

## A Sexism Analysis in English Textbook Used in Indonesian Schools' 7th Grade Entitled: “When English Rings a Bell” Published by the Ministry of Education and Culture

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**Abstract.** Sexism is a foundation where there is unequal treatment between men and women in society. This unequal treatment emphasizes the dominance of men over women. This research analyzed sexism in English textbook 7th grade entitled “When English Rings a Bell” Published by the Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia. This research used descriptive qualitative method and used six criteria of sexism based on NCTE guidelines for gender-fair use of language and also Porreca’s study to analyze the data, that are includes: generic he, generic man, titles, labels and names, occupational roles, omission, firstness. The technique of data analysis of this research adopted from Miles and Huberman theory. The aims of this research is to know the dominant criteria of sexism found in English textbook 7th grade entitled “When English Rings a Bell” Published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia. The results of this research shows that there are 5 criteria of sexism found in the English textbook 7th grade entitled “When English Rings a Bell” Published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia, that are includes: generic man, titles, labels and names, the occupational, omission, firstness. The dominant criteria’s of sexism found is omission criteria.

**Keywords:** efl textbook; sexism; society

### A. INTRODUCTION

Sexism refers to a societal foundation that perpetuates unequal treatment between men and women, resulting in the dominance of men over women. It is a systemic issue where men and women are not merely distinct but unequal. The manifestation

of sexism in language serves to the detriment of women rather than men (Cameron, as cited in Touran Ahour, Bayezid Towhidiyan, and Mahnaz Saeidi, 2014). Therefore, the language of sexism reinforces the presence of inequality between the sexes. Moreover, any form of language discrimination that favors one sex over the other is considered sexism (Saci, as cited in Bataineh, 2018). To conclude, sexism exaggerates one sex and/or allows one sex to dominate the other, with males being regarded as superior to females in this instance.

Additionally, sexism pervades every aspect of life in various forms, each distinct at different levels. In the realm of education, sexism may manifest as sexual harassment and gender-based stereotypes. In particular, sexism in education can also be expressed through subtle portrayals in textbooks. In Indonesian schools, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks are used as a tool for teaching and learning foreign languages. Textbooks serve as the primary language input received by students, or as a medium for them to practice language skills (Tomlinson in Riana Herlinda, 2014). Thus, the use of textbooks can aid students in improving their foreign language proficiency through classroom instruction. Furthermore, textbooks play a crucial role in guiding teachers, as they can support them during potentially disruptive and challenging changes, showcase innovative and untested methodologies, introduce gradual change, and establish a foundation upon which teachers can develop a more creative teaching methodology of their own (Hutchinson and Torres in David R.A. Litz).

To ensure the quality of textbooks, it is essential to undergo a thorough textbook analysis process, especially considering the role and the importance of a textbook. Through this process, it becomes easier to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the textbooks used. Textbook analysis involves a consistent evaluation procedure that aims to identify the particular advantages and drawbacks of textbooks already in use (Sheldon in Ni'mal Fuyudloturromaniyyah, 2015). Therefore, it can be

argued that conducting a textbook analysis process can help determine the quality of a book, including its impact on students.

As previously mentioned, analyzing and examining sexism in textbooks is crucial because it can impact the construction of students' gender identities and their perception of gender roles. If textbooks promote sexism through biased or stereotypical portrayals of one gender over the other, students may internalize these beliefs and apply them in their lives, as noted by Hartman and Judd in Syarifuddin's study (2014).

Several previous studies have addressed the issue of sexism in EFL textbooks used in Indonesian schools. For instance, Syarifuddin's study (2014) found that sexism was present in the EFL textbooks used in Indonesian schools, with male-gendered words being mentioned first in a ratio of 10:1 compared to female-gendered words. Another study, "Confronting Subtle Sexism in an Indonesian EFL Textbook," analyzed a Bahasa Inggris Kelas XII textbook for twelfth graders published by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia. The results of the study showed that even though the textbook did not contain blatant or covert sexism, it still promoted subtle sexism that the writers may not have been aware of, as noted by Ana Humardhiana and Yayah Nur Hidayah (2020).

