

Gender Representation in Narrative Texts in English Textbook: Questioning the Values through the 2013 Curriculum

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal gender values in the narrative text of English textbook and how the values meet the requirement of the 2013 Curriculum. This research uses a qualitative approach. The data source is narrative text in English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Data collected through documentation techniques by citing. Meanwhile, the data analysis procedure includes finding how many narrative texts are in the English textbook, reading the text carefully, taking notes and collecting citations. In addition, it is found that the narrative text was dominated by the values of gender inequality. Gender inequality is still considered as a silent missile in today's education and is still present in many stories or classic narrative texts in English textbooks. The researcher also found the unsuitability of the values with the 2013 Curriculum. Finally, based on the findings of this study, the researcher suggested that educational institutions pay more attention to the content of textbooks, not only in accordance with the current curriculum, but also according to student's needs.

Keywords: *English textbooks, narrative text, gender representation, and 2013 Curriculum*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is renowned for being a wealthy nation in terms of both natural resources and culture. Its citizens reside in the same region that is protected by an established, legitimate government that is a part of a single state. However, they share the same ideals, which include honoring moral principles equally, and this has persisted. Unfortunately, it is slowly being destroyed by the traditional values on gender equity that rooted decades ago. Since the equity tends to break away from outdated social norms and practices, many parties are scared and concerned about this issue.

Moral principles may be thought in systematic and directed fashion to younger generation as the successors of the nation's growth. Effective education at school where moral principle is rooted in one of the approaches to sustain values and understanding. By switching the curriculum from KTSP to the 2013 Curriculum, it is in accordance with the government's efforts. The 2013 curriculum is distinct from the KTSP. The 2013 curriculum's goals include reaching particular ideals as well as knowledge development. The government must include religious, social, legal, and moral principles into the teaching and learning process, according to the curriculum.

In the process of teaching and learning, textbooks are crucial. Narrative writing may be one of the mediums used to teach values (Teranishi et al., 2015).

Textbook assists the teacher in facilitating student learning. Additionally, it supports teachers in completing the syllabus-specified learning objective in the classroom. As a result, educators must select textbooks that are suitable, optimal, and beneficial to both students and educators.

Thus, the book's content has a significant impact on both teaching and learning (Isenberg, 1990); as a result, a teacher must be cautious and take into account a number of factors before choosing a certain textbook. It could not be appropriate for students when the textbook's material is either too complex or too easy for them. However, it might be difficult to find English textbooks with content that follows the curriculum.

Government as the ruler and teacher as a facilitator play significant role in education. As long as teachers lack the ability to grasp gender, learning and teaching about gender in schools may not be properly accomplished. That is crucial. The Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia has published English textbooks with narrative texts or stories that include cultural values, with the obvious goal of promoting effective learning. However, it truly symbolizes gender inequity. The use of narrative prose can be a silent sinking weapon (Veugelers, 2010). A particularly creative disguising of a message or ideology might be used in narrative literature (Saparudin, 2022). This is where reading literary works may be quite risky.

It is impossible to exaggerate the value of narrative literature, particularly for language teaching and learning. When students understand narrative elements like character, topic, conflict, setting, and others, they automatically follow the story. The stories guide them toward the message. At this stage, comprehension of literary works helps to advance higher-order thinking and analytical skills.

The problem is narrative texts in language school textbooks usually still contain cultural concerns, including as women are frequently portrayed as having lower status, fewer roles, and other things than males (Ulfah et al., 2019). Cultural studies use the term "gender inequality" to characterize this phenomenon. Of course, this could indirectly affect how well kids understand. When it comes to gender depiction, women are implicitly portrayed in unequal gender bias. As is generally known, textbook topics are closely related to larger educational and cultural contexts.

This study is related to a number of earlier investigations. The first research, "Gender (In)equality in English Textbooks in the Philippines: A Critical Discourse Analysis," was done in 2020 (Curaming & Curaming, 2020). Discourse analysis was used in this study to conduct the research, and the findings indicate that men and women are more aligned than women, reflecting the gender difference, particularly in the economic and political spheres.

The second research, "Gender Representation in Instructional Materials: A Study of Iranian English Language Textbooks and Teachers' Voices" was carried out by Jackie F.K. Lee and Vahid Mahmoudi. It was released in 2020. In both the household and public realms, where the writer tends to uphold Islamic male dominance, the results of manual and computer analyses demonstrate that there is man dominance over woman (Lee & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2020).

The third research, "High school English textbooks promote gender inequality in Afghanistan," was undertaken by Orfan and Sayeed Naqibullah and

was released in 2021. Using mix content analysis, the study's findings show that men are more prevalent in the text than women are, and women are seldom mentioned. Men have a bigger function in the social realm than women do, who have a more limited one. As a result, gender inequality in Afghanistan is encouraged and maintained through the English textbooks (Orfan, 2021).

