

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the introduction of the study. It covers background of study, research questions, objectives of study, significances of study and definitions of key terms.

A. Background of Study

The notion of gender equality has been devoted since decades ago. Especially in Indonesia, the notion of gender equality mostly known as women emancipation was spearheaded by R.A. Kartini who wrote her book entitled “*Habis Gelap Terbitlah Terang*”. R.A. Kartini fought for the position of Indonesian women so that it could be improved and equal to men’s in Indonesian society through good education and teaching. By giving these facilities, the women are expected to get good educational background so that they can live their life well in the society. Furthermore, women should also have the same right to men not only in education, but also in occupation, organization, government, and so forth.

In Qur’an, Allah says in verse 58 to 59 of an-Nahl:

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ {58} يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ أَيُمْسِكُهُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ ۗ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ {59}

Translation: *When if one of them receiveth tidings of the birth of a female, his face remaineth darkened, and he is wroth inwardly. {58} He hideth himself from the folk because of the evil of that whereof he hath had tidings, (asking himself): Shall he keep it in contempt, or bury it beneath the dust. Verily evil is their judgment. {59}*

This verse emphatically rejects view that distinguishes men and women, especially in terms of humanity. Furthermore, those verses also explain that male and female were created by Allah with the same degree, perfect shape and there is no difference between one individual with other individuals because Allah created humans from one origin.

In addition, the explanation related to gender equity can also be found in Qur'an, verse 13 of al-Hujurat:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ {13}

Translation: *O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allâh is that (believer) who has At- Taqwa (piety). Verily, Allah is all-knowing, Well-Acquainted (with all things). {13}*

Based on this verse, Allah explains that there is no superiority or inferiority between men and women. In the Qur'an, it is explained that the most superior and honorable person in the world is one who is pious and believes in God. This verse gives us a portrait of equality between men and women in terms of worship (spiritual dimension) as well as in social activities (career affairs). It indicates that there is no dominance between male and female. However, the awareness of gender equality in the world still becomes hot topic to be discussed.

Numerous studies have been conducted to rectify gender imbalance. Lakoff (1973) revealed that women were more likely to be in lower-status position rather than men. Women were considered as a marginal and powerless group. They should

avoid the strong expression of their feeling when they speak. In social roles, the women tend to depend on the men. Then, this topic also developed in educational materials. The issue of gender representation in educational materials has been discussed in Western countries around 1970s. There were some researchers who focused their researches in the issue of gender representation in educational materials such as Steffire in 1969, Frasher and Walkter in 1972, Sunderland in 2000, Cromer and Brugeilles in 2009, Hazir and Cristinte in 2013, Noval and Qawar 2015 and Jackie in 2018. Some sexist language patterns and sexist attitudes were found in the result of their researches. It shows that educational materials should be improved to provide gender equality in their contents.

One of educational materials that the teachers usually use to teach their students is a textbook. It contains teaching materials and activities that can be applied in the classroom. Sometimes, it is also equipped with multiple resources such as workbooks, CDs, DVDs, videos, and so forth that can boost both the teachers' and students' performance in teaching and learning process. Therefore, the existence of textbook becomes very important in teaching and learning process.

Richards (2001) states that a textbook provides an effective language model and input. Since a textbook contains various texts, it will give the students opportunity to study about the generic structure of the texts, the function of the texts, the language features of the text, etc. Thus, it makes a textbook can be one of resources to get linguistic input. In addition, the existence of a textbook also makes the teachers easier to teach their students. Since it contains material arrangement, it makes the teacher easier to prepare their class before teaching their students. The

teachers will have a guidance to prepare the class by using a textbook. As a textbook has a big role in teaching and learning process, it becomes very important as the teachers to select the appropriate textbooks for their class. Hence, study about textbooks becomes important to get the representative of an ideal textbook.

A good textbook covers a good content of the book with its purpose and the effectiveness of materials (Tomlinson, 2003). Thus, to analyze the textbook, two stages must be considered by the analysts. The first one is assessing the content of the book about its purpose. The second one is assessing the effectiveness of the materials. In recent times, the 2000s, many studies analyzed the gender matters in the content of the textbooks. Sunderland, et al. (2001) conducted a study analyzing a set of lessons involving gendered texts in a textbook. The results of the study show that the teacher's talk cannot be predicted from the textbook text itself as 'traditional' texts might be being endorsed and 'progressive' texts undermined (Sunderland, et al., 2001). Furthermore, Balfour (2003) conducted a study focusing on female and male pupils' responses to text dealing with gender relations. The study indicates that teacher's talk around gendered texts contributes to raising students' awareness of gender representation.