In summary, the researcher is interested in conducting a sexism analysis in an English textbook used in Indonesian schools, specifically in the 7th grade textbook entitled "When English Rings a Bell" published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The researcher discovered a context of sexism in the textbook, such as the portrayal of women as a mere complement to their husbands. The researcher is particularly interested in identifying the dominant criteria of sexism present in the textbook. This study is different from previous studies as it focuses on a specific textbook and aims to identify the dominant criteria of sexism present.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

The present study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach and utilized content analysis as the research design. Specifically, the content analysis focused on analyzing materials, including pictures, texts, vocabularies, and exercises in the English textbook entitled “When English Rings a Bell” that were related to sexism. The data for this research were taken from the English textbook entitled “When English Rings a Bell” 7th grade, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The data sources for this research were taken from journals, articles, and theses related to sexism analysis.

As the primary instrument of data collection, the researcher acted as a key instrument in this study. Additionally, several complementary tools were employed, including laptops, notebooks, digital dictionaries, and pens. The data collection process followed several steps: first, the researcher read the English textbook entitled “When English Rings a Bell” published by the Ministry of Education and Culture; second, the researcher paid close attention to all parts of the textbook; third, the data that were collected contained criteria of sexism that were noted and placed as primary data; and finally, the researcher classified the data into six criteria of sexism and analyzed the data.

To analyze the data, this study employed the steps outlined by Miles and Huberman. The three steps used to perform data analysis in qualitative research, based on Miles and Huberman, include: [a] Data Condensation, [b] Data Display, [c] Drawing Conclusion and Verification (Miles and Huberman, 2014).

## **C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Findings***

Upon identification of the data that met the criteria of sexism in the textbook, a total of 891 instances were found and collected for analysis. The researcher then

proceeded to classify the data into six criteria of sexism, namely: generic he, generic man, titles, labels and names, occupational roles, omission, and firstness. The classification was based on NCTE Guidelines and Porreca's study. Subsequently, the researcher conducted an analysis of the data within each criterion of sexism, based on the aforementioned guidelines and study. The findings of the analysis for each of the six criteria of sexism have been elaborated on earlier in this chapter.

### *Generic He*

The first one is “Generic He” Criteria. Generic he is a male singular pronoun which is used as the default pronoun for represent both sexes (Syarifuddin, 2014). After the researcher identify and classify the data that related to the generic he criteria, the results shows that all of the chapters in the English textbook 7th grade entitled “When English Rings a Bell” published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia there is no example or data related into criteria of sexism “Generic He”. It means in the English textbook 7th grade entitled “When English Rings a Bell” Published by Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia there is no example data that explain male singular pronoun which is used as the default pronoun for represent both sexes.

### *Generic Man*

The second finding is generic man criteria. This criteria means the use of man to both genders, excludes women (Syarifuddin, 2014). There is one example data that is related to criteria of sexism “generic man” in English textbook 7th grade entitled “When English Rings a Bell” published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia. This example is in chapter VII on pages 160 with the sentence is “my father is a good man”. In this sentence, the word “man” included into criteria of sexism generic man because the word man represents and emphasizes the position of men. Based on NCTE Guidelines, to make language more inclusive we can choose inclusionary alternatives from “my father is a good man” could be “my

father is a good person”. The reason for replacing the word “man” with word “person” in the sentence “my father is a good man” because the word man here emphasizes the position of men. Whereas person itself is a form of noun which is means “orang”. “Orang” here is someone whose identify is clear and singular. Therefore, the purpose of replacing the word “man” to “person” is make the sentence does not represent and emphasize the position of men.

### *Titles, Lables and Names*

The third finding is titles, labels and names criteria. Titles, labels and names are used linguistically more feminine word and titles (Syarifuddin, 2014). There are 15 data related to the titles, labels and names criteria. In chapter I, there are 5 data related to criteria of sexism titles, labels and names, that are includes:

- 1) “Mrs. Rita” (p.4),
- 2) “Mr. and Mrs Smith” (p. 8),
- 3) “Mr and Mrs A dnan” (P.8),
- 4) “Mrs. Ahmad” (p.12),
- 5) “Mrs. Lina” (P.13),
- 6) “Mrs. Rita” (p. 14),
- 7) “Mrs. Yuli” (p.15),
- 8) “Mrs. Vina” (p. 15).

In the chapter II, there are 3 data that related to the titles, labels and names criteria.

There are includes:

- 1) “Mrs. Kurnia” (p.33),
- 2) “Mrs. Yulia” (p. 33),
- 3) “Miss. Mutia” (p. 33).

In chapter V, any 1 example data into titles, labels and names criteria, that is

- 1) “Miss Mutia” (p. 128).

Next chapters VI, there are 2 examples data related to this criteria that are includes:

1) “Miss Mutia” and “Miss Mutiara” (p.146).

