

“Cinderella” Vs “Timun Mas”: Exploring Gender Stereotypes and Culture as Learning Material Purposes

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Abstract

Gender roles are an important part of culture. How the genders are portrayed in the literature contributes to the image young adults develop of their gender roles and the role of gender in the social order. This research entitled “Cinderella VS Timun Mas : Exploring gender stereotypes and culture as learning materials purposes” aimed to analyze the content of both “Cinderella” and “Timun Mas” which cover: 1. Occupations and Gender Stereotypes; 2 Centrality of Female and Male Characters; 3. Culture Content ; and 4 Suitability as learning material purposes. This research is a qualitative study using content analysis. It was carried out with procedures: collecting, analyzing, and presenting data. Based on research questions it is revealed that for occupation and gender types showed that “Timun mas” has varieties of gender with 66,67% reference whereas “Cinderella” only has 50% references. For the centrality of male and female character, “Cinderella” has more varieties in 37,5% male and 62,5% female whereas in “Timun Mas” showed 50% for both genders”. For the cultural content, in “Timun Mas” the cultural content found was 60% and in “Cinderella” was 80%. And the suitability to be used as learning materials showed that “Timun Mas” checked with 16 points whereas “Cinderella” checked with 20 points. It can be concluded that both can be used as authentic learning materials for gender references, but “Cinderella” has more varieties and cultural content compared to “Timun Mas”.

Keywords: *Cinderella, Timun Mas, gender, materials*

Introduction

Human in society consists of females and males and they have assigned each and different roles. Especially when portraying in literature usually there were clear sets of roles, assigned and genders on how they should act, think, and do. In our daily activities, we will not be separated from matters related to gender because the existence of gender is a result of the social construction of the community itself.

Like all other media bombarding people with images and information, books also play significant role in transmitting society to our youth. Gender roles are an important part of this culture. How the genders are portrayed in the literature contributes to the image young adults develop of their gender roles and the role of gender in the social order. This issue is made more complex by the fact that gender plays an important role in the reading choices of young men and women (Wood, 1994).

Gender is a combination of nature and culture, biological traits as well as learned behaviors (Ryan, 2010). Gender roles are among other cultural identities that play an

important role in learning. Based on our observation usually gender is not really defined as parts of Indonesia's education and isn't something that it would describe explicitly. However, the government has tried to implement gender into curriculum based on the assumption that women and men are equal in education and with that noted that they also have the same opportunities in education

An understanding of gender identity is generally shaped by people's beliefs about the gender roles held by each culture. This shared belief often takes a simplified form, namely as a stereotype of gender roles. A stereotype is a widely held, simplified, and essentialist belief about a specific group. Groups are often stereotyped based on sex, gender identity, race and ethnicity, nationality, age, socioeconomic status, language, and so forth. Stereotypes are deeply embedded within social institutions and wider culture. They are often evident even during the early stages of childhood, influencing and shaping how people interact with each other. For example, video game designers designed a game platform for girls in pink because that is what the parents (who purchase the game) perceived their girls wanted. On the contrary, the girls themselves preferred darker metallic colors (Rommies, 2006).

In our society in Indonesia, the characteristics that are generally developed and desirable in the character of children are competent and resilient for boys and submissive, gentle, and affectionate for girls. This stereotype is also sometimes illustrated in the form of literature. The stereotype depictions in the story or literature tend to show that men always play a dominant role, while women are portrayed as helpless. Story with women as the main character tends to show more in need of help to solve the problem. Eventually, male figures will come as helpers. Indonesia is basically a patriarchal society where women are expected to play traditional subordinate roles as daughters, wives, and mothers. However Indonesian women have come a long way in the last few years. Now, woman seen as almost as equal as man. Although gender inequality still exists, the situation is changing. Indonesian law mandates that political parties should include at least 20% women as their candidates for the House of Representatives (World Trade Press, 2010). In education, women are often marginalized. In rural areas and underdeveloped areas where resources are scarce when a choice must be made parents often discourage girls from continuing their education. In 2010 only 12,8% girls finish high school but in 2020 the amount of 68,72% for both boys and girls finished high school (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020).

