CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter, firstly, begins with the explanation of the general theories of discourse and ideology, for instance, the definition, how language works in a society and how discourse and society are related. Secondly, the term gender and gender socialization are clarified to show how gender behaviors are developed. Thirdly, children's literature is explained together with discourse, language and ideology and gender ideologies to see how it is related to these elements. The fourth theory is about language. They are divided into verbal and visual languages which both can be inscribed with gender ideologies. The last part of this chapter is previous studies. This part gives details of the selected studies concerning the issue of ideologies in children's literature and textbooks. The children's literature study from Sorani Wongbiasaj is the discourse study of the power relation found in Thai children's literature. The gender ideology and gender bias are also mentioned in this study. Another one is the study from Worasuda Wattanawong which is about the gender ideologies in Thai children's literature. The textbook studies are consisted of the textbook study from Majorie U'Ren which is about the different images of male and female characters as portrayed in textbooks used in America. Another textbook study by Nidhi Eoseewong is about how textbooks are considered to be part of socialization process to instill appropriate behaviors to students.

2.1 General Theories of Discourse and Ideology

2.1.1 Definition of Discourse

The framework for this study is based firstly on the definition of discourse proposed by Guy Cook in his book, *Discourse and Literature* (1994). According to Cook, a discourse is " a stretch of language in use, taking on meaning in context for its users, and perceived by them as purposeful, meaningful and connected" (25).

Cook states in another book, *Discourse* (1996) that in discourse analysis, we study and explain the quality of consistency and purposefulness by giving account of how the stretches of language in their full textual, social and psychological contexts are considered meaningful to the users. Cook contends that there are two approaches to the study of discourse. The first one is a contextual approach which refers to the facts outside language such as the situation, the people involved, what they know and what they are doing. These facts enable us to understand stretches of language as discourse in a specific context. The other one is a formal approach which refers to the elements inside the language, how they are combined to create meaning. The difference between these two ways of approaching language can be understood through formal features, something we understand when we read and hear, and contextual features, something outside physical realization of the language or something pre-existing in the minds of the participants. The formal features or cohesive devices can be divided into verb form, parallelism, referring expressions, repetition, lexical chains, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and information arrangement. The contextual part, on the other hand, consists of language functions, conversational principles and schema (Cook, 1996). This latter level concerns the users of the language as well as the society or the community they are in. In some schools of discourse studies, therefore, analysis is focused on the language, the usage especially in the form of media and their connection or their relationship to the surrounding society (Bell and Garett 2001; Nodelman 1996; Fairclouguh 1994; Stephens 1992).

2.1.2 Language and Society

One of the scholars in the area of discourse who is interested in the relationship between language and society is Norman Fairclough. According to Fairclough (1994; 20), "language as a form of social practice" means that language is part of the society or a socially conditioned process since people are socially determined when they communicate to one another, by speaking, listening, writing or reading. Language is a kind of act by people, and their act also has social effects. For example, a language act helps to maintain the relationship among the people in the community; in some cases, it also helps sustain power in the society.

Then again, social phenomena is linguistic because the language used by people in each social context is not only a sign or expression of social process and practice, but also a part of these processes and practices (Fairclough, 1994; 23). Through language, people learn to live together as a society. They learn social rules and orders. These people consciously or unconsciously reinforce, reproduce and sustain these rules, orders and standards until they become ideologies which, in turn, function to control and determine the society. In this sense, ideologies are produced, maintained and passed on through language. The definition of discourse proposed by Cook, then, is extended by Fairclough and the school of Critical Linguistics to cover such issues as power relations, gender and social ideologies and social control.

2.1.3 Definition of Ideologies

Ideology is a system of knowledge, beliefs, ideas, morals and values which are accepted to be true and then, shared and passed on by members in a society (Wongbiasaj, 2004; 28). Van Dijk sees that ideologies are, "*the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group*. This means that ideologies allow people as group members, to organize the multitude of social beliefs about each case, good or bad, right or wrong, *for them*, and to act accordingly" (Italics in original) (Van Dijk, 1998; 8).

Ideology, though invisible and intangible, is very powerful since it is the basis of perception, understanding and judgment. People use ideology to understand, account for, justify and evaluate other people's behavior. Thus, an ideology influences a person's perception and organization of the society and the world on the whole.

