

## DEVELOPING SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE OF GENDER EQUALITY IN ELT PROGRAM

A Laut Hasibuan<sup>1</sup>, Saiful Anwar Matondang<sup>2</sup>, Salamuddin S<sup>3</sup>, Irpan Apandi Batubara<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3&4</sup> Universitas Muslim Nusantara (UMN) Al Washliyah Medan, North Sumatra,  
INDONESIA.

<sup>1</sup>ahmadlauthsb@yahoo.co.id, <sup>2</sup>sammatondang68@gmail.com, <sup>4</sup>irpan.batubara@yahoo.co.id

### ABSTRACT

*Social knowledge of gender equality plays an important role in learning. This development research encompasses the gender equality based in language learning materials. The object of the research is the development of gender-based English material development in SMK (Vocational School) Sentra Medika Medan. The finding showed that such words as chairperson, police, fire fighter, sales person, flight attendant, mail carrier, person, fisher person, congress person, post officer, lawyer, bartender, and comedian as words that related to the gender-based material development. There is a need to create syllabus of ELT for students to which show neutrality of words and phrase that support social equality.*

**Keywords:** Teaching English materials, ELT, gender equality, neutral

### INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics has identified the positive correlation between language and gender. Fasold (1990) concluded that the correlation is seen in daily life. However, the different use of language between man and women could be because of culture and ethnics. Moreover, Fakhri in Astiatun (2003) believes that gender must distinguished with sex. The problem of the study is focused on the vague concept between sex and gender. Both terms are defined as the same, which is human nature. This conception remained woman weaker than man. This study is aimed at developing a gender-equality-based of recent materials of English Language Teaching (ELT) and being an effort to enhance students' perception that all humankind are the same in their nature.

Sex is a gender division that is determined biologically and so related to a certain gender that human being is classified into male or female. In addition, it can be exemplified like a woman (female) is socioculturally gentle and graceful emotionally, motherhood, and so forth; while a man (male) is considered strong, rational, brave, and so forth. These views is a gender-bias that is oriented to a lasting tradition. It also led a belief that a man is more than a woman. Actually, it is potential to discriminate woman from man. Eventhough research in 1970's found that a man tend to use improper words in public place whilst woman tend to avoid them (Wardhaugh, 1986). Other research found that there is an inequality of gender in oral and written language. Mukminatien (2010) identified the gap where a woman called a chairman and suggested a neutral gender usage.

In ELT, it is important to note that neutral-gender remains no bias when somebody speaks or writes. Neuron (2003) stated that some writers did not pay well attention to gender-neutral language that they consistently use masculine pronoun in their writing. He suggested the following samples for a fair language use.

(1) Incorrect: A good judge takes their job very seriously.

Undesirable: A good judge takes his or her job very seriously.

Better: A good judge takes the job very seriously or a good judge takes judging very seriously.

(2) Incorrect: A teacher must communicate clearly with their students.

Also Incorrect: A teacher must communicate clearly with her students.

Better: A teacher must communicate clearly with his or her students.

Best: Teachers must communicate clearly with their students.

In real life, some characteristics that a man has, belongs to woman and vice versa while in English Language, the use of some words that is oriented to a gender still there, namely: salesman, chairman, and so on. This views need to be changed into a point of view that human being is hierarchically equal particularly seen from a language use.

Research findings above leads to a conclusion that the inequality in language use happens not only in a certain place but more seriously also happen in public places. However, one of reasons education comes is to control the gender bias in communication. Education as an agent of change could function to repeal the gender bias in language use. The use of English in common, still counts *gender* as a difference in sex. It is observed that the phenomenon of gender bias is seen in the world of education, such as in text book in schools, which is one of the main academic tools. That is why the important of this research is to analyse and to evaluate the current curriculum by suggesting the material development.

