CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a general description of the research. It consists of the background, the reason for choosing topic, the research question, the purposes of the research, the scope of the research, the research method, the significance of the research, the clarification of terms, and the organization of the research.

1.1 Background

In some contexts, women are labeled as subordinated. To cover this, Ray (2006) argues that women are not only treated as subordinate to men but are also subject to descrimination, humiliations, exploitations, opression, and violence. Therefore, the phenomenon leads to the assumption that women are powerless creature. Ray further explains that women experience descrimination and unequal treatment in terms of basic right such as making decision. Therefore, it means that women are confined in making decisions.

The term decision has an important meaning which focuses on choosing or deciding something. Here, women's choice or consideration is closely related to her as being a subject. Therefore, the women's preference towards subject they desire becomes the most important thing. It means that if they can be the subject they want to be, they can liberate in showing their identity. Essentially, women as

a subject are able to choose the preference in their world. Such as to become the figure they willingly want, to be good or bad, pretty or even ugly person, and to obey or disobey. However, Geldard and Geldard (2004) assert that sometimes their preference will cause a conflict between them and the social expectation. Therefore, in order to become free in showing the identity, women have to break the common social assumptions, which are weak, passive, or "women are subordinated" (Ray, 2006) to gain a better subject position as subject in the society.

Nealon and Giroux (2003) and McCallum (1999) consider subjectivity as a perception of personal identity that is controlled by individual as a subject. It is also related to the idea that every individual is different from other selves in holding position within society and being capable of deliberate thought and action. Subjectivity also conveys the concept of personhood's understanding based on social laws. Thus, subjectivity principally is considered as a maturity process in dealing with relationship between person and others.

The issues on character's subjectivity are often presented in the literary works, in this case young adult fiction. One of young adult fiction that presents the issue on subjectivity is a novel entitled *"Ella Enchanted"* written by Gail Carson Levine. Ella as main female character in the novel chooses to break 'the gift of obedience' from a fairy named Lucinda since it is considered as a curse rather than a gift. With her intellegence, Ella as the female teenage shows her decision by choosing a sequence of action to break the unwanted gift of obedience which finally puts her in the situation of being independent.

Besides subjectivity, the phenomenon of main female character can be analyzed also from a feminist perspective. As Trites (1997) argues that the main aim of feminism is to support women in making decision and to raise societal respect for their decision. Furthermore, the most important thing is the essence of the decision that women know exactly the choice they have made. In this research, the writer focuses on the ways in which main female character in *"Ella Enchanted"* acts as a subject in her ordeal. The intertextual connection to *"Cinderella"* story present in the plot and characters. More importantly, the writer focuses the research on how the fairytale is reproduced in *"Ella Enchanted"*. Hence, the writer chooses Charles Perrault's *"Cinderella"* as a pre-text of the fairytales.

1.2 Reason for choosing topic

The writer chooses this topic of feminist literary criticism and subjectivity because the issues often appear in young adult fiction. To be a subject is an issue often experienced by young adult. Since adolescence is the transition period of teenager from childishness to maturity, subject position and being different to show their identity are naturally related with the problem of young adult. Geldard and Geldard (2004) state that adolescent is the development of personal identity. Also, McCallum (1999) affirms that adolescence is usually assumed to be the period during notion of selfhood where adolescents can experience some change and essential transformation. In other words, 'Self-discovery' and 'search for

identity' become the important aspect in adolescence period. Young female character, which is described by woman writer, brings the strong role as female protagonist that makes the topic of feminist literary criticism is also important to discuss in this research.

1.3 Research Question

To specify the research, this research is guided by following research question:

- In what ways does *"Ella Enchanted"* present a reproduced version of *"Cinderella"* tales?

1.4 Purpose of the research

The research is purposed to examine the ways in which *"Ella Enchanted"* reproduces the fairytale of *"Cinderella"*

1.5 Scope of the research

The focus of the research is the novel entitled *"Ella Enchanted"* written by Gail Carson Levine. The writer limits the study on the ways in which *"Ella Enchanted"* reproduces the fairytale pre-text of *"Cinderella"* under the framework of subjectivity and feminist perspective.

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1.6 Research method

Naturally, the research is qualitative in which the writer tries to emphasize on words explanation rather than data measurement. As Maxwell (1996) states that qualitative research focuses on specific situations or people, and it's emphasizes on words rather than numbers. Moreover, this research is conducted in textual analysis approach. According to Frey, Botan, and Kreps (1999) textual analysis is the method used to describe and interpret the recorded or visual message. It step by step procedure and aims to describe the content, structure, and functions of the messages contained in the texts systematically. Therefore, it focuses to the content of the text to analyze and describe its meaning.

For that reason, this research is also descriptive. According to Nazir (2005) through his book "*Metode Penelitian*" (6[th]ed) descriptive analysis is a method used in the researches of an object, a set of condition, a system of thought or an event that take place in the present time. Moreover, Whitney (1960, as cited in nazir 2005) descriptive analysis is fact identification with a proper interpretation. Thus, the goal of descriptive research is to describe the fact, the condition, and the interpretation of the text systematically.

