CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers background of the research, research question, aim of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, research methodology, subject of the research, data analysis, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Research

Gender issues in education have become the main topic in many research. Several studies have been conducted to explore gender issues in education especially in language education since gender is both reflected and constructed in language (Holmes & Meyerhoff 2008, p. 313 cited in Aydınoğlu, 2014). The exploration regarding gender issues in language education including the visual arts, print and non-print media, especially in learning materials. One of the learning materials is textbooks. Textbooks play an important role in education since it had been extensively used both by teachers and students.

Even though textbooks have been extensively used by teachers and students, it is somehow unfortunate that gender-biased content are still exist. This gender-biased content may lead into stereotypes that can dictate the textbooks' viewers to perceive negative traits of particular gender (Yasin et al, 2012). The findings of Aydınoğlu's research in 2014 state that one of the EFL textbooks that are studied is contained full of gender bias. Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008) also found similar things when examine gender issues in Malaysian secondary school English textbook which revealed the men in the textbook mostly possess negative traits. The textbook should serve both females and males greater range of roles, activities, and settingssince textbook are not just as learning sources but also as bridges for students to be connected to the target language culture and values (Bahman & Rahimi, 2010).

Yet, Sunderland (2000) stated the effects on learning of any text are hard to predict but it still has to be remembered that in reading constructively, a reader will be engaging cognitively and affectively with a text. Moreover, Sarland (as quoted from Amirulloh et al., 2010) said "Ideology is not separate concept 'carried by' text but that all texts are inevitably infused by ideologies." Every text is inevitably contains ideology. It means even though there is an assumption toward a text that

the text isn't harmful, it is still infused by ideology and possible to derive vary comprehensions from the viewers. Amirulloh et al. (2010)

also argued that a text that is both implicitly or explicitly contains ideology potential regarding gender role, then the children will adopt the message about the gender role based on the text description. Therefore, gender bias content in the textbook may evoke misconception and can be caused of confusions for the students regarding gender role and construction since the students are textbook main viewers.

Although there is misconception potential because of gender bias content in the textbook, this issue is somehow still disregarded by the teacher. Hindasah (2016) revealed that the teacher neglects the discussion of possible gender issues and the treatment towards the used text was somewhat unclear. Hindasah's research is in way with Kızılaslan's in 2010 that is resulted majority of student teachers in which will become future teacher ignored the gendered presuppositions in texts and continued to be largely gender-blind.

The potential of students' misconception toward certain gender caused by mishandling of gender bias content in a text triggered researcher of this study to conduct the current research. The study is aimed to explore the ways students' make-meaning of gender issues presented in texts used as learning material. Sunderland (2000) stated that it is important for the teachers to be aware of the above forms of bias when selecting textbooks, and for gender bias to be considered on material selection sessions in learning process. To support the awareness, teacher's understanding toward how students produce meaning of gender issues is needed. Hopefully based on the knowledge about how students make meaning of gender, it can minimize the mishandling of gender bias in a text. Therefore, teacher will be able to handle and convey the particular text in betterment situation.

1.2   Research Question

Based on the background of the research, this study is carried out to find out:
In what ways do students make-meaning of gender issue in selected narrative texts in EFL textbook for Junior High School?

1.3   Purpose of the Research

This research is aimed to explore the ways students' make-meaning of gender issue presented in narrative texts used as learning material in an EFL textbook.

1.4   Scope of the Research

According to the research question and the purpose of the research, a limitation has been made to specify the problem in this research. The research is limited to explore the ways students' make-meaning of gender issue presented in narrative texts used as learning material in an EFL textbook. The text selection is based on the kind of the text in which gender is in some way salient, that it has to be texts about people (Sunderland, 2000).

1.5   Significance of the Research

This research is expected to provide various significances as follows:
1. Theoretically:
   a. To teachers, this research can be consideration for teacher's awareness before convey a text contained gender bias content referred to the result of how students make meaning of gender issue.
   b. To school authorities, the result of this research could be one of the considerations in choosing textbook to be used in the learning process.
   c. To textbook writer, the way of how students making meaning of gender could be one of consideration to choose the material that will be included in the textbook.
2. Practically: To future researchers, this research can give benefits as a guideline to support their research. Also, it can be a door of exploration in order to provide supportive information for later research.

1.6   Research Methodology

This research employs a case study qualitative research design. Qualitative research is the research which involves data collection procedures in a sense of open-ended data to be analyzed without employing statistical measurement (Dörnyei, 2012, p. 24).

For the research design, case studies are usually used to portray 'what is like' to be in particular situation, to get a detail description of participants' lived experiences, or the participants' thoughts about and feelings for a situation, and it usually employs various types of data (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007). Hitchcock and Hughes (as stated in Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007) also assert that a case study can be used when the research focuses on "individual actors or groups of

actors, and seeks to understand their perceptions of events." It is in line with the purpose of the study which exploring the ways students' make-meaning of gender issue presented in narrative texts used as learning material in an EFL textbook.

Data were collected through classroom observation by videotaping students' given activity based on the texts used as material and interview with several students as respondent sample. The gathered data were analyzed based on the framework by Sue Jackson (2007) on students' perspective about gender.

1.7   Clarification of the Terms

Since there are several technical terms occur in this research, they need to be clarified to avoid misconception and misunderstanding. The clarifications of those terms are as follows:

Gender refers to everything to do with roles, responsibilities, identities and expectations attached to men and women which socially constructed. It has distinct meaning with sex which refers to biological characteristics that categorize someone as either female or male. (Dziwa, 2013, p. 194).

Gender roles are the product of the interactions between individuals and their environments, and they give individuals cues about what sort of behavior is believed to be appropriate for what sex. (Blackstone, 2003).

Gender stereotype is preconceived ideas whereby females and males are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their gender. (Brannon, 2004, p. 160).

Gender issue refers to any issue or concern determined by gender-based and/or sex-based differences between women and men. (EIGE, 2004).

Gender issue in education refers to any issue or concern determined by gender-based and/or sex-based differences between women and men in education domain.

Meaning-making is the process of how people construe, understand, or make sense of life events, relationships, and the self. (Ignelzi, 2000).

1.8   Paper Organization

The research consists of five chapters. Each chapter has subtopics which are organized as follows:

1. **Chapter I: Introduction**
    This chapter presents the introduction part of the research contained the background of the research, research question, purpose of the research, clarification of related terms, and the organization of the paper.
2. **Chapter II: Literature Review**
    This second chapter discusses ideas and issues relevant to the current research.
3. **Chapter III: Research Methodology**
    This chapter encompasses the explanation how the research is conducted and analyzed. This third chapter covers the overview of research design, research site and participant, data collection, and data analysis.
4. **Chapter IV: Finding and Discussion**
    This chapter discusses the result of the research in the form of data analysis.
5. **Chapter V: Conclusion and Suggestion**
    The last chapter presents conclusion based on the result of data analysis. The suggestion for the betterment of further research is also covered in this chapter.

1.9.   Concluding Remark

This first chapter has discussed the background of the research, research question, purpose of the research, clarification of related terms, and the organization of the paper. In the next chapter, this paper will discuss the literature review of the research.