## RESEARCH METHOD

A *research & development* was conducted in SMK (Vocational School) Sentra Medika Medan, Indonesia. The research result in SMK was used to design the material development for the next step of the development of gender-based one and to be tested at the same level. Borg and Gall (1979; Colombo Plan Staff: 1983; Huitema: 1990; Hasibuan: 2010) stated that *research and development* is oriented to a cycle that is started with an introductory information gathering that is continued by a product development process.

In this research, the introductory is done by an anlysisis on students handbooks in SMK Sentra Medika Medan. The information gathered is made the English material development consideration.

The Steps in this research are as follow:

1. Introductory Research. In this step, the analysis on students' hand books was done to collect and discuss the matters that related to gender bias.
2. Planning. In this step, the objective of the research was formulated.
3. Material Development. In this step, equal gender-based material development is done toward the SMK students' handbooks.

The research model as following:

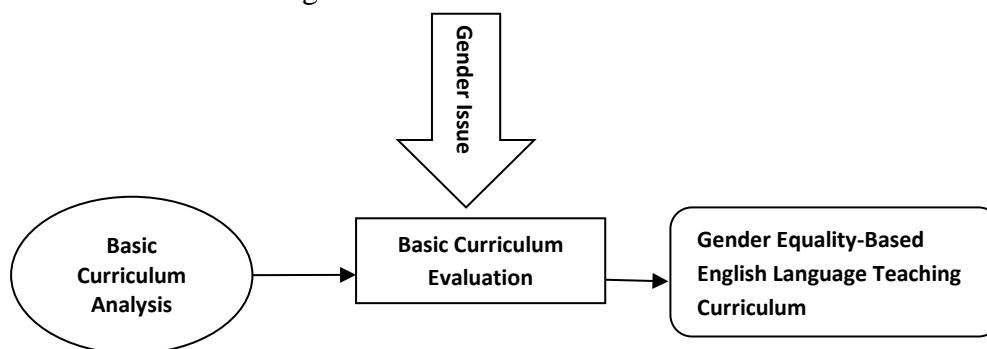


Figure 1. Steps of the Research

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings of SMK (Vocational School) Curriculum Analysis

SMK Sentra Medika Medan still refers to The School Based Curriculum at the time this research conducted. The indicators of the student's achievement include Standard Competency, indicator of competency, teaching resources, and assessment. In the syllabus, the topic about jobs and job description was identified. The detail is illustrated as the following table.

**Table 1. Syllabus of English in SMK**

<i>Standard Competency</i>	<i>Basic Competency</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Teaching Material</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
Elaborating job description and education background which somebody has in the form of written and oral language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telling about people's job using the Simple present tense:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A cook prepares food.</li> <li>- Pilots fly aeroplanes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Telling about people's educational background using the Simple past tense.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She graduated from SMKN 8 Bandung.</li> <li>- The new secretary learned shorthand at the college.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Listening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dictation</li> <li>- Answering dialogues given by the teacher</li> </ul> Speaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explaining someone's profession</li> </ul> Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rewriting someone else's curriculum vitae</li> <li>- Writing one's own curriculum vitae</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using <i>Simple Present</i> correctly to describe someone's job and other profession.</li> <li>• Using <i>Simple Past</i> to describe someone's education background</li> <li>• <i>Curriculum Vitae</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral Test               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explaining Profession and job description</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Writing Test               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cloze test related to job and profession</li> <li>- Writing a curriculum vitae</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Result of the Material Development in SMK Curriculum

Based on the syllabus above, this research presents the material which refers to gender equality below table with following keywords.

1. Chairperson is person who leads a meeting, organization, committee, or event.
2. Linesman is an official who assists a referee (as in football or hockey) especially in determining if a ball, puck, or player is out-of-bounds or offside.
3. Police officer is a person whose job is to enforce laws, investigate crimes, and make arrests.
4. Salesperson is person whose job is to sell things.
5. Firefighter is a member of a group that works to put out fires.
6. Cameraperson is a person who operates a camera.
7. Officer is boy or man employed for odd jobs in a business office.
8. Movie star is a person who acts in a play, movie, etc.
9. Post officer is a person who collects and delivers mail.
10. Flight attendant is a person whose job is to help passengers who are traveling in an airplane.
11. Mail carrier is a person who delivers mail.

