, Proctor, and Oman-Reagan, 2016; Tenorio, 2000; Whitcut, 1983; Rose, 1979; White, 1989) or dictionaries of other well-established languages (Hampares, 1976), there are no studies looking at gender models constructed in dictionaries of new languages such as SC. Thus, this paper fills the gap and contributes to the systematic research of lexicographic representation of women and men in various languages.

Analysis of gender representation in dictionaries of young languages, such as SC, is especially vital for several reasons. First of all, with reference to the social dimension of language, since SC lexicon is characterized by a greater degree of mobility than a language with a longer history, its dictionaries acquire a greater importance as a reference source for the standard. Linked to this, these dictionaries gain more significance not only in further linguistic developments of SC, but also in socio-cultural impacts enabled through the subsequent language use based on the information provided by the dictionary, including the messages about gender models and attitudes. Given that for a language at the early stages of development, definitions and illustrations of the lexicon are challenged by a limited corpus of language in use, so the provided illustrative material cannot be fully representative, transmitting the experience of a team of dictionary compilers. In this respect, to balance the potential prejudice, more attention should be paid to the textual examples included in the dictionary to avoid any form of linguistically communicated bias, as awareness of asymmetries is an important factor in their elimination.

Furthermore, analysis of gender models presented in the dictionary of SC through the illustrative examples is specific from the linguistic perspective. The point is that, grammatically, SC has a very limited gender system. There is no grammatical gender for nouns or pronouns (Choppy, 2013, p. 57, 58) and verbs or adjectives do not change for gender (Choppy, 2013, p.64, 76); that is, the sex of the referent of a noun phrase is mostly derived contextually. To illustrate, the dictionary example, (3) ***I*** *ti klak* ***li*** *avek en lafors terib…* '**He/she** slapped **him/her** with a terrible force…', does not give any indication of the sex of the action participants referred to by the third-person pronouns *i* and *li*, and the sentence can be accurately interpreted only when you know who the acting people are. However, the sex of the action participants in a sentence becomes transparent with the use of gender-specific nouns, such as *fanm* 'woman', *fiy* 'girl', *zonm* 'man', *garson* 'boy', *manman* 'mother', *papa* 'father', *granmanman* 'grandmother', *granpapa* 'grandfather', *tantin* 'aunt', *tonton* 'uncle', *madanm* 'madam, misses', *msye* 'mister'; *mis* 'miss, female teacher', *ser* 'sir, male teacher', *actor* 'actor', *actris* 'actress', *Zan* 'Jean' (a male name), *Marie* 'Marie' (a female name)*,* etc**.** Given the fact that because of the above morphological specificity of SC, the number of dictionary illustrations with the explicit manifestation of biological gender of the action participants is limited (only 0.5% of SC verbal lexicon registered in DTKSFE (2345 lexemes) is illustrated with gender-specific examples), their value for the analysis of gender representation increases, as such instances present particularly focused or typical gendered associations.

Method and material

DTKSFE presents the lexicon of SC, a young language with only about 200 years of existence and one of the official languages of the Republic of Seychelles (Fleischmann, 2008). This dictionary comprises over half a million words (Skerrett, 2018, p.5), and is the most comprehensive collection of SC to date. Each dictionary entry has a SC headword, definition in French, translation into English, and a number of illustrative examples in SC. The examples for DTKSFE were made up by a team of educated native speakers with a linguistic background. These examples are an essential continuation of the language description because, apart from exemplifying the meaning of SC words in terms of linguistic parameters, they present cultural and historical information about contemporary Seychellois society, including perspectives on women and men.

The analysis in this paper was carried out with DTKSFE textual examples illustrating the definitions of SC verbs. As was mentioned above, the sample included sentences presenting situations with human participants whose sex is explicitly indicated as male or female by gender-specific nouns (see examples 4-52 below). The sample comprised 172 sentences illustrating the use of 120 verb lexemes (0.5% of the verb lexicon presented in DTKSFE). The number of illustrating sentences is bigger than the number of illustrated lexemes as some