One of the famous narrative stories where female as main character is "Cinderella" which has many versions and translated into many languages across the globe. In "Cinderella" the story describing a girl who was tortured by her stepmother and stepsisters, but finally have her happy ending after she was married to the prince. This was leading to a syndrome called "Cinderella complex" (Zain, 2016) which refers to women's tendency to depend psychologically, as indicated by the existence strong desire to be cared for and protected by others, especially men. On the contrary, another female character in "*Timun Mas*" which means "*Timun*" is "*cucumber*" and "*mas*" means "*gold*" describing a story about a girl who was born from a magic gold cucumber who was beautiful and brave and fight monster to save her life. "Gender stereotyping" is the practice of ascribing to an individual woman or man specific attributes, characteristics, or roles solely because of their membership in the social group of women or men. Gender stereotypes limit children's potential by prescribing acceptable and unacceptable behavior to girls and boys. Gender stereotypes can be harmful insofar as they negatively restrict how children and indeed adults see themselves and

others. These assumptions restrict opportunities, constrain choices, and can lead to unequal gender outcomes (Fawcett Report, 2019).

Literature is one place where gender stereotypes are encountered and learned. Picture books provide role models for children. They also provide visual and textual representations of what it is to be a man and a woman (Fawcett Report, 2019). In recent years, the role of literature as a basic component and source of authentic texts of the language curriculum rather than an ultimate aim of English instruction has been gaining momentum. Many teachers consider the use of literature in language teaching as an interesting and worthy concern (Sage, 1987).

Literature is a powerful vehicle for students understand their homes, communities and the world provide impressions and messages that can last a lifetime. As stated by Khan (Khan, 2016) culture influence in English learning due to improving the student speaking ability because from that the student get the new vocabulary and they will have a good manner. Therefore, it is essential to review the stories and choose criteria that reflect the diversities and the roles of the gender to expose students as much as possible in cultural aspects, gender references and language wise.

Language sets the stage for the development of self-conscious behavior and thought. Through language and interaction, children acquire social self. Language allows humans to make sense of objects, events, and other people in our environment. Indeed, it is the mechanism through which humans perceive the world. As children learn how to read, they are exposed to the cultural symbols contained in books (Collie & Slater, 1990).

The concept of 'culture' is too complex and multi-dimensional to define. Hinkel (Hinkel , 1999) described culture as areas of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviors and activities. Moran (Moran , 2001) argued that a dichotomous concept of culture was not complete and added 'communities' and 'persons' as the other factors to be considered in the cultural dimensions. After establishing the five dimensions of culture, or products, practices, perspectives, persons and communities, he gave a definition of culture as "the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts" (Moran , 2001):

1. 'Products' are defined as a system of code that measures a cultural dimension in four broad aspects: Artifact, Place, Institutions, and Art forms. Artifact includes cultural issues such as foods, language, and money, while Place refers to building or cities associated with particular cultures.
2. 'Practices' characterizes another cultural dimension that measurers various aspects of cultural practices in terms of 'Operations', 'Acts', 'Scenarios' and 'Lives'. Specifically, Operations refer the practice of manipulating cultural products, Acts are ritualized communicative practices, Scenarios refers to extended communicative practices, and Lives are descriptions or stories of cultural members.
3. 'Perspectives' include cultural materials that convey the particular perceptions, values, and beliefs and that guide people's behaviors in cultural practices. For example, the 'culture of learning together' described in an English textbook can be classified as a 'Perspectives' category in that it recognizes a cooperative learning in Western cultures as a superior learning approach.

4. 'Communities' describes the specific social contexts, circumstances and groups through which members engage in cultural practices. Religious ceremonies and social and cultural clubs are examples of content that would be included in the 'Communities' category.
5. 'Persons' refers to the individual members who represent the particular cultures and communities

Literature plays a powerful role in understanding gender. The gender representation through literature has been the focusing point of many scholars mainly since 20th century. It has brought a great change in traditional and stereotypical way of thinking of many nations. Still in many developing countries, these stereotypical perceptions about gender roles, especially about women's existence. Literature has a great influence on the development of children's gender identity. It affects a child's perceptions, development, and socialization process that may develop his gender-based behavioral roles (Kuykendal & Sturm, 2007).