12. The person is a person who does a profession for long time.
13. Fisher person is one who engages in fishing as an occupation or for pleasure.
14. Congress Person is someone who is a member of a congress and especially of the U.S. House of Representatives.
15. Lawyer is a person whose job is to guide and assist people in matters relating to the law.
16. Bartender is person who serves customer of a bar.
17. Super person is someone who who is very strong, successful, etc.
18. Comedian is a person who performs in front of an audience and makes people laugh by telling jokes or funny stories or by acting in a way that is funny. (Merriam-webster Online Dictionary)

**Table 2. Material on Gender Equality in SMK**

No.	Neutral/Gender Equality	Male	Female	Meaning (In Bahasa Indonesia)
1	Chairperson	Chairman	Chairwoman	Ketua
2		Linesman		Hakim garis
3	police officer	Policeman	Policewoman	Polisi
4	Salesperson	Salesman	Saleswoman	Petugas bagian penjualan
5	Firefighter	Fireman	Firewoman	Petugas pemadam kebakaran
6	Officer	office boy	office girl	Petugas pelayan kantor
7	Movie star	Actor	Actress/ female actor	Pemain film
8	Cameraperson	Cameraman	Camerawoman	Pengambil gambar/foto
9	post officer	Postman	post woman	Petugas kantor pos
10	flight attendant	Steward	Stewardess	Pramugari
11	mail carrier	Mailman	Mailwoman	Pengantar surat
12	the person	the man	the woman	Orang
13	career person	career man	career woman	Pegawai
14	fisher person	Fisherman	Fisherwoman	Nelayan
15	congress person	Congressman	Congresswoman	Anggota kongres
16	Lawyer	Lawman	Lawwoman	Pengacara
17	Bartender	Barman	Barwoman	Pekerja bar
18	super person	Superman	Superwoman	Manusia kuat
19	Comedian	comedy man	comedy woman	Pelawak
20	Trendsetter	Divo	Diva	Selebritas panutan

### Students' Ability in Comprehending Gender Equality

A pretest was organized to measure students' mastery level before material development. In the test, students were given an assignment to translate a number of Bahasa Indonesian vocabularies into English. Treatment by presenting the material related to gender equality. The neutral gender was introduced by social approach. The issues related to that especially those which related to job and profession was discussed. The post-test was done with the same material as that in pretest. The post-test shows that students have comprehended the gender issues so they are able to distinguish ones which are neutral and ones which are not.

The students' ability in using gender in English was averagely 61,58 (Fairly Good) in pre-test and it increased to 94.14 (Very Good) in post-test. This increasing shows that students comprehend the neutral gender better than that segmented to single sex.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Gender-Based Curriculum Implementation in Vocation School (SMK)**

Vocational schools in Indonesia have been designed to prepare for students who are ready to job markets after they graduate. In short, this is the reflection of the implemented curriculum. SMK Sentra Medika as a vocational school is also responsible to prepare for the students and one of the implementation is by introducing to the students kinds of jobs and profession as well as their job description.

In the handbooks the students use, an explicit explanation about gender issue was not found. In the examples, cases on gender issues were identified, namely: a certain job as like only be done by man or woman. In a sub-theme, pictures of persons from different professions are presented i.e picture of a male chef, a female waiter, a male mechanic, and a male hotel receptionist. In addition, there are some cases that are related to gender issue but it was not discussed. Another part gives these example sentences:

- a. Fitri is the secretary here.
- b. Lisa works as a secretary.
- c. Mr. Andi has an advertising company.
- d. Putu is a mechanic and he repairs the car engines.

In relation to gender issue that is analyzed in this research, the examples above reflect a view that for instance a mechanic must be a man and a secretary must be a woman. In fact, it is not nowadays.

