

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the background of the research, the research questions, the purposes of the research, the significance of the research, the research scope, the conceptual framework of the research, and previous studies.

A. Background

The research intends to investigate gender representation in pictures and texts of an English textbook used for senior high school. Textbooks, as one of the resources in teaching English, commonly show many illustrations or pictures of activities often done by people who usually adjust to their gender according to the learning material attached. It may influence students' minds that certain things are only done by women when, in reality, today, women also work outside as men do, and vice versa. Therefore, the research is important to conduct because analyzing gender representation in textbooks can promote gender equality, identify gender bias and stereotypes in textbooks, and ensure that textbooks do not only benefit one gender. Furthermore, it is essential to teach gender to the students; they will recognize and learn the values of gender in society. It is under what is explained by Tyarakanita et al. (2021) that gender roles in society have been shaped in large part by the way gender is portrayed in textbooks.

Textbooks are a learning resource often used in schools as a reference for teaching and learning activities. A textbook is a lesson book that serves as the foundation for a language course and is systematically used and followed by teachers and students (Ur, 1996, p. 183). Nowadays, textbooks are not only in printed form but also in digital form, commonly called electronic books (e-books).

Besides being a source for teachers teaching English, a textbook is also a medium or source for students to learn what is happening out there. Textbooks

represent everyday life for children, providing a range of identities, passions, perspectives, and life adventures that shape the kids' positions (Kereszty, 2009). He added that textbooks serve as vital intermediaries between the school, parents, and students and represent the reading community. It depicts what it is like to be a youngster in a specific setting, which includes socialization into a gender identity. In addition, textbooks play a crucial role in the gender socialization of youngsters since, during that process, they learn the specific behaviors associated with their genders.

In education, images are used to make students understand more about the text discussed and can also show gender stereotypes in the social system. This is because the images displayed follow gender roles in society. Therefore, gender is related to a place's social and cultural context and is visible in some sectors, such as education (Putra & Angelia, 2021).

Meanwhile, "gender" describes a person's identity as either male, female, or, less frequently, neither (Jackson, 2014, p. 378). Furthermore, it is stated that a person's gender can be determined by various factors, including their social contacts, activities and interests, physical appearance, legal status, personal preferences, and public persona. Also, gender refers to the socially built traits that distinguish men, women, girls, and boys (World Health Organization (WHO), n.d.). This encompasses interactions between people and the standards, behaviors, and roles of being a woman, man, girl, or boy. Gender is a social construct that differs from culture to culture and is subject to change (WHO, n.d.).

Furthermore, the Indonesian moral standards of Pancasila give Indonesian traits to the concept of gender in achieving equality between men and women. The statement aligns with the Pancasila philosophy, as expressed by Tanya et al. (2015, p. 41) in Suryana (2017), who states that addressing Indonesian issues requires a solid moral basis. The concept of divinity serves as the moral cornerstone. The

“ontological creed” of the Indonesian nation, state, and people is contained in the solid religious commandments (Tanya et al., 2015, p. 41, as cited in Suryana, 2017).

A written, spoken, or graphic portrayal of something or someone is called a representation. In a broader sense, this phrase also describes the meanings that texts and images may have and how those meanings develop (Beltran, 2018, p. 97). In the meantime, gender representation illustrates the various responsibilities that men and women assume in society or the social environment (Saraswati, 2016). Gender representation is crucial to research because it may be used to examine how the environment shapes men’s and women’s roles in society. Moreover, most media in education represent gender roles (Wilfitri & Suganda, 2023). They went on to say that various media forms should be looked at and examined in the classroom since they impact how pupils view gender roles.

Indonesia’s Ministry of Education introduced the Merdeka curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka) educational program in 2020 (Zidan & Qamariah, 2023). The *Merdeka* curriculum is an initiative intended to elevate the education standard in Indonesia through a contextual and student-centered approach (Dian et al., 2023, as cited in Sofiana et al., 2024). This program offers a novel way to update curricula in Indonesian schools by emphasizing developing students' skills via a more thorough and creative method (Sofiana et al., 2024). Moreover, the Merdeka curriculum, which builds upon the preceding curriculum and recognizes the value of education while also valuing each student’s uniqueness, gives optimism for the restoration of kids’ learning (Fauzan et al., 2023).

Based on preliminary observations at one of the senior high schools in Bau-Bau, Southeast Sulawesi, the English textbook “*Bahasa Inggris: Work in Progress*” for 10th-grade senior high school students is used by teachers as teaching materials and learning resources. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia published the textbook implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*). The researcher

chose to examine this book because it fits the research criteria and is a source for the teachers who teach English in senior high schools.

