

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents research background, research focus, research problem, research objectives, research significance, and definition of keyword.

1.1 Research Background

Folklore has been a fundamental part of Indonesian culture for centuries. Each individual must have encountered or read at least one folklore in their lives. Kittilä (2020) defines folklore as the information of ancient people considered as part of history that has been inherited across the generations for years. Danandja (2007) in Saddhono & Erwinsyah (2018) stated folklore is a tradition shared between a group of people who have similar traits (physical, social, and culture) that differs them from other group. It can be concluded that folklore is a traditional beliefs or knowledge (literature, art, law, behavior) of people who share at least one common characteristic that passed from generation to generation.

Folklore represents the collective beliefs of the community as it provides moral lessons and ethical codes. For example, the story of Malin Kundang which has the message that children must be filial to their parents, or the story of Danau Toba which conveys the message that one should not break his promise.

One of the elements that depicted in folklore is gender representation. Gender refers to the social views toward men and women regarding on the way they behave

in their community, while representation define as the way certain object is introduced, portrayed, or illustrated through media. Therefore, gender representation refers to how the society's perspective on men and women behavior portrayed in media, specifically in literary work such as folklore.

Many folklore describe how certain gender behave in certain way. For example, the characterization of men in folklore are often depicted as leader, dominant, strong, and problem-solving, whereas the women characters are often depicted as passive, dependent, and weak. This phenomenon occurred because folklore reflects the society's view and norms of its time.

Despite encourage and strengthen acceptance of the dominant norms, concept, and power structure in a society, folklore can also challenge the authorities, power holder, dominant beliefs, or gives alternatives (Nenola, 1999). Wiyatmi (2023) conducted a study which intended to explore the existence, role, and position of women figures that become queens in Indonesian folklore, where one the queen figures that being explored is Madam Undang (Nyai Undang) from Central Kalimantan. The study then concludes that there is no gender bias in folklore about queens in Indonesian kingdoms, in spite of Indonesian patriarchal history. Women's roles in ruled the kingdoms and thrones had been existed in a long time. Women not only have the right in the domestic sector but also in the public sphere. This can also be concluded that before the rise and the development of feminist movement in the West, Indonesian feminism had already existed.

Amri (2021) argues that the division of roles and duties between men and women in folklore leads society to preserve and perpetuate the expectation of how both genders behave in real-life situations. Men are expected to be brave, adventurous, emotionless, and independent, since they are prepared to be the provider or the breadwinner of the family. In contrast, women are encouraged to be nurturing, compliant, and emotional. This expectation socializes for a long time and directs society to stereotyping people based on their gender.

The practice of gender stereotype occurs in the smallest unit of society which is family, and is experienced by the researcher herself. For example, a typical gendered household chores when parents setting the duties for the daughter to be responsible for cooking and cleaning while the son is restricted to do the cooking and cleaning because it was women's duties. Another example is when parents have separate expectation for their children's future. The son is prioritized to pursue career as extent as he please. The daughter is also supported to have career, but there are always limit to it since the main purpose for the daughter is to raise family and relationship.

Folklores often depict men and women in the stereotypical way. For instance, men are often depicted as providers, independent, and brave, while women are often portrayed as caregivers, dependent, and submissive. As folklores are passed down through generations, the stereotypes that attached to men and women in the folklores are also transmitted. It can be said that gender stereotypes still exist is because the contribution of folklore as the media to illustrate the perception of society and inherit it to the next generation.

Therefore, the researcher is interested to conduct a research about gender representation in Central Kalimantan's folklores. This study aims to describe how men and women represented in such literary work which existed and still evolve in Central Kalimantan, since there are only few studies that focus on literary work from Central Kalimantan. The study is entitled **“An Analysis of Gender Representation in Folklores from Central Kalimantan”**.

Since its essential roles to convey different kinds of messages to the reader and listener, especially in picturing and representing gender roles and position in society, folklore becomes an interesting object to be investigated. The discussion of this study later will contribute in ongoing discussions about gender equality and representation in literature, media, and society as a whole. The investigation of gender representation in folklore is important since it affects the collective belief of society. The critical examining about gender challenges the gender stereotypes, reshaping perception about gender, and being a tool of educational value. As an educational value, student will be exposed to a balance depiction of gender that shapes their perspective in a more equitable way about gender.

1.2 Research Focus

The present research focuses on examining the gender representation and investigating the gender stereotypes in 28 stories from Central Kalimantan folklores. The data source of this research is the text from the Central Kalimantan folklores.

1.3 Research Problems

The research problems are presented:

1. How is gender represented in the Central Kalimantan's folklores?
2. How is the gender stereotype found in the Central Kalimantan's folklores?

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are:

1. To examine the gender representation in Central Kalimantan's folklores.
2. To investigate the gender stereotype found in the folklores from Central Kalimantan.

1.5 Research Significance

The significance of this study is divided into two parts, which are theoretical and practical significance.

1. Theoretical Significance

This study is expected to be helpful insight on sociolinguistic, specifically on how gender is represented in literary work such as Central Kalimantan folklores.

2. Practical Significance

This study will give contribution and references for the readers and future researchers who conduct research in the same field.

1.6 Definition of Keyword

There are several keywords used in this research such as folklore, gender, representation, and gender stereotype.

1. Folklore

Folklore is a cultural belief, customs, stories, that passes down through generations.

2. Gender

Gender refers to social concepts that are attached to men, women, girls, and boys. This includes behaviors, norms, and roles associated with being woman and man, as well as the relationship between each other.

3. Representation

Representation refers to the way something or someone is shown or described.

4. Gender Stereotype

A gender stereotype is a widely held belief or generalization about the behaviors and characteristics attributed to women and men. Females are often portrayed as being emotional, caring and in need of protection. Males are often characterized as being rational, career driven and strong. These assumptions can be negative (women are irrational, men are insensitive) or seemingly benign (women are nurturing, men are leaders).