Learning materials play an important role in teaching and learning activities in the classrooms. Textbooks are often the only if not the main sources of learning in Indonesia. Indonesia with a population of more than 200 million is a diverse country in terms of ethnicity, language, religion, and socio-economic status (SES). Publishing any learning materials for schools should take diversity into account in order that the materials cater to the learning needs of students with different ethnic, language, religion, and socio-economic backgrounds. In order to promote learning, materials should be culturally relevant and inclusive, accommodating the many cultural differences of the students. Culturally relevant teaching materials should include students' culture in order to maintain it and to avoid misinterpretations other cultures. Culturally relevant teaching is a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These cultural referents are not merely vehicles for bridging or explaining the dominant culture; they are aspects of the curriculum on their own right (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

The appearance of any article is the first thing that students notice. An "attractive" article is more likely to grab reader's attention or simply download an article from internet without taking any considerations. Berardo (Berardo, 2006) stated that some considerations should follow to present article/stories/authentic materials for students are: the suitability of content, exploitability, readability, and presentation. Whereas Santora (Santora, 2013) stated that there are few criteria to check when evaluate article/stories/authentic materials for students. There are: collection, stories, characters, themes, settings, and illustration.

According to (Collie & Slater, 1990) there are four main reasons which lead a language teacher to use literature in the classroom. These are valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement. In addition to these four main reasons, universality, non-triviality, personal relevance, variety, interest, economy and suggestive power and ambiguity are some other factors requiring the use of literature as a powerful resource in the classroom context. This is interesting to be explored further as to see the gender stereotypes and culture content as learning materials purposes. Therefore, this research entitled "Cinderella vs *Timun Mas*: Exploring gender stereotypes and culture as learning materials purposes" aims to analyze the content of both "Cinderella" and "*Timun Mas*" which cover: 1. Occupations and Gender Stereotypes; 2 Centrality of Female and Male Characters; 3. Culture Content ; and 4 Suitability as learning material purposes.

Method

This research is a qualitative study using content analysis. It was carried out with procedures: collecting, analyzing, and presenting data. Data collection refers to primary and secondary sources. Primary sources as the main references in the study are the stories "Cinderella" and "Timun Mas". The secondary sources are the results of previous studies and other literature with the same theme in the form of books, journals, articles, and papers.

Data collection was done by reading thoroughly the primary data sources (Cinderella and Timun Mas stories) and the secondary sources that support primary data so that the writer's ideas are well understood. The reading technique used in this study was intensive and extensive reading. The data then classified and identified according to their respective types for later analysis.

There are several components addressed in this research, they are: (1) Occupations and Gender Stereotypes: How are males vs females portrayed in their jobs?; How are these levels different? How does it correlate to gender bias and stereotype?; (2) Centrality of Female and Male Characters: What is the role of males and females in the story? How does the amount of male or female being central differ?; How does it present a male or female issue?; (3) Cultural content analysis based on Moran (2001) theories (4) Suitability as learning material purposes based and adapted on Berardo (2006) and Santora (2013) theories. The research results are then presented using the comparative Descriptive method.

Results

There are several research components addressed in this research, they are: 1. the occupation and how the gender stereotypes portrayed, 2. the centrality of the characters, 3. The culture contents 4. the suitability of the stories to be used as learning material purposes.

Occupation and gender stereotypes

Table 1. Occupation and Gender stereotypes

Cinderella				Timun Mas		
No	Character	Gender	Occupation and Gender stereotypes	Character	Gender	Occupation and Gender stereotypes
1	Cinderella	Female	"She had to scour the dishes, tables, scrub the floors and clean out bedrooms"	Mbok Sarni	Female	"Actually she really wanted to have children to help her work at the woods"
2	The hairdresser	Female	"To get the make up and their hair in the fashionably style"	Giant	Male	"You may pass after you give me a child to eat"
3	Coachman	Male	"We may make a coachman for him"	The hermit	Male	"The hermit gave Timun Mas 4 small packages"
4	Footmen	male	"They held on as they had done nothing else their whole lives"			
5	Godmother	Female	"With her wand her clothes were turned into cloth of gold and silver all decked with jewel"			

6	Guards	male	"The guards at the palace gate were asked if they had not seen a princess go out"			
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The Table 1 above shows that for occupation in "Cinderella" story it is mentioned 50% reference for male occupation and 50% reference for female occupation. Meanwhile, on "Timun Mas" story shows 66,67% reference for male occupation and 33,34% reference for female occupation.