This research examines gender norms in textbooks and how they meet the requirement to Indonesia's K-13 curricula. The Ministry of Education and Culture released the books for High School students. The problems that were brought up about gender inequality were still existent. As a result, there is a prevalent gender disparity in Indonesia that is propagated through institutional state apparatuses. Since they represent the nation's future generation, schoolchildren need to be taught the right values. Additionally, schools must be able to develop education that is consistent with the character of the country as institutions of higher learning. Aside from the government's role, which the K-13 curriculum does not fully embrace gender equality.

METHOD

In this study, the researcher takes an objective approach toward literature as something that is unconnected to readers, viewers, the environment, and education sphere. Literary works are studied and evaluated using intrinsic components such as themes, storyline, background, traits, and point of view. Literary works are characterized as an objective approach as an autonomous object that must be conceived of as its own aim. This qualitative research focuses on gender representation and questioning the value in Ministry of Education and Culture textbook of senior high school (Bashir, 2017; Widiati et al., 2017).

The narrative texts that are cited in this study serve as the data. Words, phrases, and sentences can all be used in the quote. The source of the data was taken from The Ministry of Education and Culture's textbook for X and XI grades published in 2017. The narrative texts are (1) Issumboshi, (2) Malin Kundang, (3) Strong wind, (4) The Enchanted Fish, (5) Vanity and Pride, (6) Letter to God, and (7) The Last Leaf. These narrative texts for senior high school students are the data primary sources. Reading in depth, taking notes, and quoting are the techniques in collecting the data. The data were analyzed through content analysis. The procedures are proposing the problem, data display, data analysis, critical interpretation, and conclusion.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Gender Representation in Narrative Texts

It is a common truth that the contents of textbooks are closely related to larger educational and cultural contexts. Teaching culture and teaching language are related. As a result, narrative works included in textbooks serve a range of functions, such as drawing students' attention to the subject matter and imparting moral principles. This is how education and the social environment interact. The first narrative text in the textbook is The Enchanted Fish (Bashir, 2017). The narrative centers on a husband and wife who endure a terrible existence in a little hut close to the ocean. Being poor makes the woman fantasize of being affluent and in charge.

The problem is that the woman is referred to as a housewife who exclusively does domestic duties, while the man is regarded as a worker. In fact, it represents the social standing gap between men and women. In general, men and women are depicted differently. Men are typically seen to hold positions of authority over women. The worth of men's actions exceeds women. Gender is not innate; rather, it evolved as a result of the empowering of the patriarchal system (Sassatelli, 2011). This viewpoint clarifies beliefs about injustice by focusing on gender.

Based on the characteristics of gender stereotypes, women are stereotyped. They are renowned, yet they have no power. These explanations help to explain why women are seen as emotional, less educated, have less physically demanding professions, and have inadequate representation. A broad assumption about current differences between men and women's characteristics may be referred to as a gender stereotype. Socially accepted ideas that specific traits may be assigned to individuals depending on their membership in the female or male categories (Butler, 2011a) is how gender stereotypes are described.

Gender stereotypes are defined as socially accepted notions that particular characteristics may be ascribed to individuals based on their membership in the female or male categories (Butler, 2004). In *Vanity and Fair* the narration portray women gives the impression that woman must be beautiful with jewelry. It is important to consider how deeply ingrained the patriarchal system is in our lives and how it either directly or indirectly enslaves women. Does a woman need to be physically and psychologically attractive? When a woman is seen to be beautiful, the idea unintentionally traps her in dangerous circumstances (Gottschall et al., 2008). These women are in danger because they lack of attractiveness. A woman can afford to be successful in all endeavors.

Letter to God (Bashir, 2017) is the third narrative piece in the textbook. Two boys, a mother, and a father make up the farming family described in the book. The daily agricultural items that the family cultivates are essential to their survival. When the farmer labor in the field, cultivating the crops to life, the negative stereotype persists. The woman, on the other hand, works from home while performing domestic duties. From a social and cultural standpoint, women are just as powerless as men. A woman works at home by cooking, caring for the infant, doing the dishes, and performing other household duties. On the other hand, a male is perceived as a strong individual who works outside the home, accomplishing something more difficult than a woman. In general, this is not equivalent. Women are perceived as being weak and frail human beings.

The Last Leaf (Bashir, 2017), a short tale by renowned author O. Henry, is the fourth narrative piece in the course. The story's major characters are painters. The guys in the narrative text discredit and devalue Sue and Johnsy as women. It may be inferred from the friendship between Sue and Johnsy. A studio apartment in a historic Greenwich Village building houses two ladies. Their partnership defies preconceived ideas about LGBTQI people. Their actions raised issues in larger society. Although they are not married, they live together, share a house, and look out for one another. They communicate intimately and have a relationship.

