CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Fairy tale is very common in our life. It is usually assumed as children literature. It is often told by parents to children before bedtime. Actually, the word 'fairy' comes from late Latin *fata* or *fatae* which has meaning of the nature and powers ascribed to these supernatural creatures. However the word 'fairy' has several meanings: enchantment itself (magic or illusion), the realm where enchantment is being dwelt, and supernatural inhabitants of that lands (Haase, 2008). Mostly fairy tales show the magical helper like elves or witches who help the main characters. According to Thompson:

> The basic elements of fairy tales are 1. The structure is episodic and constructed on primarily motifs; 2. The genre is unabashedly fictional, the setting indefinite, and the mode of reality in which characters move is supernatural or fantastic; 3. and protagonist overcomes obstacles to advance rewards and a new level of existence (achieving wealth, power, marriage, and/or social status). (in Haase 2008, p. 323)

Based on the statement above, it can be concluded that fairy tale is made with motives which implicitly in purpose. The motives are usually about manners, morals and values in society which can be the learning media, especially for children. Fiction genre is one characteristic of fairy tales because it makes some fantasy to the readers when it set in a place which sometimes unreal. Fairy tales always maintain that good will be the winner over the evil. Whatever the antagonist characters do to disturb the protagonist, the never win. In other hands, even there are so many difficulties are

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experienced by the protagonist, in the end they will achieve better condition. They will get their happiness and appreciation from other characters because of their strength and bravery.

Moreover, concerning fairy tale as a learning media for children which construct motives of manners, morals and values in society. Many people assumes that fairy tales are entertaining without realize that there are many motives constructed and some problematic issues. Especially, how the story itself constructs gender values. Peksen (n.d, p. 153) states that fairy tales began to be written for children during the first half eighteenth century. The main reasons are to amuse and to teach the children about their sex roles. In the nineteenth century, fairy tales were revised to teach children about good manners and morals. It also modified the tone which concerned to gender restrictions that reflected a social opinion previously unknown. The tales have been successful in gender stereotyping which is taken for granted by almost everyone. According to Zipes (in Baker-Sperry & Graverholz, 2003), on those century, fairy tales were intended to teach girls and young women how to become domesticated, respectable and attractive to marriage partner and also to teach boys and girls appropriate gendered values and attitudes.

The most famous author of written fairy tales is Brothers Grimm whose the stories still exists nowadays. Some of the fairy tales have been adopted in animated films by Walt Disney Inc. which is a dominant children entertainment in the world. Those kind of cultural product affected the social changing. According to Coca (n.d, p. 8), Disney animated film conveys message that previously overlooked in favor of

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the colorful, musical, and happy ending plots which actually concerns in particular gender message. It makes extent the fantasy that presents the reflection of social and ideological 'reality' in which they are embedded. For the gender construction, it provides the clear illustration such as gender visibility, gender roles and message, gendered bodies, gender intersection, and gender performance. People assume that the stories are a mirror that reflects their life as the social relations among group. Even though the stories serve the normative social control, fairy tales also contain stereotypic images of women's beauty. Fox (in Baker-Sperry & Graverholz, 2003) stated that 'fairy tales construct the value such as the feminine beauty ideal. Those are normative restriction prevails, one is like to "find an elaboration of socialization structures that conduce toward the internalization" of such values.'

This emphasis of the feminine beauty ideal may operate as a normative social control especially for girls and women. In one side, this feminine beauty ideal has positive things. For example women learn how society is constructed and stereotyped them based on their character, manners, and behavior. Actually, the feminine beauty ideal is a kind of patriarchal system that builds their ideal women based on their thought. Indirectly, it constructs women that the physical appearance is their assets to enhance their social status. The feminine beauty ideal controls and restricts women's life. It is also could be the construction women femininity in society. The feminine beauty ideal depicted on Snow White and Cinderella stories explicitly. Both stories have similar pattern. They are portrayed as good girl who passive, submissive and under patriarchal system.

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Those kinds of patterns are often found in fairy tales. They depict that a good girl or women should be passive, submissive, gentle, angelic and so forth. According to Peksen (n.d, p. 156), good women are never active and never have power, they are obedient wives who depend on their heroes for survival. In other hands, the bad girl represented as an active, aggressive, violent, monstrous and so on, which the hierarchy of good and bad based on the traditional gender roles. Coca (n.d, p. 15) also maintains that many fairy tales making gender codes by having female characters always wear gown, dress or skirt. Sometimes the female characters have long hair. It means that all of the characterizations of female characters are constructed in the stories not only the behavior but also their appearance.

In twentieth century, there are many fairy tales that arrange the story become more complex and argue the pattern of female characters. One of the examples is TV series *Once Upon A Time*. The words of '*Once Upon A Time*' are very common in fairy tales, especially for the opening of the stories. *Once Upon A Time* is a TV series from America. It launched on October 23, 2011 on ABC (American Broadcasting Company). *Once Upon A Time* is an American fantasy-drama television series. It is a TV series which tells about some well-known fairy tales, including Snow White and Cinderella. The story is compiling the fairy tales and arranges a new story of fairy tales. The uniqueness of the concept that different with other fairy tales makes this series serve a different story of fairy tales which are never made before. It arranges the story based on the characters that is compiled and related to each other. Similar with fairy tales, the dominant characters on *Once Upon A Time* are women. The