The success of the western countries in instilling the equal gender representations in school textbooks is not followed by Asian countries. Some studies scrutinizing gender matters in language textbooks in this region indicate similar results where textbooks perpetuate gender imbalances. The context of this region covers the studies in Singapore, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Malaysia. In Singapore, Gupta and Lee (1990) conducted a research focusing on gender

representation in English language textbooks. The results show that there were significant gender imbalances in the female-male ratio and in the amount of speech given to characters and in role-presentation. Then, Lie (2001) did research to 42 textbooks used in Indonesia. The results of the study denoted that there were stark gender imbalances in terms of frequency of male and female characters in the reading texts. In addition, McGrath (2004) also conducted research related to gender matters. The study pointed similar results in which the males significantly outnumbered the females. In 2012, Yasin, et al. (2012) conducted a research highlighting issues related to gender, inclusiveness and equity in Malaysian school textbooks. The results also showed that gender imbalance still occurred in these textbooks. Their analysis revealed that the domain relegated to female participants is still private sphere while male participants are predominantly represented in the public sphere.

Since textbooks have important role in teaching and learning process, the existence of gender imbalances should be avoided in Indonesian textbooks, especially in English language teaching (henceforth ELT) textbooks. This is because the content of ELT textbooks represents cultural and social values that one of them is about gender. The students' perceptions about gender can be built from the way they understand and interpret the images and information about gender in the textbooks. Davies, et al. (2008) explained it is very important that the textbook could reflect balanced images and information about male and females and support broad choices and many roles for both sexes because the students are influenced by attitudes and values around them, including the values of the textbook which they

learn in school. Consequently, the content of the textbook should be analyzed before the textbook is used as one of resources in teaching and learning process at schools.

Departing from this point, it is very important to study gender construction in ELT textbooks, especially at Junior High School level. The Junior High School level was chosen since English is considered as a compulsory subject for the first time in this level. Furthermore, ELT Textbooks for ninth grade was chosen to be investigated since in this level students have felt that they have been adolescent so it is very important to introduce them about the gender equality. The ELT textbook published by Indonesian ministry of education and culture was chosen as this ELT textbook is mostly used in Junior High School level in Indonesia. Furthermore, it also implements curriculum 2013 which becomes the newest curriculum applied in Indonesia.

B. Research Questions

According to the background of study stated above, this study is aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. How is gender construction in visual images of the ninth grade ELT textbook of Junior High School published by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture?
2. How is the representation of gender biasness and stereotyping in the visual images of the ninth grade ELT textbook of Junior High School published by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture?

C. Objectives of Study

Based on the research questions, the objectives of the study are concluded as follows:

1. To find out the gender construction in visual images found in the ninth grade ELT textbook of junior high school published by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture.
2. To explain the representation of gender biasness and stereotyping in the visual images of the ninth grade ELT textbook of Junior High School published by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture.

D. Significances of Study

This study is expected to be able to give some contributions to the education field, especially in English education at least for two aspects: theoretically and practically in relation to gender matters in ELT textbooks.

Theoretically, this study can give contributions to the textbook authors, English teachers, students and other researchers. For the textbook authors, hopefully, the result of the study can be consideration so that they can write the better textbook in the future regarding the realization of gender equality in ELT textbooks. For English teachers, the results of this study are expected to be used as sources and information related to gender equality so that the teachers can give additional comprehension related to the importance of gender equality in education field, especially in English language teaching. Further, for English students, the results of this study hopefully can be used as sources and information regarding how to respect one another related to gender matters from those textbooks. The last

but not least, the result of this study can be used as sources and additional information for other researchers regarding gender equality theory in the ELT textbooks.

Practically, the results of this study can help the teachers choose and use the good English textbooks for delivering gender equality in teaching English for their junior high school students. Moreover, the results of this study are expected to give the students adequate information about gender construction in English textbooks that can increase their understanding in respecting one another in the class. Then, for the other researchers, the results of this study can be a reference to conduct other researches in the future, especially researches related to the gender matters.

E. Definition of Key Terms

Some key terms of the study are clarified to avoid misconception and to facilitate understanding.

1. Gender Construction

According to Lindsey (2015), the social construction of gender stipulates that gender roles are an achieved status in a social environment, which implicitly and explicitly categorize people and therefore motivate social behaviors. In this study, it focuses on how gender is constructed by analyzing visual images in the textbooks that represent the gender stereotypes based on the textual analysis for analyzing gender representation proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) adopted by Painter and Martin (2010) and Van Leeuwen (2008).

2. Visual Images

Visual images are images that can be seen visually. These words come from the head noun 'image'. An image (from Latin: imago) is an artefact that depicts or records visual perception, for example a two-dimensional picture, that has a similar appearance to some subject usually a physical object or a person, thus providing a depiction of it (Niranjan and Ahmed, 2014). Here, visual images are all of images which are in the textbooks representing gender matters.

3. ELT Textbook

Textbook is a lesson book teachers and students have, and it is followed systematically as the basis of language course (Ur, 1996). In this study, ELT textbook is a book used to teach English subject at junior high school level in Indonesia, especially for the ninth grade students. This book is published by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture.