

Gender Analysis in *Bright* English Textbook for Indonesian Junior High Schools

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Abstract

This study aims at describing gender equality in English textbook for Indonesian Junior High Schools by using language items and images. It used content analysis as the research design, a kind of research under descriptive qualitative research and it more concerns of the content in a textbook. The result of the study showed that there is less gender bias occurred in the text content through the use of language items and in images of twelve chapters in the textbook. Male were dominant in the use of language items in the text content, while women were dominant in the images of the textbook. Based on the findings, the researcher suggested that both textbook writers and English teachers have to be aware of the stereotypical portrayals in the English textbooks. Further, English teachers have to prepare the supplementary materials which represent gender equality. When they deliver the material and give tasks for the students, they have to give same portion for men and women.

Keywords: *Bright* English Textbook, Indonesian Junior High Schools, gender, textbook, images, language items

Introduction

Choosing a textbook is one of the most important selections which teachers can decide to involve the appropriate material towards the context in which it is going to be used, following of teaching program and also the personal methodology of the teacher. The students need a textbook which becomes an accessible and understandable record of their work. Therefore, the problems are faced by the teachers about selecting the textbook for their students which is appropriate or not for the students' needs. In this case, the teachers have to use an evaluation in order to assess their suitability and relevance for a particular group of students. According to Sheldon (1998) in developing an English language textbook evaluation checklist journal, we need to evaluate textbook for two reason. First, the evaluation will help the teacher or program developer in making decision on selecting the appropriate textbook. The second, type of evaluation aids the teacher to explore the weakness or strength of the textbook while it is being used.

Nowadays, the popularity of using textbooks are growing in Indonesian school, especially for English which has been taught as a compulsory subject in Junior High and Senior High School in Indonesia. Based on BSNP (2006), the objective of learning English in Junior High School is to acquire competence at functional level. It means that this level is related with the daily activities or daily life

to make them easier to learn and use the English. So, the teachers need some instructional material to deal with daily life occasion. It can support the teaching learning process and also as a reference used by the teachers. Besides, Brown (2007) states that much of the richness of language instruction is derived from supporting material. It shows that the instructional materials are important to support and facilitate teaching learning process. Textbooks, articles, computers software, videos, and musics are include in the instructional material. Considering some criteria of a good EFL textbook, the teachers have to select the textbook. Ur (2003) and Cunningsworth (1995) proposed a checklist to see whether a textbook is adequate for English language teaching. The criteria proposed generally cover the aims and approaches, design and organization, language content, skill and topics, methodology, and supplementary things like teachers' book and audio cassette. The criteria of good textbook also contains moral value, culture, and also gender equality. Because of that, the teacher needs to evaluate the textbook they are going to use especially in gender.

Gender Analysis

According to Haider (2012) gender inequality has occurred for several decades. Many efforts to reduce it, but there are still plenty. Gender inequality still found in English learning elements, especially in the English textbook. According to Kale (2005) textbook is very important tool to bring desired change among children. Using textbook is one of the primary instruments for equity between men and women. According to Kale (2005) textbook should be designed in deal with equality of women and men. In relation with gender, it is proposed by Cunningsworth (1995) that women are expected to be portrayed and represented equally with men in textbook. In line with it, Ur (2003) states that it is needed to ensure that textbook do not carry the message of gender bias or gender imbalance. It can make any negative messages in teaching materials which are possibly affect students' mind and it can lead them to negative perception about gender. Nowadays, in society women are equal to men. It is expected that the equality of women and men provide in the content of textbook. Therefore, the teachers are expected to be aware in using such kind of textbook in their teaching.

Focus of This Research

Based on the aforementioned studies, the researcher is interested in conducting a study on textbook used by 1st year of Junior High School students which is organized in the framework of the 2013 Curriculum. The activities in the textbook are varieties and it is arranged based on Scientific Approach. Ministry of National Education states that one of supporting factor to succeed the 2013 Curriculum is the availability of textbook as an instructional material and learning source which integrates the curriculum standard. In Ministry Regulation Number 81 A, it is stated that textbook have to include gender representation and the goverment should consider the equality of gender through the curriculum of education to make it fair for both gender. Based on the elucidation that has been explained the researchers raise up the question upon how gender equality in *Bright* English textbook for 1st year of Junior High School.

Review of Related Literature

Gender Representation in English Textbook

Not only have the teachers socialized gender, but also textbooks. Textbooks may also present gender bias implicitly. According to Logsdon (1985) cited in Salamah (2014) gender representation in the textbooks consists of six aspects. They are: 1) number of female/male pictures; 2) number of female/male mentioned; 3) gender roles; 4) female/male games; 5) female/males roles model; and 6) pattern of mentioning female/male names.

The first, number of female/male pictures is about how many female/male pictures are found in the textbooks. The second aspect is number of female/male mentioned that shows how many times

of female/male mentioned in textbooks such as names and pronoun. The third is gender roles indicating how many roles of female/male are mentioned such as in texts, sentences, or illustrations. The next aspect is female/male games which means how many games played by female/male mentioned in textbook. The other aspect is female/male role models which means how many female/male role models are found in texts, sentences, or illustrations. The last one is pattern of mentioning female/male names. It shows either female or male mentioned firstly in a phrase or a sentence.

A previous study related to the gender analysis on English textbook was conducted by Sademi (2014) through text and illustration of *When English Rings A Bell* textbook. In her study, she analyzed gender representations in an English textbook for the first year of Junior High Schools, „When English Rings the Bell', published by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture based on 2013 Curriculum.

The analysis is based on five criteria, (1) equitable visibility (2) equitable activity distribution (3) equitable gender role distribution (4) equitable personality description (5) the masculine generic usage.

This study utilizes a qualitative content analysis design. The object of the study is an English textbook entitled „When English Rings the Bell'. The instrument of data collection is the criteria in the form of a checklist.

The data obtained show that (1) the occurrence of female and male characters is roughly equal in terms of texts but male characters occur more frequent than female characters in illustrations, (2) female and male characters presence in dialogs and dominate in mixed-sex dialogs equally yet male characters initiate more dialogs than female characters, female characters perform less varied and ranged routines than male characters, (4) the occupational activity of female and male characters are unequal with an extension of women's traditional domestic roles but there is balance portrayal of prestige and authority, (5) female characters perform less varied and less creative/ initiative/ independence/ adventurous for interests/ hobbies/ leisure activities than male characters also there is an extension of women's traditional roles, (6) the non-occupational activities for male and female characters are roughly equal but they carry sexist stereotype, (7) female and male characters perform unequal distribution of domestic roles and conventional domestic roles only, (8) female and male characters perform unequal distribution of social roles and conventional social roles only, (9) male and female characters are portrayed in roughly equal physical appearances without sexist stereotype, (10) male and female characters are portrayed in unequal emotionality with sexist stereotype, (11) male and female characters are portrayed in roughly equal personality traits without sexist stereotype, (12) male and female characters are portrayed in roughly equal attributes with sexist stereotype, (13) there is no usage of masculine generic.

She found that in “When English Rings the Bell' represents men and women equally in terms of occurrences in texts, non-occupational activities, physical appearances, personality traits, attributes and masculine generic usage. It represents men and women fairly equal in terms of the number of presence in dialogs. The textbook represents women and men unequally in terms of occurrence in illustrations, routines, occupations, interest/hobbies/leisure activities, domestic and social roles, and emotionality.

Another study was conducted by Bahman, M & Rahim, A (2010). They discussed about gender representation in EFL materials: an analysis of English textbooks of Iranian high schools. This study was an attempt to examine different areas of gender-bias in representation of women and men in 3

volumes of English textbooks taught in the high schools of Iran. This study employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches in which frequency counts of female and male referring terms, frequency of first-place occurrences of words attributed to females and males were examined. Chi-squares were performed to find the frequency of names, nouns, pronouns and adjectives attributed to women and men. Also, chi-square was carried out to investigate whether women and men had more or less equal first-place occurrences in instructions, exercises and sentences. Furthermore, the other areas which were investigated were: 1. reading passages to find whether women and men appeared more or less equally or not, 2. male- generics and 3. animals. The findings revealed that the manifestation of women and men in these textbooks was not fair. In other words, the presence of men was more highlighted than that of women regarding names, nouns, pronouns and adjectives attributed to them. In regard to firstness, also, male-attributed terms came first more frequently than those of females. In reading passages, male characters appeared more frequently than female characters. Moreover, these textbooks contained many male-generics in which women were almost invisible. Also, sexism was detected in regard to animal representations.

From the previous studies above, it can be concluded that both of the studies focused the gender representation in English textbooks. In additional Sademi (2014) study focused on gender representation based on five criteria, while Masoumeh Bahman and Ali Rahim's study focused on examine different areas of gender-bias in representation of women and men in 3 volumes of English textbooks taught in the high schools of Iran

Similar with the previous studies, this study also aims to describe gender representation in English textbook. The researcher would focus on language items in text and illustration, the visible of male and female in images such as characters' clothing, characters' status, characters' body language and eye direction, activities of the images and also active and passive characters in textbook. The differences between these study are subject of the study. In present study, the researcher used English textbook "Bright" by Erlangga publishing and based on Indonesian 2013 National Curriculum.

Research Method

This study was aimed to examine the gender equality in *Bright* that used as a main textbook on 1st year of Junior High School. In analyzing the text content through the use of language items, there were four types of language items which were examined in order to find gender bias. There were: (1) generic masculine terms; (2) gender-marked terms; (3) the collocation of gender-marked items; and (4) gender-neutral language items. The researcher analyzed the each of language items and described the meaning.

The data on gender bias in images were analyzed after the analysis on the data of gender bias in text contents through the use of language items. Five aspects of the second set of criteria are using to analyze the data. The activities which were portrayed in an image are the first aspect to be analyzed. From the activities, the researcher identified in what environment females and males were mostly portrayed. The researcher identified the active and passive character which were involved in performing the activities. The active characters were the protagonists or the doers of the activities, whereas the passive characters were the receivers. The researcher observed the characters which became the other characters' center of attention in the activities portrayed in images. In contrast, the researcher identified passive characters pays attention to the characters which attentions drawn to the active characters.

Next, to obtain the data portrayal of gender bias in an image, the researcher analyzed the characters' body language and eye direction. The researcher observed how both female and male

characters are involved in the activities through the characters' physical attitudes (heads, hands, feet, etc) in analyzing the characters' body language. The researcher also observed to which character a female or male character directed his/her eyes in engaging in the portrayed activities. The researcher gave some descriptions for each character's body language and eye contact as evidence in finding gender bias in images. In discovering gender bias of characters' clothing in images, the descriptions were showed as evidence since clothing helps creating characters' identity. The last, the researcher also described the characters' status in images; that was, either the female or male characters who has the status in the images.

Findings

Gender bias in text contents through the use of language items

Several gender biases are found in text contents through the use of studied language items, which are the use of: 1) generic masculine terms, 2) gender-marked terms; and 3) collocations of gender-marked items.

Gender bias in the use of generic masculine terms

Two masculine nouns are discovered in twelve chapters of the textbook. Each noun has same frequency of existence and exists in different context. The first masculine noun which discovered is *man*. The noun *man* appears only once in unit 8 page 115 of the textbook. The noun *man* appears in activity 5 about how to write plurals. The term *man* refers to males only instead of human being in general. The term *man* is written in singular form. The second masculine term which refers to human being in general is *businessman*. The terms only appears once in unit 12 page 172 of the textbook. The term *businessman* in dictionary as a noun and it means person who works in business. The researcher's opinion that the noun is not appropriate with the condition nowadays when females have equal opportunities to males in performing an occupation. Today, not only males, but also females, work in business, and have equal responsibilities in doing business. Therefore, the more appropriate term is *businesspeople*.

