

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the research, questions of the research, objectives of the research, significance of the research, scope and limitation, and definition of special terms.

1.1 The Background of the Research

Today, within the era of post-modernism, the study of gender is being experienced a stratospheric rise to fame. This idea – at least in Hegelson’s view - comes up owing to the gender itself that has been fairly the interest to scholars and researchers in recent times (as cited in Ifegbesan, 2010: 29). On this phenomenon, the gender talked over can not be separated from the root of it that is traditional gender, the stereotypical made by the citizen and culture. One is duty-bound to be the real man and woman regarding on their gender role in a social life. This stereotype - as stated in Brannon (1995:160) - is being a good vehicle to uphold the concept of masculinity and femininity both in beliefs and attitudes.

Ever since, the gender-stereotype itself at least in Halim and Diane Ruble’s view is sort of beliefs about men ,women, boys and girls in their attributes or characteristics (2010:500). Furthermore, based on Martin and Halverson’s idea as found in (Ifegbesan, 2010:29), gender-stereotype is a type of subjunctive perception of what a woman and man ought to be or

how folks should behave. It is thus based on Brannon and Martin and Halverson's view, bound to be seen that gender-stereotype is beliefs and

attitudes of what man and woman ought to be and behave considering on their proper activities in an exceedingly world.

The gender-stereotype of what man and woman should be and behave does not merely divulge in a real life, however it can be mirrored and depicted in a story. Regards of it, the story itself - both short and long - is such a product of delineating one's life. Astya is lived up to this case; she states that the story can reflect the real situations in which happen in society such as the story of friendship, love and the good against evil. She further states that story is also a sort of literary works which is in the form of text (as cited in Yudi, 2011:127). It thus – at least in Astya's view- can be inferred that story is sort of literary works exemplifying human and humanity concept in the form of text.

Considering that story is a vehicle for reflecting the human and humanity concept in the form of text, story can be classified into literary works of literature, due to the fact that in all literature genres have story in it. Fairy tale is somewhat a part of literary works especially in the case of children literature. What it means by the fairy tale itself – based on Lombardi's view- is a story about fairies, giants, dragons, and other fanciful and fantastic forces and he further states that fairy tales are somewhat traditionally intended for children (2013). Moreover, regards of fairy tale is a kind of story, literally, the fairy tale also has a symbol in it and the symbol has broadly and tightly relation to the context and meaning of story, as proposed by Perrine, the symbols themselves may have more

than one meaning and the meaning of literary symbols have to be supported and established by the whole context of the story. Additionally, Perrine further states that symbols are something that not only has literal meaning yet also other meaning as well. The symbols themselves can be in the form of an object, a person, an action, a situation and so forth (*See: Fadaee, 2010:20*).

Granted on the top of Halim and Diane Ruble's, Astya's and Perrine's view are true (*see: Halim and Diane Ruble, 2010:500, Yudi, 2011: 12, Fadaee, 2010:20*). It is therefore lighted up that the concept of gender-stereotype of man and woman in a real world is unconcealed in stories or tales, and it is viewed throughout symbols. In short, there is a simultaneous interconnection between gender-stereotype and the symbols in stories or fairy tales.

On the basis of symbols of gender-stereotype within the fairy tales, the researcher has found many symbols of gender-stereotype in Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale; *The Little Mermaid*. This fairy tale is somewhat one amongst the well-known classical fairy tales cannon in the western world (*Zipes, 2006:1*). Rather than having the superb quality of world recognition, the story of *The Little Mermaid* is also somewhat interesting to be analyzed further in terms of the content and issue of the story. It is prominently because the tale provides the depiction of unique fiction's characters such as mermaid, sea and so forth. These characters are somewhat can be a reflection of such symbol of gender-stereotype as to

the traits revealed from the characters of the story themselves unequivocally convey femininity or masculinity.

It can be seen that the placement of such characters, place and the event, and so forth in children story (tale or fairy tale) is not solely being the attributes of the story however conjointly propose a meaning. It is therefore such as horse, giant, angel, fairy, sword, and so on in children stories become such symbols whereof numerous readers do not understand what they are about and sometimes tend to take a dim view of them. The symbols themselves literally have tight relation to the gender stereotype that implicitly teaches the children the concept of masculinity and femininity in a real life, meaning, the readers should not only concern to reading of the fairy tales themselves but also the readers can transfer the good ideologies and virtues to the children through the symbolization of masculinity and femininity in the fairy tale. Thus, the fairy tale reading activity will be both interesting and fruitful. In short, the gender-stereotype symbols in Hans Christian Andersen's tale *The Little Mermaid* are such pretty interesting topics to be conducted and discussed.