lexemes were exemplified with more than one sentence. It should be noted that when the defined SC lexemes are mentioned in the paper, the English translation is quoted as it is provided in the analysed dictionary (e.g. *demont-e* 'to beat up, to flog'). The illustrating textual examples in SC were translated into English by SC native speakers. Based on the thematic affiliation of actions expressed by the verbs in the sample, these sentences were organized into topical rubrics (see Table 1). Furthermore, the action doers in each rubric were streamed into female and male groups according to the gender-specific nouns they were represented by, and their numbers were calculated (see Table 1). Action or quality domains, where agents were predominantly male or female, were summarized in Table 2. Next, the findings were checked against the linguistic stereotypes of men and women described in previous research (Gershuny, 1974; Smith, 1985; Mills, 2008). Based on the received findings, some observations were made regarding the action-gender associations in DTKSFE, as part of the gender model this dictionary communicates.

Findings and discussion

In course of analysis, sampled examples were organized into nine topical rubrics represented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Distribution of gender-specific agents over topical domains in the sample

Action/quality domain	Male AGENT	Female AGENT
Violence	17 (65%)	9 (35%)
Nagging	-	8 (100%)
Seduction	4 (4%)	6 (6%)
Physicality	1 (3%)	28 (97%)
Verbosity and gossiping	-	18 (100%)
Negative behaviour	22 (63%)	13 (37%)
Weakness	-	10 (100%)
Power	10 (55%)	8 (45%)
Domesticity	-	18 (100%)
Total	54 (31%)	118 (69%)
	172	

The basis on which particular examples were brought together in one rubric is the topical relatedness of actions or states expressed by their verbs through certain socio-cultural parameters. For instance, swearing, drug taking or excessive alcohol drinking are considered in the rubric of negative behaviour, as such actions are disapproved of and viewed negatively in the society. It should be noted that the above topical rubrics were organized for illustrative purposes in this specific paper and their boundaries are not strictly fixed. Similarly, the

membership of examples in each group is quite flexible. The benefit of the suggested grouping of the examples based on their verbs is that while single sentences may not be informative of certain gendered attitudes, considering a number of related examples together reveals a pattern and contributes to the analysis of representation of women and men in DTKSFE.

Violence

The sample included a number of examples which illustrate definitions of verbs and phrases referring to the act of using physical force to hurt another person: *bat-e/ donn en bate* 'to beat'; *brousay-e* 'to whip'; *demont-e* 'to beat up, to flog'; *frap-e* 'to hit, to strike'; *fwet-e* 'to whip'; *klak-e/donn en klak* 'to slap, to smack'; *koriz-e* 'to give a beating'; *sing-le* 'to flog with a strap'; *tap-e* 'to hit, to strike'; *rousay-e* 'to give smb a trashing'; *rouste* 'to give smb a trashing'; *zifl-e/donne-en en zif* 'to slap, to smack', etc. Analysis of agents in this rubric showed that in 65% of sampled examples with verbs of physical violence the doer is a male (see Table 1): (4) *Sa **zonm** i brutal, **i bat** son madanm devan son zanfan* 'This **man** is brutal, he **beats** his wife in front of his children'. (5) *Taler ou **papa** i **a demont** ou akoz ou`n dezobei* 'Later your **father** would **beat** you up because you did not obey'. (6) *Sa **sonm** ti menasan avek mwan, I ti sorti en gran kouto* 'This **man** threatened me and took out a big knife'. In 35% of examples with verbs of physical violence the doer is a female: (7) *Son **manman ti single** li, I ti frap li avek en sang* 'His/her **mother flogged** him/her, she **hit** him/her with a belt'. (8) *Mon **manman ti fwet** mwan e zanmen mon pou oubliy sa, zot!* 'My **mother whipped** me and I will never forget it'. Further analysis of other action participants in this rubric showed that in all examples with verbs of physical violence where the doer is female, the person affected by the action is her child (examples (7,8)). In examples with verbs of physical violence where the doer is male, in 32% the recipient of the action is his child (5); in 45% it is his woman (4) and in 23% it is another person (6).

Based on the above findings, the dictionary constructs a perspective where both men and women are associated with violence. However, men are associated with violence more often than women (65% vs 35% of examples). Besides, while the violence which women are associated with is usually physical punishment of their children, men are associated with physical violence towards children and adults, in the family and outside it.

