

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the general description of the study. It covers background of the study, research questions, objectives of study, importance of study and a brief outline of the dissertation. The reasons why this issue is importance to investage can be found here.

1.1 Background

Moral crisis that has swept through the world, including Indonesia has made people realize the importance of valueor moral educationand turn to educational system for help. The government does not remain silent, to show its commitment, character education as a national movement was launched by the President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudoyono, in his welcoming speech for Education Day ceremony on 11 Mei 2010 in Jakarta (Mulyasana, 2011: 294).In its implementation, character education should not always be done by changing the curriculum. It can be done in the existing values learning such as religious studies, civic education or Indonesian language. It can even been executed in other learnings such as mathematics and physics. All that depends on the creativity of the teacher in integrating values into it.

This study focuseson usingEnglish learning as a means tointegrate valuesto the learners. This is done as an attempt to support the Character Education Program initiated by the government.It is hoped that in the end, English learning is not always identified with the learning focusing only on transferring skill and knowledge of English, but the one that can both transfer English related skills and values to the learners.

English as A Means to Transfer Values

The core of all teaching lies in values, including that of English Language Teaching (ELT). In addition to focusing on the mental acquisition of a language,

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English Language Teaching (ELT) whether it is as a second or foreign language concerns with values in at least three fundamental ways. Firstly, like all teaching, ELT is purely about human relation, especially the relationship between teacher and student; the one which is essentially moral in nature. Secondly, like all teaching, ELT aims to change students to become better, that of moral matters. Thirdly, although there have been objective or scientific principles in ELT, in many cases of teaching English, like all teaching, is full of moral judgment. In teaching, we have to make decisions how to manage the class, creating effective teaching for the best of all (Johnston, 2003: 1-5).

In effect, it has become the duty of all ELT teachers not only to make the EFL or EFL learners to get involved in second or foreign language acquisition, but also to build their character, making them better people in the future. For the case of ELT teachers in Indonesia, their duty is even harder. They are not just to equip their EFL learners with English language mastery for their own benefit, but to prepare young generation who can survive in the global competition with their English skills. In addition, ELT teachers have to equip their students with moral values, to make them become people with decent characters. This latter issue is even more relevant with the present situation in which the emergence of character crisis phenomena in this nation has resulted in multi-dimension national crisis.

There have many decent characters important to build. Of the essential characters, gender awareness is one of the most crucial dispositions to have by the students. Genderawareness refers to “an understanding that there are socially determined differences between women and men based on learned behavior, which affects access to and control resources” (https://definedterm.com/gender_awareness). Awareness about gender differences education becomes important since it is a first step towards addressing and integrating the special concerns of male and female students fairly in the teaching and learning process.

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In addition, there are at least four other important reasons why gender awareness is vital to address. *Firstly*, although it has become a global commitment since 1979 (Malihah, 2011) to eradicate gender discrimination in all areas, gender bias still lingers and exists in all aspects of lives. Although men are also the victims of gender discrimination, predominantly women experience this in various ways. Cases like abortion of a female fetus through sex determination, denial of education/proper opportunity for education, early marriage, rape and sexual harassment, divorce and destitution for trivial reasons are still common discrimination features in the lives of girls. Seeing it also as a crucial issue, Indonesia has made the same commitment since 1984 by issuing law No. 7/1984. Indonesian government even has issued gender mainstreaming policy (President Decree No. 9/2000) to realize its commitment to abolish gender discrimination. In spite of the efforts, gender bias and discrimination in Indonesia persists in practice. In the overwhelming majority of cases, gender injustice practices are uneasy to see since it needs gender awareness.

Secondly, education is a necessity to prepare human beings for the real world. As an education institution, therefore, it is the duty of schools to provide students with education that can prepare them to achieve the goal. Gender issues are rightly addressed at schools since in their actual life, one of the first social phenomena that the students will find is gender differences. Having gender awareness to be tolerant to gender differences is the key and it is not born, especially in the patriarchal society, like Aceh, where there has been a widespread belief that men held legal power over their families. Gender discrimination cases occurring in the society such as the regulation not to wear trousers and jeans for women in West Aceh and to *mengangkang* (straddle) when riding a motorcycle in North Aceh (*BBC Indonesia*, 3/1/2013) are the convincing proofs that gender discrimination still persists in that province. Since gender awareness is the one can only be gained through learning, it is the duty of the school to train it.