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characters that very visible here are Snow White and the Evil Queen. The female characters are depicted as active women who struggle for their urge. In this series the female characters depict more linear, realistic, and active. This series also depicts the female characters who do not always wear the gown or dress. It often showed them wear trousers that never found in classic fairy tales. Because of the unique story of fairy tales that served by *Once Upon A Time*, it receives good rating during the season 1, and is watched by 13 million viewers. It is very popular in teens and adult. This series won 3 awards there are Favorite New Series, Favorite Villain and Best Performance in TV Series – Leading Young Actor. (Wikipedia)

The one that makes this TV series differ from other is the setting that depicts two different worlds, switching between fairy tale world which magic still exists and the real world which is world without magic. As Horowitz, one of the executive producers of *Once Upon A Time* (2011) states on an interview that if we can go to two different worlds and see two different sides of this characters, that was a new way to explore the characters and what make them thick, and come at them from different angles (Radish, 2011). From his statement he seems like mixed two different part which are related to our life. The producers are trying to reflect the story related to our life today. He wants to reveal the audience that there are changing in every characters even she portrays the protagonist as the antagonist and vice versa. The female characters are depicted more active, although, she represents a good girl. The different worlds that the characters exist are as the media to show the audience two different sides of the characters. Tolkin (p.6) states on his journal that fantasy is built

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by the literature such as drama. Fantasy is natural desire of critics to cry up the form of literature or imagination that they innately or by training. It could be define that the TV series itself brings some critics which try to reveal the society. The critic that showed on this series is the femininity that representative by the female character. The femininity that is appears in this series seems not really follow traditional gender role and feminine beauty ideal that are often constructed in fairy tales.

Therefore, it raises a question how femininity is represented by the main female characters in *Once Upon A Time*. It is point out the femininity as the interesting point to analyze because the characters seem challenge the femininity. Femininity will be analyzed by traditional gender role and Feminism approach. Besides, there are several aspects to be considered in doing research about movies and series, which are narrative and non-narrative aspects. Narrative aspects analyzed about plot, dialog, setting and the characters, while non-narrative aspects is cinematic representation, such as appearance (make-up, costume, and hairdo) and colors. This series is chosen because it has different idea in the gender issue, which is packaged in unusual fairy tales story with a good making of dual portrayal, which makes it more attractive to be watched.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Based on the background of the study, the writer forms statement of the problems:

1. How femininity is represented by Snow White's female characters on the TV series?

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1.3 Objective of the study

Based on the research of the statement above, this study intends to analyze Snow White's female characters that represents their femininity in *Once Upon A Time* TV series.

1.4 Significance of the study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the femininity of Snow White's female characters based on the female representation on fairy tales. The writer hopes this research give more information and acknowledgement to the reader about gender construction especially the femininity of female characters in fairy tales. It is important to understand the term of femininity in order to know how female in fairy tales representing their feminine beauty ideal which is constructed by patriarchal system. In this study, the writer expects that the readers are able to know more about the discourse of femininity that is depicted and understand the meaning which is brought on the story. In addition, this study means to give contribution to the cultural studies, in the case issue of gender on the fairy tale and understanding the discourse of femininity on female characters, particularly in English Department of the Faculty of Humanity.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of limitation on this research focuses on how femininity is represented on this television series. This study will focus on the Snow White story on *Once Upon A Time* and concern at Snow White and Evil Queen's characterization. Snow White and Evil Queen are the most dominant and contradict characters in this series.

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It will take all episodes on season one. From all episodes, the writer measures the femininity in representative sampling in which the messages are created or presented.

1.6 Organization of Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters: introduction, literary review, methodology, analysis and conclusion. Each of this chapter will be divided into several topics which are expected to explain more clearly about the content of the chapter. For the first chapter is Introduction which consists of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, organization of thesis and definition of key terms. All of the points explained are the picture of the whole thesis and it is hope to attract reader to find out more about the object of the study.

The second chapter is about literary review which is divided into two topics. The first is theoretical framework which explains about the theory that used to analyze the object. For this case, the theory used is femininity. And the last chapter is literary reviews which is related to this study which giving similar information of this thesis. The related studies expose different point to prove that this thesis is not an imitation.

The third chapter is about methodology of the study. This chapter is divided into four topics: research approach to the issue of the study, scope and limitation which provides information about what we are going to include or exclude in this study, technique of data collection which is quantitative method, and technique of data analysis which is content analysis.

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The fourth chapter is about the analysis of the object which consists of two topics. The first is data findings, which provides some proves that connected to the issue that the writer concerned. And the second one is the discussion and analysis finding by related proves that gotten with the selected theory. And for the last chapter is the conclusion which is also has two topics. The first is the summary of the analysis of this study and the second is the suggestion for further research.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Fairy tales : a sub-genre of folktales involving magical, fantastic or *wonder*ful episodes, characters, events, or symbols. Like all folktales they are narratives that are not believed to be true (fictional stories), often in timeless settings (once upon a time) in generic, unspecified places (the woods), with one-dimensional characters (completely good or bad). The main characters are often following a typical pattern that is resolved partly by magic. (Magoulick)

Femininity : an identity category that refers to the social and cultural characteristics associated with being female. It is discursive-performative construction that describe and disciplines the cultural meaning of being a woman. (Barker 2004, p. 68)

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Patriarchy : a social order in which there is recurrent and systematic domination of men over subordinated women across a wide range of social institution and practices. (Barker 2004, p. 142)

Representation : a set of process by which signifying practices appear and stand for or depict another objector practice in 'real' world. Representation is thus an act of symbolism that mirrors an independent object world. (Barker 2004, p. 177)

Gender role : social ideology and custom construct a large number of associations between gender and other qualities, behaviors, concepts and categories (e.g femininity and masculinity). (Bem, in Lips, p. 48)

CHAPTER 2

LITERARY REVIEW