CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter presents the background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, and conceptual framework.

A. Background

Teaching materials play a significant role in the development of language for both teachers and learners. A second language learner (L2) may take some benefits from teaching materials to get more exposure for developing his language competence (Ajoke, 2017). Similarly, L2 teachers are facilitated to help L2 learners find their resources for learning. Thus, teaching materials are beneficial for both L2 learners and L2 teachers (Tursunovich, 2022).

Teaching materials, including materials for teaching English, should be seen by learners as relevant and useful in real-life situations (Tomlinson, 2011, p.11). It is essential to select relevant teaching materials and integrate them into real-life tasks to motivate them in language learning and teaching activities. Using materials that are relevant to real life in learning efficiently engages learners, arouses their attention, and introduces them to the authentic language they will encounter in the real world (Al Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014). A textbook is one of the teaching materials that is widely used in the classroom. Hence, textbooks arise as a crucial resource for achieving this goal.

As a result, selecting the appropriate textbook is essential. However, when selecting the textbook, it is important to analyze the contents (Sani, 2022). Based on the interview with some Indonesian teachers, some teachers tend not to analyze the textbook before using it. They only rely on what the school provides. The lack of knowledge in the textbook analysis is another reason why they did not analyze the textbook. The aspects that need to be analyzed are instructional materials, illustrations, exercises, and more importantly social or cultural aspects such as the concept of gender.

Scholars have extensively studied the representation of gender in English language teaching materials, as textbooks significantly influence students' perspectives, attitudes, and understandings of gender roles and stereotypes within society (Rong et al., 2021). Several studies have explored how gender is portrayed in textbooks, with a particular focus on the possibility for gender bias and stereotyping. Orfan (2020) discovered that Afghanistan's high school English textbooks promote gender inequality, with women underrepresented whereas men were overrepresented in text & illustrations. One study found that males were often represented as dominating language strategies and occupying more public areas, while females were portrayed as more passive and confined to private spaces (Muzdalifah et al., 2021). Although gender bias and stereotypes has decreased in recent times, it remains present in some textbooks.

Gender inequality still exists in Indonesia, for example, in the world of work. Some women do not get the right to work. Research conducted by Larasati (2021) found that women rarely gain a place as leaders. In addition, to the admission of female workers, corporations put many terms, such as looking attractive, not married, having to remain in dormitories, and so on. Women have a harder time getting a job than men. In 2014-2018, the men's employment in the workforce was higher than the women's participation level (Farida & Wardana, 2020). Thus, gender inequality persists in Indonesia.

Schools play a vital role in shaping their views on gender since they are the ones who are responsible for their education. The concept of gender equality should be taught and introduced to students in schools. Schools could use textbooks as an agent to portray this concept. Textbooks play a vital role in shaping students' worldviews about the female and male genders in society (Kobia, 2009). This action is needed so there are no issues such as gender bias and gender stereotypes found in textbooks.

The visual element in EFL textbooks has received attention and has been found to contribute to gender bias and stereotypes (Tajeddin & Janebi Enayat, 2010). Images have been proven to communicate in ways that oral or written

words cannot (Giaschi, 2000). Therefore, images in textbooks might transfer certain ideologies including the concept of gender.

Nevertheless, several studies have found that gender bias and gender stereotypes in textbooks still exist. Putra and Angelia (2021) analyzed the textbook for tenth-grade students in Indonesia, the result shows that there is male dominance in several categories which indicates gender bias. Another research conducted by Azad (2020) shows that there is a gender bias in which males were portrayed as playing a more active role and females were depicted as the reactive and goal participants in Iranian high school textbooks. Sani (2022) found that there was an imbalance in gender representation in the Indonesian seventh-grade English textbook with a predominance of female figures in illustrations, themes, and language. Furthermore, research conducted by Muzdalifah, Noorman, and Gunawan (2021) showed that there are unfair gender representations in textbook images. This occurred because both genders are represented through stereotypical portrayals. Bachore (2022) also analyzed the Ethiopian English textbook. The result indicated that females were underrepresented in language use, illustrations, and occupational roles mentioned in the text. This research examines a junior high school English textbook used in Indonesia. This research analyzes text and images found in English textbooks. What differentiates the presence research from the previous research is that the content of the textbook is analyzed with several factors including visibility, occupation, games/sport, firstness, and role model. As a result, Yudhistira's textbook "Interactive English 1" which used *Kurikulum Merdeka* has yet to be evaluated.

Following the above, it is critical to investigate gender representation in textbooks. It enables teachers to identify and hinder potential issues such as gender inequality that may be accidentally transferred during instruction. By addressing gender equality in textbooks, we contribute to the larger goal of fostering social gender equality across race, religion, culture, and ethnicity. Hence, the Indonesian junior high school English textbook entitled "Interactive English 1" by Yudhistira was investigated.

B. Research Questions

This research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What was the gender representation in the English textbook entitled "Interactive English 1" by Yudhistira?
2. How equal is gender represented equally in the English textbook entitled "Interactive English 1" by Yudhistira?