1.6.1 Research Procedure

The procedure of the research follows these steps:

- Choosing the main source of the research, that is novel entitled *"Ella Enchanted"* written by Gail Carson Levine

- Reading closely and repeatedly the novel as the main source of the research.

- Deciding main issue of the research, that is *"Ella Enchanted"* as the retelling of classic a fairytale.

- Undertaking library research by collecting and comprehending the references which is related to the research in order to gain a better understanding about the issue of the research.

- Finding and taking notes of textual evidence.

- Categorizing the textual evidences.

- Analyzing and interpreting textual evidences.

- Analyzing the data using the framework of subjectivity and feminist perspective.

- Drawing conclusion and suggestion.

1.6.2 Data Collection

The primary data of the research is the novel entitled *"Ella Enchanted"* written by Gail Carson Levine (1997). The secondary data will be gained from reading journal articles, books and literature related to the problem which is being investigated, analyzed, and interpreted. The data will be analyzed using framework of feminist literary criticism.

1.7 Significance of the research

The writer expects that the result of the research gives a contribution to the library collection about feminist literary criticism and subjectivity. It is also expected that this research can be used as the reference for next researchers in the English Department of UPI or for those who are interested in investigating the subjectivity, particularly in the context of fantasy fiction.

1.8 Clarification of terms

- **Subjectivity**

    According to McCallum (1999), subjectivity is a perception of personal identity that is controlled by individual as a subject. Intrinsically, it is a personal maturity about relationship between the self and others, and exploration of relationship between the self, the society, and the world.

- **Feminist literary criticism**

    Based on Henderson and Brown (1997) Feminist literary Criticism is acriticism advocating equal rights for women in a political, economic, social, psychological, personal, and aesthetic sense. On the thematic level, the feminist reader should identify the female characters and their concerns in the text.

- **Identity**

    Barker (2000) argues that identity is the conception holds and creates by individual. It always in process rather than fix entity.

- **Young adult**

    Based on *Literature For Today's Young Adults*, young adult includes students in junior high school and those who graduating from high school and still finding their way into adult life. By young adult literature, it means the readers between the approximate ages of 12 and 18 choose to read (Donelson, &Nilsen, 2001:3).

- **Fantasy Fiction**

    Fantasy fiction is the well-known genres and old form because its relation to the genre of myth, legend, and fairytales of our childhood. It is the story of fairy, magic, sorcery, and enchantment. Fantasy fiction also considers as an imaginative fiction that allows young readers to explore major life mysteries without limited by size, time, or space. It is combine imaginative and realistic elements because it often uses to satirize or rewrite reality (Sarick, 2009; Gates, Steffel, Molson, 2003; Grenby, 2008).

- **Fairytales**

    Gates, Steffel, and Molson (2003) argue that fairytale is a short narrative composed or written in prose. It focuses on essential and magic becomes a pervasive element.

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- **Young adult literature**

    Niday (2000) defines young adult literature is literature written for and marked to young adult. It usually includes a teenage as the protagonist, first-person perspective, adult characters in background, limited number of characters, positive resolution, and approximate length of 125 to 250 pages.

- **Pre-text**

    Pre-text is a source that associates to the retelling text (Stephens and McCallum, 1998)

- **Metanarrative**

    Stephens and McCallum (1998) argue that metanarrative is a narration which commonly grounds the retelling version of fairytales. It shaped the pre-text and resembled it as a new textual and ideological structure. Thus, metanarrative is a version that contains implicit and invisible ideologies, system, and assumption which operate globally to explain knowledge and experience

1.9 Organization of the research

This research paper is organized into five chapters:

- Chapter I   : Introduction

    This chapter provides a general description of the research.

    It consists of the background, the reason for choosing topic,

the research question, the purposes of the research, the
scope of the research, the research method, the significance
of the research, the clarification of terms, and the
organization of the research.

- Chapter II   : Literature Review

  This chapter presents the theoretical framework that
  underpins the research. It elaborates feminist literary
  criticism, young adult literature and fantasy fiction, fantasy
  fiction which is derived from fairytales tradition, feminist
  issue in fairytales, subjectivity in modern fairytales,
  intertextuality and feminist perspective in *"Ella
  Enchanted",* also previous studies. Moreover, synopsis of
  the novel is also included in this chapter.

- Chapter III : Research Method

  This chapter explains a methodological aspect of the
  research to find out the answer of the research question. It
  includes research question, research procedure, data source
  and collection, data analysis, framework, and data
  presentation.

- Chapter IV : Findings and Discussion

  This chapter reports all findings by elaborating the textual
  evidence in Gail Carson Levine's *Ella Enchanted*. To arrive

at the discussion of the reproduction of fairytales in *"Ella Enchanted",* it is necessary to look at how the female character in the story is portrayed. Then, an analysis of how the story employs fairytale's plot to reproduce the fairytale is discussed as well. More importantly, investigating intertextual affiliation helps to see ideological position of the story.

- Chapter V : Conclusion and Suggestion

    After describing and discussing the findings of the research, this chapter presents conclusions which are drawn from the previous chapter. This chapter also provides some suggestions for the readers and the future research deals with the same issue of fairytale retelling.