Centrality of female and male characters

Table 2. Centrality of female and male characters

Cinderella				Timun Mas		
No	Character	Gender	Centrality of Characters	Character	Gender	Centrality of Characters
1	Second wife/ Cinderella's step mother	female	bad temper	Mbak Sarni /Timun Mas'mother	female	kind and patient
2	Gentleman/Cinderella's father	male	kind	Timun Mas	female	brave and loving
3	Cinderella	female	sweet temper, patient , kind, emotional	Giant	male	barbaric
4	Cinderella's step sisters	female	rude and uncivilized	The hermet	male	calm and collected
5	Godmother/Cinderella's helper	female	empathetic			
6	The prince	male	kind and concerned			
7	The King	male				
8	The queen	female				

Table 2 reveals that for centrality in "Cinderella" story in 37,5% refer to male and 62,5% to female. While in "Timun Mas" the centrality 50% refer to male and 50% to female,

Culture contents

Table 3. Culture contents

Timun Mas			
No	Content	Lines	Scope
1	"Timun Mas spread salts behind her back"	20	Practices
2	"The story begins with an old widow named Mbok Sрни who lives by herself and wish to have a descendant to accompany her during her old times"	1	Perspectives
3	"She was so happy that finally she had someone to take care of and accompany her for in her old days"	9	Perspectives
4	"She packed her with magic cucumber seeds, needles, salt and shrimp paste in her bad which she got from a local religious leader"	13	Persons
Cinderella			
No	Content	Lines	Scope
1	"The poor girl had to sleep in the garret, upon a wretched straw bed while her sisters lay in fine rooms with inlaid floors, upon beds of the very newest fashions and where they had looking-glasses so large that they might see themselves at full length"	5	Products

2	"When she had done her work she used to go into the chimney corner and sit down among the cinders hence she was called Cinderwench"	7	Products
3	"They were highly delighted with the invitation and wonderfully busy in choosing the gowns, petticoats and head dressers which might best become them"	12	Products
4	"They were highly delighted with the invitation and wonderfully busy in choosing the gowns, petticoats and head dressers which might best become them"	12	Products
5	"For my part" said the elder "I will wear my red velvet suit with French trimmings"	15	Products
6	"And I" said the younger " shall wear my usual skirt but then to make amends for that I will put on my gold flowered mantle and my diamond stomacher"	16	Products
7	"This made Cinderella's lot still harder , for it was she who ironed sister's linen and plaited their ruffles"	13	Practices
8	"They sent for the best hairdresser they could get to make up their hair in fashionable style and bought patches for their cheeks"	17	Practices
9	"we may make a coachman of him "	38	Practices
10	"the coach would be a pumpkin again, her horses mice, her coachman a rat, her footmen lizards"	49	Practices
11	"Ay to be sure!" cried Miss Charlotte "Lend my clothes to such a dirty Cinderwench as thou art ! I should be out of mind to do so"	75	Perspectives
12	"It happened that the King's son gave a ball and invited to it all persons of fashions"	10	Communities
13	"The Kings' son conducted her to the seat of honor and afterwards took her out to dance with him"	58	Communities
14	"The King himself , old as he was, could not keep his eyes off her and he told the Queen under his breath that it was a long time since he had seen so beautiful and lovely creature"	56	Persons

For culture contents in Table 3, in "Timun Mas" found 1 practices, 2 perspectives and 1 persons content. Whereas in "Cinderella" found 6 products, 5 practices, 2 communities and 1 persons contents. Therefore based on Moran(2001) theories in "Timun Mas" the cultural content found was 60% and in "Cinderella" was 80%.

Suitability as learning material purposes

Table 4. Suitability as learning material purposes

Timun Mas		
Collection	Does the collection as whole :	
	Contain equal representation of a diverse group?	V
	Promote an understanding of all aspects in diverse society?	X
	Speak to all students?	X
Story	Do the stories:	
	Relate to students' interest?	V
	Provide various conflicts for students' to explore?	V
	Provide age appropriate content?	V
	Encourage discussions?	V
Characters	Do the characters:	
	Represent people from varieties of age, sizes and gender?	V
	Depicted as "Good" character	V