Several studies have already researched gender representation in textbooks; the research by Siregar et al. (2021) focused on gender representation in textbooks entitled *When English Rings a Bell*. Another study about gender equality in English textbooks was conducted by Süleyman and Topkaya (2023) using critical discourse analysis. Muzdalifah et al. (2021) have researched gender representation in English textbooks used in state universities in Turkey using a visual grammar analysis. In addition, there is also research about gender representation in an elementary textbook entitled “I Love Jakarta” conducted by Junita et al. (2022). Further, Ahmadabadi and Azad (2023) researched gender representation focused on Iranian high school English textbooks using the Fairclough model as the focus.

In line with the discussion above, the current research focus is similar to the previous studies but has different research objectives. The current study discusses how gender is represented in a textbook using an e-book, Bahasa Inggris “Work in Progress,” for 10th-grade senior high school students, which differs from subsequent analyses.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, the research questions are identified as follows:

1. How is the gender representation in the pictures contained in the “Work in Progress” English student book for 10th-grade students of senior high school?
2. How is gender represented in the texts presented in the “Work in Progress” English student book for 10th-grade senior high school students?
3. Is gender represented equally or biased in the “Work in Progress” English student book for 10th-grade senior high school?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research question, the purposes of the study are identified as follows:

1. To identify gender represented in the pictures contained in the e-book “Work in Progress” an English student book for 10th-grade students of senior high school.
2. To figure out gender represented in the texts presented in the “Work in Progress” English student book for 10th-grade senior high school students.
3. To determine if gender is represented equally or biased in the “Work in Progress” English student book for 10th-grade of senior high school.

D. Research Significances

The research significances are divided into two parts, namely:

1. Theoretically

The research findings can help understand gender representation and gender equality in a textbook, especially in pictures and texts. Furthermore, it is expected that the research findings can be used as a guide for future studies exploring the same topic.

2. Practically

Practically, the study’s results can help teachers recognize English textbooks with a gender bias. In other words, by knowing the gender representation in a textbook, teachers can help students understand more about gender bias and encourage students to scrutinize the content of the books they are using.

E. Research Scope

The research focuses more on gender representation in a student English book entitled “Work in Progress,” especially in the pictures and texts. The book is used for 10th-grade senior high school students. This book comprises six chapters divided into

two semesters (semester 1 and semester 2) and two themes (sports and art). The chapters to be analyzed in this book are all chapters; Chapter 1: Great Athletes, Chapter 2: Sports Events, Chapter 3: Sports and Health, Chapter 4: Healthy Food, Chapter 5: Graffiti, and Chapter 6: Fractured Stories. The researcher decided to look at this phenomenon since textbooks can be used to study how gender roles are distributed in society. This is in line with Susanto's (2021) explanation that language, such as textbooks that depict the identities of male and female gender, can be used to observe representations of gender equality.

F. Conceptual Framework

To enhance Indonesia's educational system, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology unveiled the Merdeka curriculum in 2021 (Azmi et al., 2023). Furthermore, as Priantini et al. (2022, cited in Rizaldi & Fatimah, 2023), the implementation of a Merdeka learning curriculum is in line with endeavors to establish a high-quality educational environment to produce a generation capable of adjusting to contemporary advancements.

A textbook guides instruction in any field of study (Swanepoel, 2010 in Kasmaienezhadford et al., 2015). The topic of the textbooks is explained in an approachable manner, unlike some publications that are created and published only with educational purposes in mind. To help students meet the learning objectives, textbooks are used as the primary learning resource. They are supplemented by other learning materials that are carefully prepared and published by professionals in education and language (Rahmawati et al., 2021). In addition, as reported by Nurdin et al. (n.d.), an electronic book (e-book) is a traditional printed book that (somebody) can read on a computer or with an e-book reader. An e-book reader can be a book-sized computer used only for reading or a software program for usage on a network, like Microsoft's free Reader application.

Besides that, a book should fulfill the needs of both the teacher and the students during a course by providing essential content for language learning (Tomlinson, 2011). Criteria of a good book based on Trinovita (2022), namely: specifically:

1. A good textbook helps students build life skills that will prepare them for events in the future.
2. A good textbook offers a variety of exercises to enhance students' proficiency in written and spoken English.
3. The textbook's educational resources should evolve with the times; for example, the subject matter should be current.

In conclusion, a textbook should assist students in developing their life skills, offer exercises that will help them become more proficient in the English language, and ensure that the content is current.

Pictures are thought to be a valuable tool for inspiring and fostering students' creativity (Kasmaienezhadfad et al., 2015). Images can engage students' attention and promote more in-depth processing of the textual information in pictures, persuading them to read the accompanying text (Rehman et al., 2022).