Gender-marked terms

From twelve units within the textbook, there is no one gender-marked terms. The researcher did not find the gender-marked term through the text contents. In the textbook did not consist of gender-marked, after the researcher analyzed all of twelve units for more than five times to find it. Thirty six verbs which collocate with subject pronouns *he/she* are found in twelve units within the textbook. Among thirty six verbs, fourteen verbs collocate with subject pronoun *he*, whereas twenty two verbs are collocating with subject pronouns *she*. For the subject pronoun *he*, eight verbs collocate exclusively with the subject pronoun. The other six verbs collocate mutually with subject pronouns *he* and *she*. Among eight verbs collocate exclusively with subject pronoun *he*, only the verb *play* which mentioned five times, whereas the other six verbs are only mentioned once until four times in the textbook. For the verb which collocate not only to the subject pronoun *he*, the verb *have* appears the most, that is for eight times in the textbook. The other verbs appeared less than eight times; that is, the verb *help* and *born* appears for two times; the verb *travel*, *read* and *eat* appear only once.

For subject pronoun *she*, there are twenty two verbs which collocate with subject pronoun *she*. Among twenty two verbs, eleven verbs collocate exclusively with subject pronoun *she*. The other six verbs collocate mutually with subject pronouns *he* and *she*. The verb "want" which is mentioned twice, the other 10 verbs are mentioned only once in the textbook. For the verbs which collocate not only with the subject pronoun *she*, the verbs *have* appeared the most in the textbook, which is four times. The other verbs appear less than four times; that is, the

verbs *miss, drive, go, tell, talk, yell, dance, lend, buy* appear once and the other verb *born* appear twice in the textbook.

Among the exclusively collocated verbs, subject pronoun *he* collocate with the verbs which refer to the use of much physical strength. For example, the verb *practice* in unit 4 page 54 in the sentences “*He practices tennis every day*” and the verb *play* in unit 12 page 169 in the sentences “*He also played roles in some musical drama*”. In contrast, subject pronoun *she* mostly collocates with the verbs which does not require much physical strength. For instance, the verb *sit*, in unit 6 page 80 in sentences “*She is sitting between Salma and Firman.*” and the verb *listen* in unit 12 page 172 in the sentence “*She listens to it all time*”.

Gender bias in text contents through the use of collocations of possessive pronoun with nouns

There are twelve nouns which collocate to either possessive pronoun *his* and *her* in the textbook. Six nouns collocate with possessive *his*, while six nouns collocates with possessive *her*. Four nouns collocate exclusively with possessive pronoun *his*. Two nouns collocate mutually with possessive pronoun *her*. For the nouns which are exclusively collocated with possessive pronoun *his*, all of them are mentioned only once in the textbook.

For possessive pronoun *her*, there are six nouns which collocate to possessive pronoun *her*. Three nouns collocates exclusively with possessive pronoun *her*. Two nouns collocate mutually with possessive pronoun *his*. For the nouns which collocates exclusively with possessive pronoun *her*, all of them are mentioned only once in the textbook.

Interestingly, there are more noun which relate to beautiful looking that collocate with possessive pronoun *her* than with possessive pronoun *his*. There are two nouns related to beautiful looking which are exclusively collocated with possessive pronoun *her*. For example, the noun *eyes* in unit 12 page 170 in the sentences “*Her eyes always twinkle when they look at you*” and the noun *hair* and *triangular face* in unit 12 page 170 in the sentence “*Her hair is white and her triangular face is wrinkled.* On the other hand, two nouns which collocate exclusively with possessive pronoun *his* related to physical appearance, they are *weight* and *height*. The noun emerges in unit 12 page 168 in the sentence “*His height is about 150cm and his weight is 32kg*”.

Besides beautiful looking, there is also nouns related to possession something which collocate exclusively with possessive pronoun *her* than with possessive pronoun *his*. The noun is *car* in unit 10 page 143 in the sentence “*Sushi is driving her car*”.

Gender bias in the use of collocations of nouns with adjectives

Four adjectives which collocate with the nouns are discovered in the textbook. Two adjectives collocate with the noun *man/men*, two adjectives with the noun *boy/boys*. Regarding the noun *man/men*, two adjectives collocate exclusively with the noun. For the noun *boy/boys*, two adjectives collocate exclusively with the noun. The noun *woman/woman, girl/girls* and *lady*, the researcher did not found any collocation with adjectives.