Nagging

Some sentences in the sample illustrate the use of verbs expressing insulting, reprimanding, grumbling or some other manifestations of nagging: *anponny-en* 'to confront, to insult'; *dray* 'to ill-treat, to treat severely'; *gronny-en* 'to growl, to groan, to grumble'; *remontrans-e* 'to reprimand'; *repran* 'to reprimand, to scold'; *reprimann-ande* 'to rebuke; *tyraniz-e* 'to tyrannise, to bully; to rebuke', etc. In all illustrating examples for the actions related to nagging the agent

of the action is a female who is acting either towards her husband: (9) *Tou le zour, sa msye I ganny* **anponnuen** *avek son* **madanm** 'Every day this man is **insulted by his wife'**; or student: (10) **Mis** *in remontrans* **zot** '**Miss** (female teacher) reprimanded **them'** (see Table 1).

Thus, the dictionary presents an association between a woman and nagging, which applies to various social domains.

Seduction

Some sentences in the sample illustrate verbs referring to attempted or actual drawing of someone into sexual activities: *abiz-e* 'to abuse sexually'; *alim-en* 'to seduce'; *anpandan* 'to flirt'; *anpandiye* 'to flirt'; *debos-e* 'to lure, to corrupt', *drag-e* 'to seduce'; *sedwir* 'to charm', etc. Gender distribution of agents in sentences of this rubric is asymmetrical in terms of quantity and also in terms of connoted sub-meaning. Thus, female doer is found in 60% of illustrations to the verbs in this group and male agents are identified in 40% (see Table 1). Furthermore, female agents are found in sentences which view the situation as flirting or cheating: (11) *Sa* **fiy** *I toultan* **anpandiye** *avek bann garson* 'This **girl** is always **flirting** with boys.' (12) *Sa* **fanm ti sedwir** *li e zot ti marye* 'This **woman charmed** him and they got married'. (13) *Sa* **fanm** *pe* **anpandan** *avek mari son kamarad* 'This **woman** is **flirting** with her friend`s husband'. The male doer is found in illustrations of situations that imply abuse: (14) *Sa* **zonm ti abiz** *sa pov piti* 'This **man abused** this poor child'. (15) *Sa* **zonm pe debos** *bann zenn fiy* 'This **man is corrupting** young girls'. (16) *Sa* **zonm ti pe alim** *Marina* 'This **man was seducing** Marina'.

That is, from textual examples in the dictionary, a woman is a more typical source of seduction than a man. Besides, the dictionary examples present a woman as an initiator, a provoker of the sexual response from a man, while a man is represented as an active or even aggressive instigator of sexual actions.

Verbosity and gossiping

The sample included a group of sentences illustrating verbs which refer to the act of speaking or gossiping: *brokarde-e* 'to gibe at, to mock; *dyanm-en* 'to badmouth, to malign'; *firt-e* 'to gossip'; *titway-e* 'to chat'; *kakay-e* 'to chatter'; *kalomnyen* 'to slander'; *kankan* 'to gossip'; *kontor-e* 'to cook up'; *malparl-e* 'to malign, to spread scandal about', etc. In 100% of sampled examples in this rubric, the agent of the verb of talking or talking ill is female (see Table 1): (17) *Sa* **fanm** *I kontan* **kankan**, *I kontan* **manparl** *dimoun* 'This **woman** likes **to gossip**, she likes **to malign** other people'. (18) *Sa* **madanm** *pe dyanm son travayer* 'This **woman maligns** her workmen'. (19) *Sa* **bann fanm** *pe* **titwaye** *larivyer* 'These **women are chatting** by the river'. Interestingly, though not in the sample, one instance of associating a male person with

gossiping was in the sentence illustrating the adjective *palab* 'gossipy', talkative: (20) *Sa zonm I parey en fanm palab, I en kankannyer* 'This man is like a gossipy woman, he is a gossiper'. Notably, in this sentence a man is presented through the comparison with a woman as a stereotypical gossiping model.

So, the sampled dictionary material presents an association between women and excessive talking or gossiping.

