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Gender Equality in the Foreign Language Textbooks of Indonesian Junior High Schools

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Abstract
The objectives of this research were (1) to find out the gender representation of men and women in the English curriculum documents; and (2) to find out the distribution of men and women in the foreign curriculum documents. The sample consisted of three most common books used in junior high schools representing grade VII, VIII and IX. The data on gender equality were analyzed through content analysis approach. The results of the research showed that: (1) the lexical representation of men compared to women in the textbook were higher than women lexical related issues; (2) the distributions of men were also much wider compared to the distribution of women. The word 'he' is used much more frequently that the used of word 'she' in different context of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Keywords: Gender equality; language textbook; Indonesian junior high schools

Introduction

Current studies have mostly focused on the implementation of English curriculum, cultural issues, and the improvement English language skills for elementary and secondary school students. It obvious that very little information on gender quality in English language teaching and learning has been explored particularly within Indonesian contexts. Therefore, this article addresses this gap and contribute to the better understanding of gender equality and its distribution in English language contexts globally and locally.

This research is informed by theory of equality proposed by United Nations (2022) and how it is applied within Indonesian contexts. The term gender equality is defined as the measurable

equal representation of women and men. Gender equality does not imply that women and men are the same, but that they have equal value and should be accorded equal treatment (the United Nation 2000). Gender Equality is perceived differently by different people in different countries including in Indonesia.

Globally, the research on gender equality has been conducted in many areas. For example, male domination in then textbooks of Afghanistan (Orfan, 2023), male domination in Vietnamese textbook contexts (Vu & Pham, 2023), gender roles in high school textbooks (Dewi, Rizki Yuliatin, & Eka 2022), gender and bilingual instruction (Abduh, 2018), gender equality in senior European citizens (Sánchez-García, Gil-Lacruz, & Gil-Lacruz, 2022) and gender equality in oceanography (Legg, Wang, Kappel, & Thompson, 2023). These studies shows that the gender equality in global contexts has been dominated by male domination.

For Indonesia, principles of gender equality and the empowerment of women have been ratified several times and it is promoted across Indonesia. In August 2007, the UN praised Indonesia for the proliferation of Law No 21/2007 on Human Trafficking, Law No 12/2006 on Citizenship (children from Indonesian mothers whose fathers are noncitizens have the right of dual citizenship until they reach 18 years old), and Law No 23/2004 on Domestic Violence (Wardhani, 2023).

Research in gender issues has been conducted by many researchers such as gender equality in movie contexts (Fatihaya & Simanjuntak, 2022), gender equality in human resources management (Infante & Darmawan, 2022), gender equality in higher educational reserch (Rosa & Clavero, 2022), gender and multicultuiralism (Jayadi, Abduh, & Basri, 2022) and students and teachers' perspectives of gender equality and problems in higher education (Sigurdardottir, Rafnsdottir, Jónsdóttir, & Kristofersson, 2023). From these investigations, studies in gender equality have been investigated in many sectors, however, the issue of gender equality in foreign language textbooks have become less attention for many researchers. Therefore, this paper explores the gender equality representation in foreign language textbooks in Indonesia

Method

The method used in this study is content analysis. Content analysis is the examination of the core elements of documents, documentations, and artefacts (Patton, 2014). The documents used for content analysis in this study were foreign language textbooks.

Sources of content analysis

This is a content analysis of three most common books used in Indonesian junior high schools. The three books are listed in Table 1 below

Table 1. Source of content analysis

No	Authors	Year	Title	Publisher	Page in total	Use
1	Artono Wardiman, Masduki B. Jahur, M. Sukiman	2008	Bahasa Inggris: English in Focus	Pusat Perbukuan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional	176	Grade VII
2	Utami Widiati et al	2008	Contextual Teaching & Learning	Pusat Perbukuan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional	148	Grade VIII

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No						
			Bahasa Inggris			
3	Ahmad Ahmat Effendi	Doddy, Sugeng,	2008	Bahasa Inggris: Developing English Competencies	Pusat Perbukuan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional	184	Grade IX

Procedures of content analysis

The procedure of conducting content analysis is that researchers read the whole content of the books. Then, researchers underline the keywords that are associated with the gender equality especially the representation of female and male stated below:

Table 2. Key representation of gender equality

No	Lexical representation	
Gender category	Male	female
Gender frequency	Percentage	Percentage

Results

The finding of the study shows that there are words associated with the gender category in the three books, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Lexical items associated with Gender found in three books

Gender category	Lexical representation
Female	She (her), Mrs, Woman (women), Miss (Ms), lady (ies), Girl (s), Daughter (s), mother, widow, Dame (female knight).
Male	He (him, his), Mr, Man (Men), boy (boys), son (s), father, dad, gentleman (gentlemen), knight, Widower.

It shows that there are several category of gender equality representation found in three books. For male, there are words of he, him, man, men and for female, there are words such as female knight, women, she and widow. The interesting part of the findings is that there are equal representation of both female and male words found in the three books relating to the words of gender.