Themes	Does the themes	
	Offer students a variety of things to question and consider?	X
	Explore instead of preach?	X
Settings	Do the stories:	
	Reflect a variety of settings?	V
	Represent cultural settings realistically?	X
Illustrations	Do the story illustrate :	
	Include representations of various people?	V
	Contain diversity represent in a group?	V
Content	Do the content :	
	The text will interest students?	V
	Is it relevant to student's needs?	X
	Represent the type of materials that students will use outside of classroom?	X
Exploitability	Do the exploitability :	
	Can the text be used as teaching purposes?	V
Readability	Do the readability :	
	Is the text too easy for students?	V
	Is the text contains many new vocabulary for students to explore?	V
Presentation	Do the presentation:	
	Is it usable as authentic materials?	V
	Does it make students wants to read ?	V
Cinderella		
Collection	Does the collection as whole :	
	Contain equal representation of a diverse group?	V
	Promote an understanding of all aspects in diverse society?	V
	Speak to all students?	X
Story	Do the stories:	
	Relate to students' interest?	V
	Provide various conflicts for students' to explore?	V
	Provide age appropriate content?	V
	Encourage discussions?	V
Characters	Do the characters:	
	Represent people from varieties of age, sizes and gender?	V
	Depicted as "Good" character	V
Themes	Does the themes	
	Offer students a variety of things to question and consider?	V
	Explore instead of preach?	X
Settings	Do the stories:	
	Reflect a variety of settings?	V
	Represent cultural settings realistically?	V
Illustrations	Do the story illustrate :	
	Include representations of various people?	V
	Contain diversity represent in a group?	V
Content	Do the content :	
	The text will interest students?	V
	Is it relevant to student's needs?	V
	Represent the type of materials that students will use outside of classroom?	V
Exploitability	Do the exploitability :	
	Can the text be used as teaching purposes?	V
Readability	Do the readability :	
	Is the text too easy for students?	X
	Is the text contains many new vocabulary for students to explore?	V

Presentation	Do the presentation:	
	Is it usable as authentic materials?	V
	Does it make students wants to read ?	V

From the table 4 it can be concluded that based on 23 checklist criteria, "*Timun Mas*" checked with 16 points whereas "*Cinderella*" checked with 20 points.

Discussion

The findings showed that based on occupation and gender aspect "*Cinderella*" has more balanced in terms of male and female references. For centrality aspects, "*Timun Mas*" has more balanced in terms of male and female references. For culture contents aspects, "*Cinderella*" has 80% more contents compared to "*Timun Mas*" who only has 60% contents. Whereas for suitability as learning materials purposes. "*Timun Mas*" has checked with 23 points criteria compared to "*Cinderella*" who has checked with only 20 points criteria. Therefore, related to review the stories and choose criteria that reflect the diversities and the roles of the gender to expose students as much as possible in cultural aspects, gender references and language wise both "*Cinderella*" and "*Timun Mas*" compatible to be used. The literature from both stories can help in learning languages because those are aspects to be learned and how other cultures speak in language. This is to show that a language is a place for culture itself and other cultures appear (Yuen, 2011). The content, the language and the literature will help with how the role played by culture when learning processes teach, pedagogy, and also the role of language in the culture used by the process and process of teaching and learning where it was stated by Anggia et al (Anggia, Verawati, & Vandia, 2018) which also in line with Fawcett society statement that literature is one place where gender stereotypes are encountered and learned (Fawcett Report, 2019).

Conclusion

This research entitled "*Cinderella vs Timun Mas: Exploring gender stereotypes and culture as learning materials purposes*" aims to analyze the content of both "*Cinderella*" and "*Timun Mas*" which cover: 1. Occupations and Gender Stereotypes; 2 Centrality of Female and Male Characters; 3. Culture Content ; and 4 Suitability as learning material purposes. Based on the research questions it is revealed that for occupation and gender types showed that "*Timun mas*" has varieties of gender with 66,67% reference whereas "*Cinderella*" only has 50% references. For the centrality of male and female character, "*Cinderella*" has more varieties in 37,5% male and 62,5% female whereas in "*Timun Mas*" showed 50% for both genders". For the cultural content, in "*Timun Mas*" the cultural content found was 60% and in "*Cinderella*" was 80%. And the suitability to be used as learning materials showed that "*Timun Mas*" checked with 16 points whereas "*Cinderella*" checked with 20 points. It can be concluded that both can be used as authentic learning materials for gender references but "*Cinderella*" has more varieties and cultural content compared to "*Timun Mas*".

Acknowledgment

Thanks to Allah SWT and English Education Study Program of IKIP Siliwangi for providing support so that this research is carried out well.

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