According to Sorani Wongbiasaj et al., ideologies in society do not just exist. They are constructed and shaped as though they happen naturally, mostly by the group of people who hold power in the society. This process is carried out through the use of verbal and non-verbal language and also through the use of media to produce and reproduce ideologies until they become "social reality" which is viewed as natural and believed to be true by members in the society who have neither power

nor the access to media. People who construct ideology often have a hidden agenda, mostly to maintain their power or to justify their rights to sustain or increase their power. Hence ideologies and power relations often exist side by side in the society (Wongbiasaj, 2004; 28).

Bell and Garett state that there are three components of an ideology that should be brought into focus. Firstly, it has social functions in real life; for instance, some ideologies serve to maintain relationships of power and domination in the society. The next part is the cognitive structure which controls our mental nature and perception of the world. These ideologies set standards which rule social judgment and what we think is right or wrong, true or false. This cognitive structure monitors social practices. The last part is called discursive expression and reproduction. These are the ways that ideologies are expressed in and reproduced by. These ideological expressions and reproductions are related to language in the way that they are linguistic in nature. Ideologies are expressed and reproduced through verbal and non-verbal language. Discourse and ideology are therefore inseparable (Bell and Garett, 2001; 23-24).

2.1.4 Discourse and Ideology

In every day life, language is always used as a discourse; that is, in a coherent manner with specific functions and purposes, with some existing knowledge in the head of participants, under some rules or regulations which are called "social orders". The varying relationships of power at the level of institution or at the level of the society are what decides how the discourses are structured in a particular order, and how the structuring changes in due course. At these levels, the power concerns the ability to control discourse and one characteristic of such control is ideological; that is, the people in power will make sure that the structuring of discourse is ideologically harmonized with other elements in society (Flairclough, 1994; 33). For example in our society, the language used by people with authority such as doctors and policemen is often structured in such a way that displays such power to the powerless.

Another example is, in Thai, the use of pronouns is determined by discursive elements such as purposes, context of situation, but most of all by the social orders of hierarchy which is a dominant ideology that controls and harmonizes the Thai society. Thus, discourse and ideologies are very much connected because discourse constructs and maintains ideologies and ideology controls discourse as well.

Gender discourse is another example we come across frequently in our society. In accordance with Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, "gender discourse is the very process of creating gender dichotomy by effacing similarity and elaborating on difference, and even where there are biological differences, these differences are exaggerated and extended in the service of constructing gender" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003; 13). Gender discourse is connected closely to gender ideology which is the system of the beliefs that direct people's involvement in the gender dichotomy as well as to explain and justify that practice. Gender ideologies emphasize the differences in the nature of male and female, the fairness, the naturalness, the origins and the essential of various aspects of gender order. The dominant ideology insists that males and females are simply different. In addition, it assigns these differences to a fixed essential quality of males and females yielding gender stereotypes and gender bias. This emphasis and assignments are again done through language.

2.2 Gender and Gender Socialization

Socialization, according to Paul H. Mussen, John J. Conger and Jerome Kagan, is "the process by which the individual acquires behavior patterns, beliefs, standards, and motives that are valued by, and appropriate in, his own culture group and family" (1963; 365). In other words, the objective of socialization is to facilitate the acquirement of culturally accepted behavior patterns and motives or to produce individuals who fit into the culture and help to sustain it.

Gender and socialization are closely connected. As observed by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, "Sex is biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex" (10). Gender is,

therefore, the result of socialization. In a society, people learn to behave and interact in the way that is based on gender dichotomy: the concept of male and female in their mind is not something they are born with. When they perceive a person as male they will treat this person in a certain way which is considered to be appropriate for his gender by the society and it will be different from the way they treat a female. Gender is produced and reproduced through learning in the society. Therefore gender is viewed as something that people construct while sex is simply given by biology (Disch, 1997; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

2.2.1 Gender Socialization

As previously mentioned, gender is socially constructed. Yet every society has different expectations and standards for the masculine and feminine behavior. The social contexts assign infants only two gender categories based on their sex. By naming, dressing, and applying other gender indicators, a sex category becomes a gender status. Then, people treat boys differently from girls. Children are introduced to what is appropriate or inappropriate for their gender through the process of reinforcement and modeling by what is called a socializing agent. Then, different sex children respond to different treatment and behave differently. Within this influential system of sex assignment, women and men behave in the way that helps define their individual identities (Raider, 2004; Disch, 2000; Mussen, Henry and kagan, 1963).