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Thirdly, studies show that gender constructs become part of our consciousness through different mechanisms, beginning at home to institutions of mass or widespread socialization. Language is known as one of the Institutions of Mass Gender Socialization, which is the most subtle but most pervasive form. It is difficult to separate the way we speak from our thought process, so the use of sexist language, even if unwitting, will inevitably lead to changes in how we perceive gender. Therefore, sexist language is a powerful tool to maintain gender ideology (Maria, 2007: 10). To avoid that, it is the duty of ELT teachers to make students aware of those kinds of languages and teach them how to have gender fair-language through their teaching learning process.

Fourthly, many studies (e.g. Sadker, 1979) show that gender bias in the society not merely occurs in the schools but is also enhanced there. The most common forms of gender bias come from unintentional acts by teachers, teaching methods and textbooks/ resources. The bias can be against males or females, but most frequently it is against females. It operates at schools by treating girls and boys differently in learning environments and this has resulted in unequal impacts. If this idea is to be considered a valid one, then it becomes critical to address gender issues in ELT as an attempt to end gender inequality and bias at schools.

Despite the importance of addressing gender issues in ELT in Indonesia, the reality says vice versa. ELT, in Indonesia, focuses more on English language acquisition. Though some traces have been found that ELT in Indonesia has already started to take notice on transferring values, only little attention has been given on gender issues. For example, of many articles about ELT in TEFLIN, only two articles do relate about gender. The first one is *Language and Gender in English Language Teaching* by Murni Mahmud (Vol 21, No. 2, 2010) and the second one is *Female EFL Learners' Request Realization in Relation to Their Ethnic Backgrounds* by Sari (Vol 21, No. 1, 2010). Another example, of more than one hundred studies about teaching with characters presented in the 58th

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TEFLIN International Conference held in IKIP PGRI Semarang from 3rd – 5th November 2011, no one focused on gender.

The importance of internalizing gender awareness into teaching and to fill the lack of studies on gender issues in ELT are two main reasons why this study was conducted. The goal of this study appears to produce a model of ELT with character, the one that can not only facilitate students to be able to master English skills(listening, reading, speaking and writing) but also effectively assists them to have the ability to respect gender differences. It is hoped that through this model, gender differences will not become a matter, and by then, gender equality and equity will be achieved, not only in Aceh, but also in Indonesia as a whole.

This study was held at UIN Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh and the subjects of the study were English department students (henceforth they will be referred as pre-service English teachers). The selection of the site and subject of the research was not arbitrary, but based on a considerable reason. Although UIN Ar-Raniry has made attempts to run gender mainstreaming policy mandated by the government through President Decree No. 9/2000, gender gap still becomes a matter there. A study done by Rasyidah and friends (Rasyidah et.al., 2013) from Pusat Studi Wanita(Women Study Center) UIN Ar-Raniry uncovering the gender profile of five big universities in Aceh shows that there is a wide gender gap in those five universities, including in UIN Ar-Raniry in terms of access and education distribution, quality and educational relevancy, and accountable management. As for UIN Ar-Raniry, it was found that the number of the male students was far less than that of female students. Another finding, however, shows that compared to that of female lecturers, the number of male ones was outnumbered. For the case of female lecturers, the higher the level of education and position was, the less the number of the female lecturers would be. The gender gaps suggest that both male students and female lecturers have been more likely than their counterparts to face discriminative situation. In addition, gender bias was also found in the teaching and learning process. The result of preliminary research shows that the lecturers

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practiced what Sadker (1979) claims as ‘sexist activities.’ The lecturers preferred boys than girls for becoming the leader of the class. The lecturers also give more attention to boys than girls.

Regarding the subjects of the study, the researcher chose pre-service English teachers under English department. They were also chosen for a thoughtful ground. It has been widely known that educational institution is one of the gendering agents. And most of the times teachers practice their sexist activities unknowingly (Slavin, 2006). This is most likely because they have no knowledge about this. As we have already known that gender issues are not really part of the curriculum for teachers. It is only recently that gender issues are highlighted in the trainings for in-service teachers. In order that these gender bias practices do not persist any longer, there should be attempts to stop them. Developing gender perspective-based English Language Teaching model by involving the pre-service English teachers as the subjects of this research is one of the solutions. As would-be English teachers, they would always work with both girls and boys. Addressing gender issues to them would hinder them from doing gender bias. They would become more aware of sexism and hopefully develop ways to eliminate sexist elements from schools.