Thus, it might be claimed that they are in a passionate relationship since they are always together out of a fear of dying apart. Of course, the relationship does not suit with Indonesian culture. Here, women are portrayed as being immoral

and facing the heterosexual system's sexual deviance. Only a man and a woman are included in the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 2011b). There are additional relationships beyond the heterosexual framework, which clearly indicate that they are lesbians who commit to being lesbian. As a result, the portrayal paints a dim picture of women and lowers their position. The short narrative that suggests lesbianism is also the most controversial. Of course, it does not align with the objectives of the Indonesian curriculum. It should not be distributed to students or incorporated in textbooks.

Issumboshi is the next narrative text (Widiati et al., 2017). This book tells the tale of two grandparents who cohabitate without a kid. They desire progeny, namely a child. Their request was fulfilled. They ultimately gave birth to a boy called Issumboshi. This story tells of a longing for a coveted child. From this, there is an intriguing question. The child is a boy. Why is a boy being accepted by an old pair of parents? Why not a woman who became a child of his descendants. Women are therefore described as the second sex in the story that has been recounted. This indicates that women still hold a lower status than males. A man is preferred over a woman. Only a man may be the heir to a family's lineage. On the other hands, a woman cannot be considered the heir.

Malin Kundang (Widiati et al., 2017), a well-known story in Indonesia. It is in the West Sumatra region where the tale of Malin Kundang first appeared. Malin Kundang's own mythology describes a disobedient youngster who was cursed to become a stone. Among the distant past, a legend circulated among the fishing community of Air Manis Beach near Padang, West Sumatra. Mande Rubayah, a widow, shared a home with her son Malin Kundang. Malin Kundang was lavishly adored and cared for by Mande Rubayah. Malin subsequently developed into a conscientious and submissive kid. Mande Rubayah was able to support herself and her sole kid when she was elderly by working as a cake seler. Mande Rubayah was left wailing on the seashore when Malin kicked her and rejected his mother. The way Malin acts broke her heart. Malin is cursed turns to stone while she is praying and cursing while she is sobbing. Malin Kundang's wife is a haughty and irritated woman. She does not like her mother-in-law. She is furious and haughty and refuses Mande Rubyah. Malin Kundang's wife is angry and disappointed over the fact that Malin Kundang's mother is an ordinary person, not a noble as told by Malin Kundang.

There are two female figures in Malin Kundang's story, namely his mother and his wife. His mother who immediately cursed Malin for his bad deeds represented that women have bad traits. Women have a sharp weapon that can curse a child. After becoming a mother, a woman changes her role. It would be better if a woman or mother has a loving and compassionate attitude than cursing the child. Malin Kundang's wife was characterized as furious and patronizing his mother. A man or a woman should use discretion while interacting with unconditioned situations. However, Malin's wife would not acknowledge that Mande Rubayah is Malin's mother because she did not believe Malin's statements. A mother can be a lover and a monster at the same time. She can curse, swear, and has magical spell.

Strong Wind (Widiati et al., 2017), a superb swordsman, once existed. He shares a tent near the shore with his sister. Strong Wind has the ability to vanish. No one else could see him, except her sister. When he arrives at the end of the day,

he declares that he will marry the first woman who can see him. In a village, the village chief has three daughters and a deceased wife. One is a lot more youthful than the other two. She is nice, polite, and gorgeous, yet her sister mistreats her and is envious of her. She is forced to wear rags and has her long, black hair chopped short. They also use embers to burn her face, making her seem horrible.

A portrayal or image of a bold and courageous man who is pursued by various women may be seen in the Strong Wind narrative. Some of these women had the audacity to assault other females. A woman is determined to injure another woman in order to win a man's heart. Here, it is demonstrated that women are capable of being cruel to others. This is the reason why women aren't superior to males.

Questioning the Value of Gender through K-13

The curriculum used in the Indonesian educational system is the 2013 curriculum (K-13). The government adopted this curriculum as a permanent replacement for the 2006 Curriculum, which had been in use for around six years and was frequently called KTSP. The 2013 curriculum has four different assessment components: knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior (Daeng Pawero, 2018). The 2013 Curriculum has simplified and expanded content, particularly in the learning materials. A very significant feature of assessment—one with a 60% aspect value—is attitude and behavior (moral). The student's assessment is counted mostly through their attitude regarding their other competencies. In K-13, there are four components to be an assessment: Knowledge (KI-3), Social (KI-2), Spiritual (KI-1), and Skill (KI-4) are the four KIs.