Throughout their childhood, children come across several socializing agents. They get their earliest examples of male and female behavior from their family. Their parents directly and indirectly influence their children's understanding of gender by assigning stereotypical chores to their children: mowing the lawn for son and preparing dinner for daughter (Raider, 2004; 127-128). The study of Jean Berko Gleason (cited in *Language, Gender and Sex in Comparative Perspective* by Philips, Steele and Tanz, 1987), reveals that the American father and mother do speak differently and apply different kinds of language to their sons and daughters: father's language is direct with more technical terms while mother's is more polite and in tune with her children.   So if children follow the model of the same sex parent, girls

will be more polite and boys will be more direct and tend to have more skills in the mechanical area.

During the schooling period, peers play a part in modeling gender behavior. Children who engage in sex-appropriate behavior tend to be accepted by their peers. Those who play in crossed sex activities are often criticized or left to play alone (Santrock, 1995; 341). Plus children are exposed to the constructing gender elements. For example, when teachers address a group of children as "girls" and "boys", the gender dichotomy is emphasized and sometimes teachers refer to English consonants and vowels by telling the students to recite "Miss A, Mister B, Mister C, Mister D, Miss E" and so on. Moreover, children see the pattern of the change of their different sex teachers: when they are little, they see female teachers who teach many subjects and take care of them like their mothers before they are replaced by male teachers as they grow up. While a female teacher is suitable to teach small children because of her nurturing ability, a male teacher is more likely to teach math or science when the students get older (Ekert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003; 46).

Media also carries the message telling what is appropriate or inappropriate for males and females. These messages also play an important role on gender development. On television, females are usually presented as less capable or stereotypically as housewives or in a romantic role. At the same time, men appear in higher status jobs and are portrayed as more aggressive and constructive. In the printed media, females often appear in beauty products, cleaning products and home appliances, whereas males are shown more in advertisements for cars, liquor and travels (Santrock, 1995).

Besides parents, peers, school and media which are important socializing agents of children from the birth onward, children's literature is also very influential. John Stephens emphasizes the importance of children's literature as part of socialization that since childhood is viewed as the fundamental formative stage in the life of a human being, children's books see it as the time for children to learn about the nature of the world, so as to know how to live in it as well as how to

conduct themselves and to interact with people (Stephens, 1992; 8-9). In terms of gender socialization, Perry Nodelman points out that children's literature portrays the stereotypical image of female as a way to introduce characteristics which are appropriate for them. For instance, the rebellious and ambitious characteristics in *Ann of Green Gables* are often controlled by the need of characters themselves to be feminine, a good mother and homemaker. In *Charlotte's Web*, the undemanding, selfless, maternal love traits that most readers find admirable are presented in Charlotte, the female spider, as part of gender socialization (Nodelman, 1996; 122).

Textbooks children use in schools are another kind of literature meant specifically for children. According to Raider, children are exposed to the content of textbooks which socialize them in developing views of the world as well as the encouragement and discouragement of sex-role identification (Raider, 2004: 135-136). A textbook is a socializing agent since the story and characters are stereotypically portrayed. For example, story themes concerning energetic or violent behavior, pranks, and work projects are generally related to boy activities. On the other hand, quiet activities, folktales and "real life with positive emotion" are associated with girls. The feelings, personal characteristics and activities of male and female characters in the story are also different. Females are more often portrayed as outgoing, friendly, kind, shy, easily scared, inactive, un-ambitious and uncreative. Moreover there are many more pictures, stories and examples of men than women. From this description of rigid gender-typed behavior and the unequal space given to male and female characters, textbooks are considered an evidence of gender bias. In addition, to the extent that boys identify with male characters and girls with female, children are likely to follow their same sex characters. Thus, textbooks have a profound significance for gender development of boys and girls (Mussen, Henry and Kagan, 1963; 500).

In conclusion, children are socialized into the gender appropriate behavior since the day they were born. At home, their parents treat them in particular way to introduce them to their gender. This gender-typed behavior is reinforced again by the time they enter school through peers, teacher's teaching style and staffing

patterns. They are also bombarded by gender messages from the media which keep repeating stereotypical images. In addition, printed media such as children's literature and textbooks provide the stereotypical images of males and females which are considered to be proper in each society to serve as examples for children. Therefore, children learn to be male and female from the socializing agents that surround them in their environment.

2.2.2 The Development of Gender Typing

The theory of gender typing tries to explain the development of gender differences. It is the children's adoption of behavior, roles, values, attitudes and interests deemed appropriate to them as boys and girls. Since masculine and feminine traits are culturally prescribed during the preschool years, children are socialized into work, activities and personality characteristics identified as differentially appropriate for males and females in their own culture (Raider, 2004; Mussen, Henry and Kagan, 1963).