Finally, it is hoped that through this Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model, gender awareness of the pre-service English teachers could be developed and, in turn, it can be the answer of the many problems faced by this country.

1.2 Research Problems

Bearing this in mind, the main issue raised here is that there should be an attempt to develop Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model that can build the awareness of pre-service English teachers towards gender issues for their future career. Based on the issue, a research question is then established, that is, “To what extent can Gender Perspective-Based English

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Language Teaching Model build the awareness of pre-service English teachers towards gender issues?

The research question is then specified as follows.

- 1) What did the English language teaching at UIN Ar-Raniry look like before the implementation of Gender Perspective-Based English language teaching model?
- 2) To what extent were pre-service English teachers aware about gender issues before the implementation of Gender Perspective-Based English language teaching model?
- 3) How was Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model using Problem Based Learning developed to promote character education among the students of English Department of UIN Ar-Raniry?
- 4) How did the implemented Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model using Problem Based Learning effectively promote character education among the students of English Department of UIN Ar-Raniry?
- 5) What did the pre-service English teachers perceive about Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model?
- 6) What are the strengths and the weaknesses of Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model to promote character education among the students of English Department of UIN Ar-Raniry?

1.3 Research Objectives

The study addresses the need for developing an ELT model that can both internalize gender awareness to the pre-service English teachers and increase their English language proficiency at the same time through incorporating gender issues. This study has six objectives:

- 1) To give the description of English language teaching at UIN Ar-Raniry before the implementation of Gender Perspective-Based English language teaching model;

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- 2) To examine the level of the awareness of pre-service English teachers about gender before the implementation of Gender Perspective-Based English language teaching model;
- 3) To illustrate the development of Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model using Problem Based Learning to promote character education among the students of English Department of UIN Ar-Raniry;
- 4) To investigate the effectiveness of the result and the process of implementing Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model to promote character education among the students of English Department of UIN Ar-Raniry;
- 5) To find out the perception of pre-service English teachers perceive about Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model.
- 6) To find out the strengths and the weaknesses of Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model to promote character education among the students of English Department of UIN Ar-Raniry.

1.4 Research Importance

- 1) For Science Enrichment
 - (1) Providing new knowledge to the realm of General Education in Indonesia, particularly the development of Gender Perspective Based English Language Teaching Model related to the internalization of gender awareness in the university.
 - (2) Providing new insight into the internalization of gender awareness in multicultural life through integrative ELT.
- 2) To Improve Teaching Practices
 - 1) Providing an alternative solution for the development of ELT that is able to instill the values of gender sensitivity in multicultural life at school.

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- 2) Fostering and encouraging the emergence of the next generation who are not only proficient in English(listening, reading, speaking and writing), but also have a high tolerance for gender differences.

1.5 A Brief Outline of Dissertation

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter I as an introduction presents the background of the study, research problems, research objectives, research importance and brief outline of dissertation. Chapter II provides a theoretical framework which derives from the literatures. From the framework, a set of criteria for this is set up. This literature review chapter consists of topics: (1) character education and its attributes, (2) gender covering reviewing about the concept of gender and other important concept related gender, forms of gender discrimination, factors of gender discrimination, and gender-related policy, gender and formal education, (3) learning models for values internalization, (4) Problem-Based Learning covering the discussion about its characteristics, advantages and disadvantages, and syntax, (5) relevant previous studies, (6) conceptual framework of the research, and (7) research hypothesis. All these are used to support the researcher's arguments throughout this study. Chapter III presents the methodology of this research covering (1) research design, (2) research procedure, (3) research setting and subjects, (4) research variable, (5) data collection techniques, (6) research instrument development, (7) data analysis method, and (8) research flow for giving a whole picture of research implementation. Chapter IV, which is the core of the dissertation, presents the findings and the discussions of the findings. In detail, it contains the results of (1) preliminary research, (2) learning model development based on need analysis, (3) early design of Gender Perspective-Based English Language Teaching Model development, (4) small scale field test and (5) discussion. Finally, chapter V provides the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the research.

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