The 2013 curriculum is focused on initiatives to get Indonesia ready for the arrival of Gold Generations in 2045. Indonesian generation is competent in attitude, knowledge, and abilities. Students must own, absorb, and master learn a subject's material, finish a course, or finish a few instructional modules. The 2013 curriculum learning is meant to help students reach their full potential so they can live as faithful, productive, creative, innovative, and affective citizens who can contribute to the life of society, nation, state, and global civilization.

Students are courage to develop behavior that demonstrates a devotee's attitude, an individual of high moral character, who is aware, assured, and responsible in engaging successfully with the social and natural surroundings as well as in positioning themselves as a mirror of the country in international relations (Nuraeni et al., 2020). Have factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge in the areas of science, technology, art, and culture, as well as understandings of humanity, nationalism, statehood, and civilization in relation to the causes and effects of occurrences and events. In addition to building on what is learnt in school individually, skills include the capacity to think and behave creatively and effectively in both the abstract and tangible worlds. When linked to moral values, student self-assessment can be used to promote honesty values and enhance reflective or introspective skills. The attitude aspect of assessment can also be understood as the assessment of students towards themselves by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their attitudes in behavior.

Additionally, all activities made by living beings are considered in the evaluation of the behavioral elements. Students are therefore expected to act in line

with the standards that already exist in the educational and community environments with regard to this issue. Students may demonstrate their understanding of behavioral components by acting appropriately, showing respect for parents and instructors, being truthful while taking tests, stating the truth about themselves, and being ready to put in the necessary effort to succeed.

The curriculum is essential in ensuring that boys and girls have equal opportunities to succeed and advance in their education. The curriculum does, however, have a gender bias, and the majority of the resources used in teaching and learning are still located in low- and middle-income nations. In Indonesia, there was a lot of gender bias in the textbooks especially in English Textbook published by Ministry of Education and Culture 2017 for Senior High School.

This has ramifications for women and men who have the same education and work experience in terms of job chances and earnings. Even though this aspect of equality is not addressed by the educational system, achieving equity in education serves as a catalyst and advances the understanding of gender equality in other spheres of life, such as the workplace and other domestic settings. Women are encouraged by gender stereotypes to pursue jobs in administration, child development, education, and public health, while males are encouraged to pursue careers in law, science, engineering, and technology. When women and men have equal access to resources and products and when they participate equally in political, social, cultural, and economic activities, external equality has been accomplished.

Schools are one of the ideological apparatuses that legally give education about a diversity of information about society (Backer, 2022). Students can learn good values and conventions from schools. In certainty, some learning methods actively construct behavior and habits that alienate men and women. Patriarchal ideologies continue to rule social construction at this time. Thus, male dominance may be seen in many areas of society, especially education. Curriculum attempts to be implemented in schools cannot be split up from relational behaviors like male dominance. It demonstrates how the curricula govern over learning activities that fosters relations of inequity. The curriculum serves as a potent instrument to enforce the status quo of gender inequality (Ulfah et al., 2019). This emerges the reproduction of social relations.

Students' views and behavior towards gender inequality are constructed as a result of using textbooks that do not demonstrate gender equality. Furthermore, the effect ultimately degenerate gender disparity in society. Gender has long been a contentious subject for public discourse. Regarding the duties, responsibilities, rights, and obligations associated with men and women, gender is a social construction (Ariyanto, 2018). Thus, we should stop the reconstruction of gender inequity as long as parents, teacher, society, and government work together to have awareness and concrete action regarding the issue.

Gender equality education for students must be given since early childhood education to highest degree education. Students may discriminate against people based on their gender. In this sense, parents and teachers may accommodate, particularly when it comes to educate and guide the children on gender issues. Government indifference and inattentiveness can keep the gender gap in society from being bigger and more rooted. The government should make specific moves

using its curriculum apparatuses, such carefully examining the curriculum's development. Additionally, it is necessary to be able to select reading material for narrative storytelling that is gender-equitable when generating textbooks for schools. The teacher's involvement is crucial in helping pupils comprehend the narrative text's meaning and interpretation, even though the narrative text itself can be read in a number of different ways.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis above, it can be stated that the value in narrative text regarding gender equity is rooted in every story. On the other hands, the curriculum itself motionless disregard the value of gender bias. The Government should aware of this reproduction notion in gender and femineity that shackles woman in global and domestics spheres. The curriculum and the narrative text in the textbook do not meet the requirements of the core missile in gender equality in Indonesia. Creating and implementing a gender-equitable education system in Indonesia is necessity. This is due to the fact that in Indonesia, education has always been a crucial requirement for children to be prepared for and skilled of surviving in the dynamic's global civilization.

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