The implemented curriculum has not taken gender issues into account of curriculum design. SMK curriculum figures a number of jobs only related to a certain gender. Therefore, Gender-based Curriculum was designed to enrich the implemented one. Curriculum development is arranged in the form of English curriculum supplement in SMK. This is reasonable in consideration that the principal in curriculum development is designed to create a flexible curriculum implementation that allows a potential adjustment based on situation, location, and timing that are dynamic.

The School Based Curriculum includes local resources that are close to students' life. Actually, gender issue has become a part of culture which is called emancipation. However, a tendency to segment a number of jobs to a certain gender was still there. In Indonesia, people assume that being a driver only suit to a man and only woman deserves a position of secretary whereas it is not absolute in reality. Trans Jakarta has females drivers and some companies place male secretary.

Curriculum is developed based on its relevance to students' need and the gender issue literacy is proper to be taught to today's students. The curriculum development should be based on the analysis on the current curriculum and the prior explanation proposed the current curriculum to be developed into a gender-based curriculum. It is all for better students' comprehension on gender issue.

In Chapter 2 of students' handbook, "Effective Communication", published by Pusat Perbukuan Kemendikbud (Central Bookkeeping of Ministry of education), the information provided only the name of the job and job description. Therefore, this research urges the curriculum to be enriched with the issue of gender in English. The enrichment is expected to

become a reminder to students and the teacher that the social change brings dynamics in language teaching where the gender equality has been popular include in workplace. Chairman is no longer a preferable word because chairperson has given chance to woman to rise.

A more particular discussion is the syllabus development. As it represents the curriculum in a broader range, it covers the adaptation to material development. In the supplement curriculum, the syllabus is changed in its elements like standard competency, indicators, and material. Special to the material, the issue of gender is made part of it.

### **Mastery Learning for Social Awareness**

The research found that there is a significant improvement in students' mastery from pretest to posttest. It implies that the gender equality issue is very important to be taught in SMK. The comprehension of gender is a good way of understanding language and culture at school. Eckert (2006) has arranged the syllabus together with the module as a guide for teaching language intonation, vocal quality, gender rule, dialect variation, stylistics, and language interrelations. It leads to a point that gender equality discussion must be there in curriculum.

Furthermore, many researches have shown that there is the different between man's attitude on improper words and woman'. So, the issue of gender equality can be the alert for both gender to be wiser in using language especially when producing words. So the long term goals of gender-based english curriculum is to teache every students to use more polite language beyond culture. However, a further research on how man different from woman in using a language needs be to conducted.

### **Gender-Based Language Teaching**

Experts in Sociolinguistics and Humanity has investigated the relation between language and gender since 1900. The studied how man, as language user, different from woman in different ethnics such as how they produce a language and how they select word to say. That is why gender becomes one of the variables in quantitative research since 1960 (Cameron, 1960). Man's language dominates politically that caused woman's subordinated culturally. Woman pay attention very well to politeness in speaking (Mills, 2003)

Research in 1990 created a recommendation in the form of reconceptual that is intergated to post-structuralism theory. Gender and language is a unity of identity. Interactional studies like Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics, and Discourse Psychology is worthy to be included in language and culture studies syllabus at school.

Eckert (2006) of Standford University USA has designed a syllabus with modul for teaching language element and gender rule in language. In further, studying the gender curriculum developed by California University's expert, Besnier (2005) that emphasized culture and history from anthropological context. Besnier pay more attention to the interaction inter-ethnics, race, nasionalism, and identity (Matondang; 1998). When Eckbert includes more oral language, Besnier integrates gender and literacy. Based on the research findings and discussion that relate to gender equality based English material development, the developed material is represented as the following list

1. The developed materials is as follow:
  - a. Chairperson is person who leads a meeting, organization, committee, or event.
  - b. Linesman is an official who assists a referee (as in football or hockey) especially in determining if a ball, puck, or player is out-of-bounds or offside.
  - c. Police officer is a person whose job is to enforce laws, investigate crimes, and make arrests.
  - d. Salesperson is person whose job is to sell things.