C. Research Purposes

This research has two purposes based on the questions above:

1. To find out what are the gender representation in the English textbook entitled "Interactive English 1" by Yudhistira.
2. To find out how equal is gender represented in the English textbook entitled "Interactive English 1" by Yudhistira.

D. Research Significances

This research has two significances, there are:

1. Theoretical Significances

   Given that gender always exists in varied contexts of social circumstances, the findings of this research will be beneficial for society.

2. Practical Significances

   a. Researchers

   Future researchers will gain insight into gender equality issues, which will help them make ideal suggestions for upcoming English textbooks.

   b. EFL Teachers

   English teachers will have a strong understanding and support for gender equality. In the teaching process, teachers will be alert and cautious when delivering content in English textbooks avoiding gender equality.

   c. Textbook Writers

   This study will seek to make English textbook authors more aware of gender representation when writing English textbooks.

E. Conceptual Framework

This research topic is closely tied to the concept of gender. Gender can sometimes be confused with the term "sex". To distinguish both concepts, Pryzgoda and Chrisler (2000) differentiate the terms "gender" and "sex". Sex is considered a term that implies biological aspects that distinguish males and females. On the other hand, gender is commonly understood as behavioral, social, and psychological traits of males and females. As a result, the discussion of gender will focus on the behavioral, social, and psychological traits as opposed to the biological aspects. Shapiro (1981) as cited in Yanagisako and Collier (1990, p.139) also separated the term "sex" and "gender". Sex is the biological differences between males and females, while gender is the social, cultural, and psychological constructs that are based upon these biological differences.

Gender can be described as the indications or identities relied on by males and females as a result of diverse perspectives and acts (Butler, 2011). Gender plays a significant role in numerous aspects of social interactions which are closely tied to human perspective and actions. Hence, discussing gender identity and gender stereotypes is critical for determining the roles played by males and females as well as revealing the overall gender representation portrayal.

Gender representation has undoubtedly altered over the centuries and decades in response to contemporary developments. To be logical, the kind of gender representation should be considered regarding the current trend. As stated by McBride & Parry (2016), current trends such as feminism include advocating women's rights based on gender equality. It arose as a result of the reaction to the inequity of women's and men's rights. In social situations, men's roles are more predominant than women's roles. Consequently, gender representation in the early appearance of feminism was considerably different from prior ages in which feminism did not yet exist. Women appeared to have increasingly prominent responsibilities in social settings, such as work and social position, throughout the feminist era.

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The relationship of language and gender is important, especially in a social context. Language can be used to convey gender identity in a social context. Based on Butler's (1990, p.25) performativity theory, gender is done via repeated performances rather than something inherent. Language plays an important role in this performativity because people utilize language to express and represent their gender identities. In this case, language plays a vital role in shaping the view of gender identity. For instance, there are manly occupational terms that indicate gender bias such as policeman, businessman, fireman, etc. It indicates that gender may be represented in written texts such as textbooks.

A textbook is a structured educational resource that is used to convey knowledge, facilitate learning, and support academic instruction in a particular subject area. It is a basic instrument in the educational process, providing learners with an organized explanation of concepts, theories, and information. Textbooks have become a significant part of the teaching and learning process (Banathy, 1986).

However, textbooks are not a neutral repository of information; they naturally reflect cultural attitudes and norms. The content and choice of language in textbooks contribute to the creation of cultural narratives, including gender representations. According to research, textbooks frequently promote and reinforce gender stereotypes, impacting how students see their own identities and responsibilities in society (Sadker & Sadker, 2010). Examining gender representation in textbooks is critical for understanding the wider consequences on the views of learners and the perpetuation or challenge of gender inequalities within educational settings.

F. Previous Studies

There have been various previous studies regarding this topic. Firstly, research conducted by Yanti & Wirza (2022) investigated gender representation in Indonesian vocational high school EFL English textbooks. The data is analyzed using critical discourse analysis and content analysis. The findings showed that females are underrepresented in the textbook. These results indicated that gender equality persists in the textbook.

Secondly, Fithriani (2022) conducted research that examined gender portrayals in Indonesian and International English language textbooks. This research aimed to compare the differences in gender equality in both textbooks. This research used critical image analysis as a research method. The result showed that the Indonesian EFL textbook did not distribute male-to-female appearances well, whereas the international ELTs portrayed a fairer distribution between the two genders. However, the presence of gender stereotyping in three social areas, namely family, occupation, and leisure activities, is obvious in both ELTs under consideration.

Another research conducted by Aguilar (2021) assessed Mexican EFL textbooks in terms of gender equality. This study examined male and gender representation in three EFL textbooks used in early elementary schools in Mexico. The result showed that the three textbooks do not have a balanced representation of characters where males were significantly more dominant than females in the illustrations. The result also indicated the occurrences of occupational gender stereotypes in the three textbooks.

What differs the present research from the previous study is that this research takes into account 4 aspects of gender bias namely visibility in Illustrations and photos, textual mentions, firstness, and domestic role. The present research also analyzes one of the Indonesian junior high school English textbooks entitled "Interactive English 1" published by Yudhistira which uses the newest curriculum named *Kurikulum Merdeka.* The textbooks have yet to be evaluated.