An ideal text is a thought expressed orally or in writing that fits the speaker's or writer's background. Text can refer to events, images, other visual media, and things not written in textbooks (Amilia, 2016). Additionally, the instructional texts found in textbooks can serve as a valuable content source for teaching and learning (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Representation is a construction of images or restatement of reality in visual and verbal forms that imply a particular meaning and ideology (Bella, 2020, p. 3, cited from Maharani, 2022). Representation can be interpreted as an activity of representing, representing something, making an image, or a way to interpret what is

given to the object or text depicted (Alamsyah, 2020). The text here can take any form, such as writing, images, natural events, and audiovisuals (Alamsyah, 2020).

Based on Barr et al. (2023), gender is a multifaceted concept with several areas that impact human health, including identity and expression, roles and norms, relationships, and power. Additionally, they clarify that gender roles and norms are social constructs that represent societal expectations and views about appropriate behavior, action, and self-expression about one's perceived or assigned gender.

Gender boundaries are the complex structures—physical, social, ideological, and psychological—that define the distinctions and similarities between men and women, as well as between women and men, are known as boundaries. These boundaries shape and limit the attitudes and behaviors of the various gender groups, and the literature on gender offers a rich treatment of boundaries (Gerson & Peiss, 1985, p. 318, in Chan, 2010).

According to Khusen (2014), gender bias is a predisposition or tendency towards one sex over another, which leads to gender injustice (Juliana et al., 2019). Furthermore, textbook gender bias creates conventional male and female characters, thinking models, family roles, and job choices that influence students' gender roles and gender consciousness (Rong et al., 2021).

When men and women are in equal positions to pursue their rights in life—such as those related to education, politics, and religion—this is known as gender equality (Cahyawati & Muqowim, 2022). The idea that men and women, boys and girls, have equal rights and chances to reach their full potential, uphold their human rights and dignity, and contribute to and profit from political, social, cultural, and economic advancement is also essential. Therefore, gender equality is the equal value placed by society on the traits and roles that distinguish men and women from one another. The foundation is that men and women should be equal partners in the family, community, and society (UNICEF, 2017).

The numbers categories used to analyze the pictures and texts in the English textbook “Work in Progress” adopted by Amini and Birjandi (2012) are:

1. Visibility refers to the presence of both men and women in the displayed images. By tallying the number of men and women in the textbook, one can determine whether gender bias exists.
2. Firstness. It describes the instances in the text when men or women are shown first. If two sexes are stated together in a text, it counts.
3. Masculine/Feminine Generic Construction refers to how textbook writers frequently refer to the two sexes using male or female personal pronouns.
4. Activities. It refers to identifying activities that are represented as being performed by men and women in the images.
5. Occupation. The purpose is to determine which professions are mentioned in the textbook for men and women, specifically in pictures. One way to assess if gender equality or bias exists is to count the professions or occupations listed in the contents.



