

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides background of the study, the research problem, the objective of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, the issue of gender is interesting to be discussed and has been very popular issue, especially in terms of gender identity. The term masculinity and femininity or one's gender identity belong to an individual's gender of maleness and femaleness (Dixson, 2016: 1). The way identification how someone identified as men and women based on the society construction. According to (Stets & Burke, 2000: 1), femininity and masculinity refers to the degree which persons see themselves as masculine or feminine based on the society constructions for being man and woman. Femininity and masculinity are rooted in the social rather than biological sex. Generally, it is supposed for a male to respond to masculine traits and act like a man, while female respond themselves as a feminine and act like a woman. However, it is possible for one person being female and see herself as masculine or male see himself as feminine. In conclusion, it is possible for one individual labels as a feminine and acts like a men because they have masculinity traits on herself, and labels as masculine and acts like a woman because they have femininity traits on himself in society.

Based on the brief explanation above, the further description about the appearance of masculinity and femininity will be conducted. According to Halberstam (1998: 13), in her book entitled *Female Masculinity* states that the study of masculinity received much attention in the 1990s. The scholars have shown no interest in masculinity without men or femininity without women. Therefore, she mentions in her book that it is important that masculinity does not always belong to men, has not been reproduced only by men, and expressed male

heterosexuality. In other words, masculinity can also be reproduced by female masculine, gender deviants, and other lesbians (Halberstam, 1998: 241). Based on the explanation of the expert above, the writer takes summary if femininity does not always belong to women, and masculinity does not always refers to men. Masculine traits can be possessed by women as long as they have some qualities as men and feminine traits can also be possessed by men as long they have some qualities as women. Masculinity and femininity are not based on biological sex but it is based on social constructions.

Based on the previous statements above, it can be seen that gender identity cannot be separated from the existence of gender stereotypes. According to Fatimah (2019: 405), many theories about the elaboration of the differences in gender stereotypes create a separate display for women, women do not have strong label given to men and are unable to hold the same position as men. Women are depicted as having lower status than men by not having the characteristics possessed by men. Some examples related to the typical gender stereotypes, those “for femininity, women regarded as domestic, warm, dependent, weak in physical, passive and emotional. Furthermore, women are also displayed as nurturing, sensitive, and deferring (Francis, 2003: 143). In contrast with men, men are displayed competitive and less emotional than women, physically strong, active, aggressive, and active (Francis, 2003: 143). Thus, the appearance of gender stereotypes is also related to the existence of gender identity. The existence of gender stereotypes can be used to explain about the masculinity and femininity traits possessed by the male and female characters considering the concept created by society. Meanwhile, this study focuses on femininity and masculinity traits found in female characters.

Based on the previous explanation, femininity and masculinity are social stigmas constructed by society, the appearance of masculinity and femininity traits can also be traced in characters in literature. According to Wellek (2009: 68), literature is a social institution, using medium language, a social creation. The

norms and conventions could have arisen only in society. Literature imitates life in social reality even the natural world and subjective world have been imitated of the object of literary.

Crazy Rich Asian by Kevin Kwan is a novel published in 2013. The representation of femininity and masculinity issues presented in this novel which is portrayed by the female characters considered as an interesting object to be analyzed. This study only focuses on femininity and masculinity in *Crazy Rich Asian*, because the female characters; Kerry Chu, Rachel Chu, Peik Lin, Eleanor Young, Felicity Leong, and Astrid Leong show the issue of masculinity and femininity traits. One of the examples is Kerry. Kerry introduces as the mother of Rachel-Chu. She is American but comes from mainland China. Besides the femininity traits possessed by Kerry, she also has masculine traits. There is an impression that Kerry is described as a masculine and feminine character. The writer expects to discover the representation of masculinity and femininity traits found in female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan. In addition, the writer gives a brief explanation of which masculinity and femininity are higher between female characters American-Chinese or female characters Singaporean-Chinese.

Recently, the writer provides five previous studies in this study. Those are previous studies that analysed *Crazy Rich Asian* by Arifah Ulfa Nasution, Siti Norma Nasution, and Riko Andika Rahmat Pohan entitled *An Analysis of Social Classes and its Impacts in Crazy Rich Asian a Novel by Kevin Kwan*. It was published in 2021 in the journal of Linguistics and Literary Research volume 2. This journal focuses on how the social class included in *Crazy Rich Asian* and the impacts on Eleanor's family life. Unlike the previous above, this study focuses on femininity and masculinity traits found in the female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan. The second previous study is *Eleanor Power in Crazy Rich Asian*. It was published in 2021 in the South Asean Journal of Social Studies written by Oneptin Kurnia Tandisau and Andi Febriana Tamrin. The previous

study investigates the effects that happens as a results of Eleanor's domination. The previous study above differs from this study that is to discover femininity and masculinity traits found in the female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan. The third previous study entitled *Rachel-Chu as Liberal Feminist in Kevin Kwan's Crazy Rich Asian (2013)*. It was published in 2020 and written by Ni Komang Arie Swastini. The previous study focuses on identifying Rachel Chu as liberal feminist. Unlike the previous study above, the writer focuses on femininity and masculinity traits found in the female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan. The fourth previous study is *The Masculinity and Femininity Traits of Clary Fray in the Mortal Instrument: City of Bones* by Muhammad Ridho Fansuri. This thesis was published in 2022. The previous study focuses on the femininity and masculinity traits of Clary Fray. The different of the previous study with this study is the results of the findings of the study. The last previous study is *The Portrayal of Masculine Qualities on Female Character in Shooting at Midnight Novel* by Aurora Nurhidayah Rifani. This thesis was published in 2017. The previous study focuses on masculinity on Bridget Logan's character. Unlike the previous study above, this study focuses on femininity and masculinity portrayed in the female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan.

1.2 Research Questions

The research questions are presented as follows:

1. What are the masculinity traits found in the female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan?
2. What are the femininity traits found in the female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To describe the masculinity traits found in the female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan.
2. To describe the femininity traits found in the female characters of *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan.

1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study

In this study, the issue is analysed by the theory of *Masculinity* by R.W Connell and the theory of *Femininity and Masculinity Characteristics* by John E Williams & D. L Best. The writer focuses on analysing masculinity and femininity traits in the female characters based on the narrator's narration in the source of data and the character's utterances related to the issue of femininity and masculinity in novel entitled *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan. The writer also gives limitation in analysing the masculinity and femininity traits just on the female characters that are related to the research questions and refer to the theory of R.W Connell, and John E Williams & D. L Best.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study give some significances, not only theoretically but also practically. The theoretical significance of the study is aimed to enrich the theoretical bases of literary studies, especially those which are related to the femininity and masculinity traits found in the female characters refers to the theory of *Masculinity* by R.W Connell and other theory of *Femininity and Masculinity Characteristics* by John E Williams & D. L Best. Meanwhile, the purpose of this study in practice is to give contribution to the reader, especially English learners who are interested in literature and gender identity topics, so that the reader can get better understanding and knowledge of femininity and masculinity traits found in the female characters in literature.