Negative behaviour

A number of examples in the sample contain verbs denoting actions which are either: a) detrimental to one`s physical or mental health: *bwar* 'drink (alchohol)'; *dope* 'to take drugs'; *drog-e* 'to take drugs'; *fim-en* 'to smoke'; *rangoule* 'to gorge oneself'; *zwe* 'to play, to gamble, to stake'; or b) harmful or undesirable for other people in the society: *denis-e* 'to sponge on smb.'; *dilapid-e* 'to waste'; *koken* 'to steal'; *trennaye* 'dawdle'; *zour-e* 'to swear, to curse', etc. The gender analysis of doers in this rubric showed that male-specific nouns are used to illustrate the verbs of negative behaviour in 63% (see Table 1): (21) *Sa **zonm** I **zoure** sak fwa I sou; I perdi control e I dir bann vilen parol* 'This **man swears** every time when he is drunk; he loses control and uses bad words'. (22) *Sa **zonm** I en gran soular, I **bwar** tou lazournen* 'This **man** is a big drunkard, he **drinks** every day'. (23) *Sa **zonm in dope** depi en zenn az* 'This **man has been on drugs** since young age'. (24) *Sa **zonm** pe **rangoule** tou lazournen, I tro voras* 'This **man gorges** himself every day, he is voracious'. (25) *Sa **zonm ti zwe** dan kazino e in ganny en res* 'This **man played in the casino** and won the pot'. (26) *Sa **zonm ti koken** kolye sa madanm. I ti aras li lo son likou* 'This **man stole** this woman`s necklace. He pulled it from her neck.' Female-specific nouns are used in 37% of the sample (see Table 1): (27) *En soulez, sa **fanm**! I **bwar** tro bokou* 'This **woman** is a drunkard! She **drinks** very much. (28) ***Pamela** I **manz** tro bokou, I en golyat*! '**Pamela eats** a lot, she is a glutton'.

The above dictionary illustrations demonstrate that the negative behaviour patterns apply to both men and women. However, men appear to be more prone to detrimental or antisocial activities than women, as they feature in a larger number of examples (63% vs 37%), and also are shown as doers in a wider range of negative behaviour patterns.

Physicality

A number of sentences in the sample describe actions related to body movements, physiological functions, appearance or effort to keep good looks: *defil-e* 'to parade in a fashion show'; *deroul-e* 'to sway one`s hips'; *devis-e* 'to sway one`s hips'; *fard-e* 'to make-up one`s face, to put one`s make-up on'; *makiy-e* 'to make up'; *ponponn-en* 'to doll oneself up'; *ronfle* 'to snore';

rouzi 'to redden, to flush', etc. In this subgroup, the doer in all sentences but one is expressed by female-specific nouns (see Table 1): (29) *Sa **madanm pe deroul** son deryer* 'This **woman sways her hips**'. (30) *Sa **fanm** pe pas son letan **ponponn** li* 'This **woman** spends time **dolling herself up**'. (31) *Bokou **zenn fiy** I kontan **deboukle zot seve frize*** 'Many **young girls** want to **straigten their curly hair**'. (32) *Sa **fiy ti rouzi** kan sa garson ti fer li en konpliman* 'The **girl flushed** when the boy gave her a compliment'. (33) ***Bann** zoli **fiy** ti **defile** devan nou* 'Beautiful **girls cat-walked** in front of us'. (34) *I konmans annan bokou estetisyen isi Sesel akoz **bann madanm** i oule anmelyor zot labote* 'There appear many beauty specialists in Seychelles because the **women want to improve their looks**'. A male doer was found in a sentence illustrating a physiological feature: (35) *Sa **msye pe ronfle** pandan lannwit, son madanm ti al dormi dan en lot lasanm* 'This **man snores** during the night and his wife went to sleep to another room'.

Thus, the dictionary emphasizes the women`s preoccupation with their appearance, supported by a socially sustained high value attached to women`s attractiveness.