The researcher notes that the noun *man/men* have the exclusively collocated adjectives which are related to pleasant appearances. For example, the noun has the adjectives *nice* in the sentence “*a nice man*” in unit 8 page 112. In addition, the noun has adjectives *young* in unit 7 page 103 in sentence “*Luckily, a young man help us*”. Hence, the researcher deems that there is no particular adjective which is attached solely to the adult males.

Concerning the noun *boy/boys*, collocates exclusively with the adjectives which are deemed to be stereotypically attached to the noun. The adjective *busy* appear for twice within the textbook. The first, it appear in unit 4 page 54 in the sentences “*He is a busy boy*”. The second, it appear in unit 12 page 169 in the sentence “*Radit is a busy boy*”. Therefore, the noun *boy/boys* collocate exclusively with the adjectives which are related to pleasant appearances. The adjective is *handsome* in unit 12 page 168 in the sentence “*Radit is a handsome boy*”. In short, there are no adjective collocate exclusively with noun *woman/women*, *girl/girls*, and *lady* which can describes the noun *woman/women*, *girl/girls*, and *lady*. The other nouns have no opposites collocated with adjective.

From twelve units within the textbook, there is no one gender-neutral terms which imply gender bias. The researcher did not find the gender-neutral term which imply gender bias through the text contents. In the textbook did not consist of gender-neutral term which can imply gender bias, after the researcher analyzing all of twelve units for more than eight times to find it.

Gender Bias in Images

There are four images which are deemed to portray gender bias. Those images show imbalance interactions between male and female characters in performing the activities. The researcher described five criteria of the images individually. Five images with single activity in each image are discovered in the textbook. Among the five images, all of them portrayed schooling environment, which is the environment mostly portrayed in the textbook clearly. Three out of five images present females in a principal role, which is a teacher. It is implied that from the images which portrayed schooling environment, women are deemed to be more suitable than men for a principal role in schooling environment that is as teachers.

Gender influence on active and passive characters in images

It is found that among five images, three images have males as the active characters. In the three images, there are two adult males who serve as the active characters, the one adult woman who serve as the passive character, whereas the others active character is young male or boy and two adult females. Out of three males who served as the active characters, they acted in three different situations. First, there is a male teacher who taught in front of the classroom and has the students’ attention. Second, an old man is portrayed as caregivers or the parents of the students. Last, an image showed that a young man or boy has a discussion with his friends in the library.

For the others two images which have female as the active character, and also has a principal role as the teacher. The females also act as the participant of the activities in the images. First, the female is portrayed to be angry to the male student, because he comes late.

Second, the female is portrayed to be a teacher who gives some explanation in front of the class and she get her student’s attention. In addition, several passive characters are also found in the five images. There are four images which have both female and male passive character involved in the activities in each image. There are two images which have male and female passive characters to act as students in the classroom. Second image shows active male and passive female characters to act as students or friends in the library.

Beside the images which have both male and female passive characters in each image, there is one image which has a single passive character in each image. One image have male as the single passive character. For the single male passive character, an image depicts a male as the student. To sum up, there are more males than females who act as active characters in the five images, which signify that there are more males than females who are in charge of the situations or activities.

However, the explicit roles shown in the images, which make the males active characters to have control over some situations, are still stereotypical roles. Two images portrayed the female active characters as teachers who manage some situations in classroom and school or who have power over the students.

Besides in text context, the researcher also confirmed that gender bias appears in images within the textbook. The bias perceptions between females and males appear in the activities portrayed in the images. In the choice of the active and passive characters as well as the characters that are given the status in the images, in the characters' body languages and eye directions, also in the characters' clothing. The researcher finds five images which contain gender bias based on the mentioned aspects.

The activities which are portrayed in five images suggest gender bias since there is an imbalance portrayal between male and female activities. The bias is shown since among the five images, only schooling environment which is portrayed by all of images in which mostly women have the principal role in the activities, which is as a teacher. People believe that women are mostly suitable to be involved in education environment as they are regarded to be better in dealing with children than men. According to Astuti (1999) cited in Rahmawati (2011), women are mostly portrayed as teachers in performing their public roles. The stereotype is based on biological supposition that women are deemed to be good in nurturing children than men. The images also given environment are clearly portrayed. The environment which portrayed is school environment. This case, make an assumption on men that men regarded to have the capabilities to do any occupation in any environment, whereas women only have limited capabilities which allow them to do limited occupations in limited environments. Such stereotyping can limit female choices in deciding the kinds of occupation and since they assume that they are only good in some environments, such as education environment.