In chapter VII, there is 1 example data related to the titles, labels and names criteria that is

1) “Mrs. Herlina” (p. 158).

Many examples of Mrs were found in English textbook 7th grade entitled “*When English Rings a Bells*” published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia. Based on NCTE guidelines, it is better to avoid forms such as Miss, Mrs to Ms to create an equitable of marital status. In other word use Ms. for married as well as unmarried women (Syarifuddin, p. 6, 2014). Based on the examples data that related to this criteria’s, all off the data promotes gender equity. The title label a women in relation to her relationship with a man in this case is her marital status. For examples data is “Mrs. Rita” (p.4), the title “Mrs” promotes gender equity. In this context the title “Mrs” indicates of sexism and shows that Rita is married. Based on NCTE guidelines, it would be better if we choose or take an inclusionary alternative title “Ms” for married or unmarried women. So it could be “Ms. Rita”. Apart from that, there are data promotes gender equity, which is describes a women as a mere complement to her husband, belittling women or make them invisible, one example data is “Mr and Mrs Adnan”, based on NCTE guidelines, the title “Mr. and Mrs. Adnan” promotes gender equity because this title labels a women, which is describes a women as a mere complement to her husband, belittling women or make them invisible, so this example shows sexism and it could be avoided by replacing Mrs with Ms and replacing a women’s name before her husband’s name. We can take or choose more inclusion alternatives for example “Ms. (her name) Adnan and Mr. Adnan.”. In addition, there is also data that promotes gender equity that shows that women are young girls. The example data is “Miss Mutia”. The title “Miss” indicates of sexism and shows that Mutia is young girl. Based on NCTE guidelines, it would be better to avoid forms such as Miss, Mrs and choose or take an inclusionary alternative title “Ms” to create an equitable form of address for all

women regardless of marital status, and use Ms. for married or unmarried women and young girl. So, the title “Miss Mutia” could be “Ms. Mutia”.

### *The Occupational Roles*

The fourth criteria are occupational roles. Occupational roles are the number and ratio of different jobs for women and men both in the text (based on context or in the form of illustrations/pictures) (Syarifuddin, 2014). From the results presented, it can be seen that the occupational roles for men are more varied. The total number of occupational roles of men and women both in text and pictures/illustration is (9:7). Therefore it can be said that, the occupational roles of men in the textbook 7th grade entitled “*When English Rings a Bell*” dominates more than the occupational roles of women. In the textbook 7th grade entitled “*When English Rings a Bell*”, the occupational roles of women in text except as student and teacher includes: Housewife (p. 33) and (p. 128), Nurse (p. 33), Surgeon (p.128), Science teacher (p. 158), Elementary school teacher (p.160), English teacher (p.161), Banker (p.161). While, the occupational roles for men in the English textbook 7th entitled “*When English Rings a Bell*” published by Ministry of Education and Culture except as student and teacher includes: farmer (p.128), mathematics teacher (p. 128), volleyball player (p. 160), Janitor (p.163), footballs player (p.164). Besides that, when viewed, most of the pictures in this textbook illustrate the role of women are passive. Women are illustrated at home, such as the following like cook food for the children pictures pages 4, prepare food and eat with family pictures pages 39, 91, 127, cook in the kitchen pictures pages 91, watch TV together with family pictures pages 92. In addition, males are illustrated as active people, such as go to an office wearing a formal bag and riding a motorcycle (pictures p. 12), control traffic in a police uniform (pictures p. 5), go to the school and carry a formal bag (pictures p. 5), being a guide at events (pictures p. 8), being a scout guide (pictures p. 8, p.12).

### *Omission*

The fifth criteria is omission. Omission is the number and also ratio of females and males in texts and illustrations or pictures (Syarifuddin, 2014). The results show that the number of male omissions both in text and pictures or illustrations in English textbook 7th grade entitled “*When English Rings a Bell*” published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia shows more male than female. The total number of male omissions in text is 191 example data and the total number female omission in text is 187 examples data. In addition, the total number of males in pictures or illustration is 260 and the total number of females in pictures/illustration is 218. Therefore, the total number of male omissions in both text and pictures/illustration when combined are 451, while female omissions in both text and pictures/illustrations are combined, the result is 405. Thus, the results of omission both in the text and pictures or illustrations there is shows sexism in this English textbook, because the total number of males more than the total number of females. Braguilles and Cromer claimed that to identify gender of pictures can be done by analyze the attributes which on the pictures. The attribute such as hairstyles and clothes, which are highly stereotyped according cultural context, may sometimes provide a basis for classification. For example, female has long and knotted hair while male has very short hair (Brugeilles and Cromer, 2009). Moreover, female usually wear skirt or dress while male wear trouser.