Domesticity

A number of sentences in the sample illustrate verbs denoting household chores: *acomod-e* 'to repair, to mend'; *antreteni-r* 'to maintain, to look after'; *derasin-e* 'to uproot, to root out'; *dres-e* 'to iron'; *ekors-e* 'to peel, to bark; *ravodri* 'to darn, to mend'; *kwi* 'cook'; *fer menaz* 'do housework'; *tricot-e* 'to knit', etc. The doer in all sentences of this sample subgroup is female (see Table 1): (36) ***Manman ti kwi** en bon ratatouy avek en sa legim* '**Mother cooked** a delicious ratatouille with vegetables'. (37) *Mon **granmanman** ti kontan **trikote** tou lazournen* 'My **grandmother** liked **to knit** every day'. (38) *Sa **madanm i derasin** tou kerneli ki`n pous dan son plantasyon* 'This **woman pulled up all the weed** which had grown in her plantation'. (39) ***Mari ti pe dres** son lenz lo en latab drese* '**Mary ironed** her clothes on the ironing board'.

The illustrative material in the sample establishes the perspective on women as the main doers of housework.

Power

One more topical subgroup of sampled sentences deals with various manifestations of power, including social prominence, inter-personal dominance, achievement, advantageous possessions or skills, and so on: *apwent-e* 'appoint'; *enpoz-e* 'to impose'; *ekri-r* 'to write'; *elekt-e* 'to elect'; *enstal-e* 'to fix, to fit'; *manipil-e* 'manipulate'; *mannev-re* 'to manipulate', etc. Verbs in these sentences have both female (44%) and male (56%) doers (see Table 1): (40) ***Madanm X** ti ganny **elekte** koman Prezidan'* **Madam** X was **elected** President'. (41) *Sa **zonm ti pe mannev** mwan…*'This **man manipulated** me…'. (42) *Sa **zonm in arrive**, get son lakaz!* 'This **man has**

succeeded, look at his house'. (43) *Sa **zonm pe enpoz** son teritwar lo lezot* 'This **man imposes** his territory (opinion) on others'. (44) ***Lise Morel in ekri** en zoli roman* '**Lise Morel has written** a beautiful novel'. (45) ***Reuben i ekri** byen; son bann teks I parey lanmizik* '**Reuben writes** very well; his texts are like music'. (46) *Sa **zonm pe travay** dan domen imobilye* 'This **man is working** in the domain of property'.

The findings demonstrate that the dictionary reflects a considerable social prominence of women, illustrating their achievement in administrative, educational and cultural domains. However, men are viewed as subjects of power more often (56% vs 44%). Besides, apart from social prominence (42, 45, 46), their superiority extends to inter-personal relations (41, 43).

Weakness

A number of sampled sentences were organized in a group based on their reference to some deficiencies or abnormalities, whereby the doers are presented as faulty, inadequate or vulnerable: *alisinen* 'to hallucinate'; *divag-e* 'to be delirious'; *fote* 'to sin, to go astray'; *sabot-e* 'to bungle (carry out (a task) clumsily or incompetently); *sed-e* 'to give in'; *soufer* 'to suffer'; *tiktik-e* 'to hesitate'; *soutir-e* 'to condole bad conduct, to tolerate, to put up with'; *toler-e* 'to tolerate'. The doers in such sentences are 100% female (see Table 1): (47) *Sa pti **fiy pe soufer** avek en konpleks lenferyorite* 'This **small girl suffers** from an inferiority complex'. (48) *Sa **fiy in fote** e son paran in met li deor* 'This **girl has gone astray** and her parents have thrown her out'. (49) *Sa **madanm** i tro feb, i toultan **sede** devan kapris son piti* 'This **woman** is very weak, she always **gives in** to her small one`s whims'. (50) *Sa **madanm** kan antre dan en magazen i **tiktike** avan i aste keksoz* 'This **woman**, when (she) enters the shop, **hesitates** before she buys things.' (51) *Sa **madanm pe alisinen**; i vwar son lisyen transformen e vin en dragon* 'This **woman is hallucinating**; she sees her dogs transforming into dragons.' (52) *Sa **fiy pe sabot** son travay, i pa profesyonnel* 'This **girl makes a mess of her work**, she is not professional'.

The sentences in this subgroup present the woman as lacking in various ways, vulnerable, hesitant and prone to illness. Overall, they construct the image of weakness and insecurity associated with women.

Table 2 below summarizes action domains where male or female agents prevail.