- e. Firefighter is a member of a group that works to put out fires.
- f. Cameraperson is a person who operates a camera.
- g. Officer is boy or man employed for odd jobs in a business office.
- h. Movie star is a person who acts in a play, movie, etc.
- i. Post officer is a person who collects and delivers mail.
- j. Flight attendant is a person whose job is to help passengers who are traveling in an airplane.
- k. Mail carrier is a person who delivers mail.
- l. The person is a person who does a profession for long time.
- m. Fisher person is one who engages in fishing as an occupation or for pleasure.
- n. Congress Person is someone who is a member of a congress and especially of the U.S. House of Representatives.
- o. Lawyer is a person whose job is to guide and assist people in matters relating to the law.
- p. Bartender is person who serves customer of a bar.
- q. Super person is someone who who is very strong, successful, etc.
- r. Comedian is a person who performs in front of an audience and makes people laugh by telling jokes or funny stories or by acting in a way that is funny.

## CONCLUSION

The students ability in using gender equality showed an increase from the pretest to posttest where posttest found better. The material development with gender equality in language, teachers need to be supportive to collect other vocabularies that remain bias gender. With gender equality in language, the curriculum designers need to consider this introductory research. Gender equality in language, advanced, the research further to create equality model is very necessary.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. Astiatun, (2003). *Gender bias in the textbook discourse*. Retrieved from [http://www.academia.edu/24578408/BIAS\\_GENDER\\_DALAM\\_BUKU\\_PENDIDIKAN\\_AGAMA\\_ISLAM\\_SEKOLAH\\_DASAR](http://www.academia.edu/24578408/BIAS_GENDER_DALAM_BUKU_PENDIDIKAN_AGAMA_ISLAM_SEKOLAH_DASAR).
- [2]. Besnier, N. (2005). Gender and language in society. *Antropology*, 149 (B).
- [3]. Borg, W. R., & Gall, M.D. (1979). *Educational research for education: An introduction*. New York:Longman, Inc.
- [4]. Cameron, D. (1992). *Feminism and linguistics theory*. London: Macmillan.
- [5]. Colombo Plan Staff, (1983). *Aspects of curriculum for technician education*. Singapore: College for Technician Educ
- [6]. Eckert, P. (2006). Language and gender. *Linguistics*, 156.
- [7]. Fasold, R. (1990). *The sociolinguistics of language*. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell.
- [8]. Hasibuan, A. L. (2009 & 2010). *The development of English learning model oriented to the needs of the market for teachers and students package c in the province of North Sumatra*. Indonesia: Penelitian Hibah Bersaing – Dikti – Depdiknas.
- [9]. Hasibuan, A. L., Effendy, D., & Salamuddin, S. (1995). *The development of English speaking subject matter of writing a Under Graduate program of Faculty of*

*Education in kopertis area I (IKIP Al Washliyah Medan)*. Indonesia: Dibiayai DP3M. IKIP Al Washliyah.

- [10]. Huitema, B.E. (1990). *The analysis of covariance and alternatives*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- [11]. Jupriono, D. (1997). Indonesian Language male: Study gender inequality in Indonesian Language. *FSU*, 5(1).
- [12]. Matondang, S. A. (1998). *A lawsuit against the gender myth in the patriarchal millennium*. Medan: Laporan Penelitian.
- [13]. Mills, S. (2003). *Gender and politeness*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [14]. Mukminatien, N. (2010). *The relationship between language and gender and its implications in writing lessons: Inaugural speech professor of science teaching English as foreign language on the faculty of literature*. Indonesia: Universitas Negeri Malang.
- [15]. Steinberg, D. (1982). *Psycholinguistics: Language, mind and world*. New York: A Longman.
- [16]. Wardhaugh, R. (1986). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- [17]. Yule, G. (1996). *The study of language (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.