In book one, the percentage of female is dominated by the use of the word she and her while the least representation is related to daughter. The medium category is the words of girl, mother and woman. It is described in Table 4 below

Table 4. Female frequency and percentage of in texts of senior high school book 1

No	Female lexis	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	She, her	112	49.77
2	Lady (ladies)	0	0.00
3	Mrs.	35	15.55
4	Miss, Ms	33	14.66
5	Woman (women)	9	4.00
6	Girl (girls)	15	2.22
7	Mother (s)	16	7.11

No		Frequency	Percentage
8	widow	0	0.00
9	Dame	0	0.00
10	Daughter (s)	5	2.22
	Total	225	100

For male category, in book one, the percentage of male is dominated by the use of the words, *he, his, and him,* while the least representation is related to man. The medium category is the words of boy and father. It is described in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Male frequency and percentage in texts of junior high school book 1

No	Male lexis	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	He, his, him	101	42.79
2	Mr	101	42.79
3	Man (men)	2	0.84
4	Boy (s)	10	4.23
5	Father(s)	17	7.20
6	widower	0	0.00
7	Knight	0	0.00
8	Gentleman	0	0.00
9	Dad	0	0.00
10	Son	5	2.11
	Total	236	100

It can be seen from this category of male and female in book one shows that the higher representation between male and female is the male category, with the total of 236. This indicates that the gender domination in book is male category.

Table 6. Female frequency and percentage of in texts of junior high school book 2

No	Female lexis	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	She, her	106	63.85
2	Lady (ladies)	1	0.60
3	Mrs.	17	10.24
4	Miss, Ms	8	4.81
5	Woman (women)	7	4.21
6	Girl (girls)	10	6.02
7	Mother (s)	17	10.24
8	widow	0	0.00
9	Dame	0	0.00
10	daughter	0	0.00
	Total	166	100

For male category, in book two, the percentage of male is dominated by the use of the words, *he, his, and him, while* the least representation is related to boy. The medium category is the words of father and man. It is described in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Male frequency and percentage in texts of junior high school book 2

No	Male lexis	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	He, his, him	106	75.17
2	Mr	10	7.09

No		Frequency	Percentage
3	Man (men)	15	10.63
4	Boy (s)	2	1.41
5	Father	8	5.63
6	widower	0	0.00
7	Knight	0	0.00
8	Gentleman	0	0.00
9	Dad	0	0.00
10	Son	0	0.00
	Total	141	100

In book three, the percentage of female is dominated by the use of the word *she and her* while the least representation is related to widow. The medium category is the words of woman and Mrs. It is described in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Female frequency and Percentage in texts of senior high school book 3

No	Female lexis	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	She, her	149	57.30
2	Lady (ladies)	2	0.76
3	Mrs	14	5.38
4	Ms	1	0.33
5	Woman (women)	6	2.31
6	Girl (girls)	40	15.38
7	Mother (s)	45	17.31
8	widow	1	0.34
9	Dame	2	0.75
	Total	260	100

In book three, the percentage of male is dominated by the use of the word *he, his,* and *him.* while the least representation is related to dad. The medium category is the words of knight and gentleman. It is described in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Male frequency and percentage in texts of senior high school book 3

No	Male lexis	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	He, his, him	428	76.29
2	Mr	46	8.19
3	Man (men)	2	0.35
4	Boy (s)	0	0.00
5	Father	55	9.80
6	widower	0	0.00
7	Knight	6	1.06
8	Gentleman	6	1.06
9	Dad	1	0.17
10	Son	17	3.03
	Total	561	100

Discussion

From findings above, it appears that all content of the three books, the male representation is higher than the female category representation. This shows that the male is dominant in all

category of the book contents. This representation has two reasons: the national of culture which are male dominants impacts on the content of the books, and the root culture of the society is where male has major roles in many aspects of society.

The findings of this study shows the consistency of the findings with the previous studies that equality is not addressed properly in the textbook contents. It is indicated by the male domination as founded in the previous studies (Orfan, 2023; Vu & Pham, 2023; Dewi, Rizki Yuliatin, & Eka, 2022).

This research has several implications:

a. there is a need to ratify the contents of many foreign language textbooks to represent equal man and woman for teaching and learning purposes
b. There should be a consensus among books' authors to portray gender equality in the contents of the books at all level of education
c. There is a need to train gender equality actors and actress to promote the equality of gender from basic to higher level of education.
d. For policy makers, it is important to provide detail policy and framework vertically and horizontally so that it can become the guideline for people who promote gender equality.

Conclusion

The results of the research showed that: (1) the lexical representation of men compared to women in the textbook were higher than women lexical related issues; (2) the distributions of men were also much wider compared to the distribution of men. The word 'he' is used much more frequently that the used of word 'she' in different context of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

This research has pedagogical implication: 1) teachers need to understand the basic concept of equality in education so that they can treat everyone equally. 2). With the good understanding of gender equality, there is a need for teachers to apply in the classroom contexts where interaction between students and teachers occur at equal levels.

Research for future is needed especially to understand the perspectives of policy makers, teachers, educators, and activists of gender equality from different sectors, not only from educational sectors but also from non-educational sectors. The future research for longitudinal perspectives are important one because they can provide holistic and comprehensive understanding of the research.

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