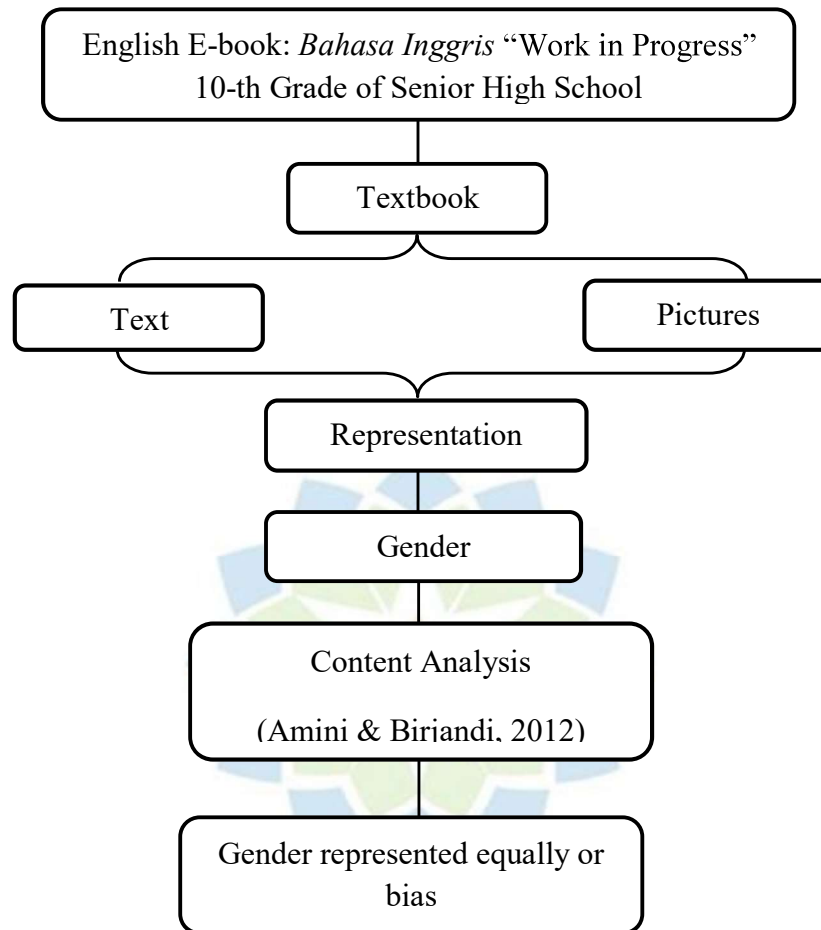


Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework

G. Previous Study

Gender inequality is a topic of discussion that many people discuss because it is often linked to the characteristics that women and men should have and play. Because of this issue, several studies have been undertaken.

First, Junita et al. (2022) examined how gender is portrayed in English textbooks often utilized in elementary schools. The study aims to investigate how gender representations are portrayed in Indonesian primary textbooks, particularly in the volume entitled "I Love Jakarta." Tiga Serangkai wrote the English textbook used in the study. It was used with first-grade pupils, and every unit was analyzed. A

qualitative and content analytic approach was used for the research. The tool used to assess gender representation in the textbook was taken from Amini and Birjandi's (2012) research. The results showed that there is unequal gender representation in the English textbook. The English textbook utilized for the research is the difference between the current study and the study of Junita et al. (2022). The current study examines gender representation in an English textbook entitled "Work in Progress," which is used to teach English to 10th-grade students in senior high school.

Second, the gender characteristics displayed by the male and female characters in images from elementary school English textbooks were investigated by Muzdalifah et al. (2021). The study aims to examine how men and women are portrayed in textbook photos. This study uses descriptive research as its research approach, and it examines the English textbook *A Fun and Easy English Book for Elementary School*, which includes pictures. They analyze the data using the Visual Grammar theory developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). The study claims that stereotypes are frequently applied to both genders, resulting in unequal depictions of the two. Women are seen as having more private areas and employing more dominant linguistic strategies, whereas men are perceived as using more public spaces. Unlike the current study, the theory used to examine the data is used by Armini and Birjandi's (2012) tools, which examine five categories (visibility, Firstness, masculine generic construction, occupations, and activities).

Third, Siregar et al. (2021) examined how gender is represented in the fourth edition of the English textbook *When English Rings a Bell*. The study aims to give teachers and book authors a reference to how gender is described in the textbook so they can recognize the imbalance and work to lessen it. The study employed a qualitative descriptive analysis methodology, utilizing Halliday's transitivity system framework in functional grammar as the investigative instrument. The fourth edition of the textbook "When English Rings a Bell" is the research's data source. The outcome demonstrates that female characters predominate in the participant roles. In

terms of Process types, representations of male and female characters are essential in Relational processes; in other Process types, however, female characters are more commonly depicted than male characters. It has been noted that most good personality traits are applied to both males and girls. Male characters are rarely linked to adverse attributes. Meanwhile, the current study uses an English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia, and a content analysis is used the research method.

Fourth, Ahmadabadi and Azad's study from 2023 examined how gender was portrayed in two textbooks used in Iran's 11th and 12th grade high schools, Vision 2 and Vision 3. The study aims to find out how gender is depicted in both textbooks and how EFL teachers feel about gender representation and its consequences in the ELT textbooks that Iran requires. Using qualitative and quantitative techniques, the researchers used a mixed-method approach to investigate gender representation using the Fairclough CDA framework. Furthermore, a qualitative evaluation of the instructors' opinions of the textbooks was conducted using exploratory analysis. Moreover, content analysis was chosen to look at the contents of textbooks. Thirty Iranian English language teachers, both male and female, who have previously taught "Vision textbooks," are the study's participants. The results demonstrated the persistence of male dominance in the textbooks and the significant socio-cultural consequences that gender bias in educational materials would have on students' mindsets, future occupations, and subjects of study. In contrast, the current study gathered data from the chapters in the English textbook, "Work in Progress," and only used qualitative research with a content analysis method.

Lastly, the study by Süleyman and Topkaya (2023) examined two English textbooks issued by national and foreign publishing houses, which first-year students utilized at a state institution in Turkey's Western Mediterranean region. The study aims to investigate how gender and gender equality are treated in two English textbooks. The study employs quantitative and qualitative research methods, utilizing

Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach. From a quantitative standpoint, the results showed that gender is represented roughly equally in textbook texts and images; however, a qualitative examination of gender representation based on Firstness, titles, and occupational roles revealed a gender bias favoring men. Meanwhile, the study uses qualitative research with a content analysis method to analyze the gender representation in the English textbook "Work in Progress."