### *Firstness*

The six criteria are firstness. Firstness is the number and comparison of the order of mention (word pairs opposite sex), which means that there is a give priority to one of the sexes or in other words one of the sexes is mentioned first (Syarifuddin, 2014). In the English textbook 7th grade entitled “*When English Rings a Bell*” published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia, the examples data that related to this criteria only found in chapter I, the data includes 2 data into male first

and 1 data into female first. The examples data into male first includes: a) Good evening, Mr and Mrs. Smith (p. 8), b) Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Adnan. How are you? (p. 8). In this sentence male word come first before female word. And 1 example data into female first is “Goodbye Siti, Beni. Take care. See you on Sunday (p. 12)”. In this sentence show the female word come first before the male word. Therefore, the total number of the order mention of men and women is (2:1). Thus, it can be said that there is shows sexism because the number of the order mention of men is more than female.

Based on the analysis of sexism in English Textbook Used in Indonesian Schools’ 7th Grade Entitled “*When English Rings a Bell*” published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia, the findings show the English textbook 7th grade entitled “When English Rings a Bell” Published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia contain context of sexism in it. This is because after the researcher collect and analyze the data through six criteria of sexism, that are follows: a) Generic He, [b] Generic man, [c] titles, labels, and names, [d] occupational roles for males and females, both in texts and illustrations or pictures, [e] omission, and the last is [f] firstness. The first three aspects (a-c) is based on National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)’s ‘Guidelines for gender-fair use of languages’ and for the d-f is based on Porreca’s study, it known that far From the 6 criteria of sexism used to analyze, only 5 criteria of sexism were found in the English textbook 7th grade entitled “When English Rings a Bell” Published by Ministry of Education and Culture at Indonesia, there are includes: Generic Man, Titles, Labels and Names, Occupational Roles, Omission and also firstness. The finding criteria of sexism generic man show 1 example data that related into the criteria. 15 examples data related to the titles, labels and names criteria. The number of occupational roles of men and women is (9:7). The total number of male omissions in text and pictures or illustrations when combined is 451 while female omissions in both text and

pictures or illustrations are combined, the result is 405. The order mention of firstness the results show the ratio (2:1), 2 data into male first and 1 data into female first. From 5 criteria of sexism that were found in this textbook, the numbers of omission are more dominant than the other criteria, because if we look at the ratio of the number of men and women here, the number of men is more dominant than the number of women. It can be concluded that the English textbook writers pay less attention to the element of sexism in the English textbooks they write and publish.

#### **D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

##### ***Conclusion***

After conducting the analysis, it is evident that the English textbook used by Indonesian 7th grade students entitled "When English Rings a Bell" and published by the Ministry of Education and Culture contains various instances of sexism. Out of the six criteria of sexism analyzed, five were found in the textbook, including generic man, titles, labels and names, occupational roles, omission, and firstness. Among these criteria, the most dominant one is omission, with a total of 451 male omissions compared to 405 female omissions in text and pictures or illustrations combined. The finding related to the criteria of generic man includes one example data, while the criteria of titles, labels, and names have 15 examples. The occupational roles of men and women in the textbook are depicted in a ratio of 9:7. Additionally, the order of mention for firstness is also gender-biased, with a ratio of 2:1 in favor of males.

Overall, the findings suggest that there are still significant differences between the way males and females are depicted in the textbook, with women often marginalized and portrayed as passive individuals, particularly in terms of their

occupational roles. This highlights the insufficient attention given by textbook writers to the issue of sexism in their publications.

### ***Suggestion***

Based on the findings of this research, it is strongly recommended that writers of EFL textbooks be more aware of the existence of sexism when creating their materials. It is important to revise and improve EFL textbooks to eliminate instances of sexism and ensure that they are not distributed to schools in Indonesia. Additionally, teachers should carefully evaluate the content of EFL textbooks before using them in the teaching and learning process. This is because textbooks can serve as a guide for students, and if they contain contexts of sexism, students may learn discriminatory attitudes towards women. Furthermore, future researchers who want to conduct similar research should use this study as a reference and strive to conduct more comprehensive research to help identify and eliminate sexist contexts in EFL textbooks.

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