Table 2: Gender-specific action domains in the sample

Male doer	Female doer
Violence	Nagging
Negative behaviour	Seduction
Power	Physicality
	Verbosity and gossiping
	Weakness
	Domesticity

A comparison of the links between gender and specific action in DTKSFE (Table 2) with previously accounted linguistic stereotyping of men and women (Gershuny, 1974; Smith, 1985; Mills, 2008) demonstrates a considerable degree of overlap. Observed in this study are predominant associations between women and nagging, seduction, physicality, verbosity or gossiping; domesticity and weakness relate to such 'traditional markers of femininity' as 'caring, concern for appearances, emotional excess, incompetence in relation to non-domestic tasks' (Mills, 2008, p.134) or textual explications of femininity, including 'defective', 'domestic', 'emotional', 'fashionable', 'incompetence', 'passivity', 'pretty', 'talkative' (Gershuny, 1974, p.165). The association of men with actions in the domain of violence, negative behaviour and power, established in DTKSFE, parallels previously described defining features of masculinity, including aggression, swearing, or superiority (Mills, 2008, p.135; Gershuny, 1974, p.165). Thus, the roles of men and women in the DTKSFE textual examples illustrating verbs are presented with a considerable degree of stereotypical gender treatment.

Conclusion

Dictionaries present a picture of the world at a given moment and from a certain ethical perspective, instilling contemporary values and attitudes, and capturing them for further generations of users. They contribute to our understanding of what is normal, including social roles, behavior and treatment of men and women. As fact-based sources reflecting reality, dictionaries inevitably reflect gendered life patterns, and in turn maintain cultural prejudice and stereotypes. Thus, systemic reference in illustrative examples to men or women for specific actions maintains strong stereotypical associations and programmes further gendered categorizations. When, for instance, women are repeatedly mentioned with reference to their physicality and provoking sexuality, their treatment as decorative objects rather than active participants of constructive social processes is implicitly justified and foregrounded. Furthermore, if most gender-specific examples illustrating verbs of speaking feature female

doers, the association of women and excessive talking is promoted. In the same way, systemic exemplification with male doers of actions referring to violence and negative behaviour, such as swearing, drinking, drug taking or gambling, sends a message of men as perpetuators of social evils and envisages respective expectations and attitudes.

Dictionaries of a young language have increased significance as newly emerging sources of reference for standards, both linguistically and socio-culturally. However, as their compilation may be restricted by a lack of captured examples of natural language use, the illustrative material they present can be limited to the compilers` experience and can appear to be biased. Thus, the analysis of representation of women and men in examples illustrating verbs in DTKSFE has revealed a certain degree of stereotypical gender treatment. So, women are referred in illustrations of excessive talking and gossiping, insulting, reprimanding, grumbling or nagging. They are mentioned to illustrate verbs related to preoccupation with appearance, physical attractiveness and provoking sexuality. Examples in DTKSFE also present women as the main doers of housework, lacking in various ways, as vulnerable, hesitant and prone to illness. Men are referred to in more examples dealing with violence and abuse, they are mentioned more often than women to illustrate detrimental or dangerous behavior. Men are predominantly the doers in sentences illustrating verbs related to social success and power and not referred to in illustrations of actions related to housework, talking or nagging. Overall, alongside capturing a considerable social prominence of women, acknowledging their achievement in administrative, educational and cultural domains, DTKSFE keeps most of the traditionally held stereotypical attitudes to women. Similarly, men are presented within the traditional masculinity pattern.

With the globally observed changes in social roles of men and women (Besnier, 2007), and contemporary revision of gender models (Cameron, 2011), linguistic coding and communication of gender should be balanced accordingly. In order to support progressive change, referential materials such as dictionaries, with a wide scope of application and a great potential for influence, should take the lead in not only cutting down on describing and re-enforcing stereotypes through language use, but also in promoting new conceptualization patterns for men and women. Linked to this, reviewing textual examples in DTKSFE towards a more up-to date gender representation would become a useful component of this dictionary`s periodic examination and revision. As SC is developing, seeing more and more textual production in all socio-cultural domains, including the creative sphere, quotations from the language corpora of fiction, mass-media texts or documents, etc. should be used for dictionary illustrations alongside or instead of invented example. Such an approach would not only enable a more up-to-date story about contemporary Seychellois women and men, their characters, achievements and contributions to society, but would also promote a more progressive and accommodating gender role modelling.

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