In term of gender-stereotype symbols in Andersen's fairy tale, those symbols are influenced by Hans Christian Andersen himself. It is because he is a masterpiece of writing a tale for kids hailed as Nursery Rhymes. He is sophisticated on creating and using enticing characters and plot as well as taking such special-diction for kids. Additionally, he showed his prowess on inserting every single of his work un-didactic moral teaching (Merriman, 2006). It is thus unquestionably that heretofore,

his name has become the name of the outstanding award, The Hans Christian Andersen Award, for the best writer or illustrator of children story in the world (Annno, 2009).

Above all, In relation to symbols used in the fairy tale of Hans Christian Andersen; *The Little Mermaid*, as far as the researcher's view, never been analyzed in terms of studying gender-stereotype. The researcher thus intends to analyze the symbols of gender-stereotype in *The Little Mermaid*. Symbol and gender stereotype theories are utilized as a basis of this research. In short, the researcher genuinely hopes that the study of symbols of gender-stereotypes in Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales; *The Little Mermaid*, will offer some contributions to the study of literature in general and fairy tales in special.

1.2 Questions of the Research

After reading the fairy tale *The Little Mermaid*, based on the background of the study above, there is a question in the study which becomes the guide of the analysis. The question meant is focused into the symbols of gender-stereotype themselves found in *The Little Mermaid* and their most possible meaning of the symbols found. Considering to the fact that the symbols and their possible meaning is always tightly bounded, it is thus the questions can be formulated as follows:

1.2.1 What are the symbols of gender-stereotype and their most possible meaning found in Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

In the point, the researcher has a purpose that he wants to show the reader. The purpose of the study is:

- 1.3.1 To find out the symbols of gender-stereotype and describe the most possible meaning of the symbols found in Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*.

1.4 Significance of the Research

By reading this, the writer expects that the readers will understand more about Hans Christian Andersen who is best known as Nursery Rhymes and shows the other students who are interested in writing about Hans Christian Andersen's works.

The writer also fervently hopes that the readers learn and understand more about Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*. The writer hopes that the readers will be able to appreciate this tale, will have better perception about the idea of gender stereotype issues depicted throughout the symbols in the fairy tale. The writer also hopes that this thesis will also give a good contribution to the study of literature in general and fairy tales in special.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is one the discussion in Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* through interpretation of the symbols and how the symbols revealed the gender-stereotype issues. The thesis'

limitation is just focused on gender-stereotype issue which is revealed throughout symbols in the fairy tale. The interpreting meaning of the symbols as well as the gender-stereotype concept is limited tightly to the context when and where *The Little Mermaid* was written. Due to the fact that there are numerous kinds of *The Little Mermaid* stories, the researcher then focus to the original story of *The Little Mermaid* written in 1836. The story used is taken from electronically published on 12 December 2007 by Zvi Har'El in http://hca.gilead.org.il/li_merma.html retrieved on 25 December 2014.

1.6 Definition of Special Terms

1.6.1 Symbol :

Symbol, is images, figures, objects, actions, human body, and so forth that has literal meaning, that stands for, represents other meaning instead of the literal meaning itself and can be related to the issues or concepts relevance to the meaning of the symbol itself. This notion deals with Perrine's view, he states that symbol is something that means more than what it is. It is an object, a person, a situation, an action or some other item that has literal meaning in the story, but suggests and represents other meaning as well (*See: Fadaee, 2010:20*).

1.6.2 Gender-Stereotype :

Gender-Stereotype is such belief and attitudes of what man and woman should be and behave considering on their appropriate activities in a real life. This concept of definition deals with Brannon's view, she states

that gender stereotype is beliefs about the activities applicable to men or women on their psychological traits as well as their characteristics, in the other word beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and femininity (Brannon, 1995:160). Furthermore, the concept of gender stereotype is further specified by Martin and Halverson, They state that gender-stereotype is a kind of subjunctive perception of what a woman and man should be or how folks ought to behave (as cited in Ifegbesan, 2010:29).

1.6.3 The Little Mermaid :

The Little Mermaid is one of the greatest fairy tales written by Hans Christian Andersen in 1836. The Little Mermaid is a story about mermaid who is falling in love with a prince. It is therefore, she tries to be a human being and meet with the prince. The prince does not falling in love with the mermaid so that the mermaid has to be died because of being not able to get immortal feeling of love from the prince. It can be concluded that the story revolves around a doomed young mermaid's sacrifice for love.