Based on the active and passive characters, the researcher found there are more male active characters than female active character in images which is portrayed clearly. Although, schooling environment which is portrayed by all of images in which mostly women have the principal role in the activities, which is as a teacher, it did not make women as the active character mostly. Among five images, portrayed which mostly men as the active character in activities on image. Females who act as the active character in images, they are mostly involved in a stereotypical activities, makes females have stronger body languages and eye directions than male. For example, women who are portrayed to be a teacher show stronger posture than males. The image showed that the women have more various hands, head and body positions in performing the activities than the male passive characters. It makes women as the main role in the activity and as the doers of the activity. Besides that, male characters are portrayed to be always taller than females. It makes stereotypical expectation that males should be taller than their female partner. In societal and cultural beliefs, that it is more ideal for men to have shorter women as their partners. The stronger body languages of women as the active characters make them to be given the status in the images.

According to body language and eye directions, the male active characters and females active characters have the same frequency. In the images, they are portrayed equally stronger between male and female active characters in each image. Eye directions between male active character and female or male passive character pay full attention to the male active character. Only one image showed that the male or female passive characters did not pay full to the male active character, they busy to their own interest. In contrast, the passive characters in the images which female as the active characters, the male or female characters gave their full attention to the female active characters. It showed that female as the active characters have regarded to give more appreciation in performing an activity within the images.

Regarding characters' clothing, the researcher affirmed that women are still portrayed to be more suitable to wear skirt than pairs of trousers or jeans. Women, who are mostly portrayed as the teachers, are suggested to be appropriate to wear skirts in performing the activity. Yet, the images also depict girls to wear pairs of trousers or jeans besides wearing skirts. It suggests that the younger generation of females have more choices in terms of revealing their characteristics through clothing. In short, the traditional stereotypical perception is no longer applied in today societies which is women is not appropriate to wears pairs of trousers or jeans.

The findings on gender bias in image of the present study are different from that of Giaschi's (2000). It can be said that the present study the images portrays less bias than that of Giaschi's. Giaschi found that in various ESL textbooks, men are the active characters who hold the status in the activities. In present study, the researcher also finds the similar from findings. Women or girl are still portrayed stereotypically. The images show women or girl involving in roles or activities regarded to be appropriate by societies, such as in education environment (Giaschi, 2000).

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussions in the present study, it can be concluded that gender bias exist in both text contents through the use of language items as well as in images of the studied English Textbook for first year students. The present study suggests that the studied textbook contains gender bias less than the textbook which is investigated previously. For gender bias in text contents through the use of language items, the frequency of the use of generic masculine terms indicate that there are rare uses of generic masculine terms. It implies that the writers of textbook should be aware of the improper associative meanings which are carried over by the use of suffix *-man* in referring to human being in general. They can use *person* or *officer* to represent it. Therefore, it brings disadvantages to females in their working and association environment.

For the collocation of gender-marked items, the present study found that the collocations which is contain gender bias are not as outright as the collocations which suggest gender bias in Carroll's and Kowitz's study (1994). In their study, they found that women are obviously collocated exclusively with adjectives *beautiful*, *pretty* and *busy* which are suggested to be the stereotypical adjectives commonly attached to women. They also found that there are more adjective uses to describe men than to women. In the present study, also found that there are more adjective use to describe men than women. The bigger number of nouns which collocate with possessive pronoun *her* also suggests that women are also described to have more possession than that of men.

For the images, there are also less bias in the present study. Giaschi's study (2000) there is more males than females which serve as the active characters in the observed images. Females are also portrayed to have stereotypical postures, such as crossing their hands in the lap. On the other hand, the present study also found that there are more males than females which serve as the active characters in the observed images. As the active characters, they showed stronger stature than passive characters in activities in the observed images. Overall, the researcher concluded that there is less bias in the present study both in text contents through the use of language items and in images compared to the Carroll's and Kowitz's study (1994) and Giaschi's study (2000).

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