Kohlberg (1966) explains the cognitive steps involved in developing gender-typed behavior. The first step towards gender typing is children's ability to know that they are male or female and then to realize that gender always stays the same in every situation. Children achieve complete gender constancy when they understand the fact that someone who is male or female is biologically determined and it cannot be changed in any circumstances. According to Raider, gender identity is acquired through a combination of observation, imitation and differential reinforcement. Children observe how men and women act, then imitate the observed behaviors. They tend to repeat these actions in the future, in case they are reinforced by adults (Raider, 2004; 64-65). When they gain gender constancy, they begin to act and behave in the way they think appropriate for their gender. They are motivated to become a "proper" girl or boy. To act otherwise would cause disequilibrium, an imbalance between the internal cognitive understanding and external reality and find activities which are rewarding and imitate the behavior of same-sex models (Raider, 2004; 71, Santrock, 1998; 342).

From the process of gender typing, the society usually ends up with binary opposite gender traits, fixing the stereotype of the man as being rational, smart and the breadwinner of the family and the woman as being emotional, passive and nurturing. Because of these stereotypes, men and women are treated differently and this results in gender bias: a situation where women are viewed as inferior or are discriminated against.

There are many socializing agents that help form and guide children to behave appropriately in terms of gender. Gender typing theory explains how children understand these gender messages and gain their gender status or perceive themselves as boys or girls. Once they come to the realization of their gender, they conduct themselves in a way that helps to maintain their gender and the stereotypical images in their mind which can cause gender bias. Moreover, there is no room in society for a man or woman to act differently from these images. This can also result in the limitation of people's potentiality.

2.3 Children's Literature
2.3.1 Children's Literature and Discourse

Language and society reflect and form each other. As said by Faircough, "language is a part of society. Linguistic phenomena are social phenomena of special sort, and social phenomena are linguistic phenomena. Linguistic phenomena are social in the sense that whenever people speak, listen, write, or read, they do so in ways which are determined socially and have social effects. Social phenomena is linguistic, on the other hand, in the sense that the language activity, which goes on in the social contexts is not merely a reflection or expression of social process and practices, it is part of those processes and practice" (Fairclough, 1991; 22-23).

Children's literature is a type of discourse since it is a kind of social communication through verbal and visual language. Doing discourse analysis of children's literature is a means to approach the language so as to understand the relationship between language and society. As said by Stephens, "a story comprises what we might roughly think of as 'what certain characters do in a certain place at

a certain time', and discourse comprises the complex process of encoding that story…" (Stephens, 1992; 17). Then the readers have to decode the language and understand the story, the world and the society surrounding it. Therefore children's literature is social phenomenon and has social influences.

2.3.2 Children's Literature, Language and Ideology

Ideologies have direct relationship to language because the use of language is the universal form of social behavior. Children's literature is part of the domain of cultural practices which help in the socialization process. In order to be part of the society and behave in the way that conforms to the social norm, children need to master the language since it is the fundamental form of social communication. Plus language is used to exemplify and instill the current social values and attitudes by the process of imagining and recording the story. Hence ideology is created in and by language, meanings within language are socially determined, and narratives are constructed out of language.

As said by Stephens, children's literature and ideology are connected because ideology is embedded in the text that exists as images of events in the real world especially in the picture books or folktales in which animals behave and socially interact like human-beings. This leads to the assumptions that the behavior of these animals reflects social reality. This way, stereotypical sexual, racial and class attitudes, with related social practices, have long been implicitly inscribed. Hence, fiction can be considered to be a special site for ideological effect, with a potentially influential capacity for shaping audience attitudes. Plus, the writers of children's books usually think that it is their responsibility to shape readers' attitudes into 'desirable' forms, which can be an attempt to perpetuate certain values or to resist the social values of the dominants that the writers oppose (Stephens, 1992; 3).

Moreover, the examples of ideology in children's literature can be seen in a distorted picture and the sexist prejudice of social reality that have been stereotypically displayed in children's literature. For instance, by having the female

characters always work in the kitchen and concealing the fact that many women also have their own professional careers (Broughton, 1987; 88-89).

2.3.3 Gender Ideologies and Children's Literature

As said by Nodelman, one of the assumptions about children's literature is that "children's stories should contain positive role models: characters who act in acceptable ways and get rewarded for it" (Nodelman, 1996; 73).

Consequently, children's literature stereotypes gender by depicting male characters with strength, courage, wisdom and female characters with love, tenderness and purity. Boys are described with lexically signifying terms, the essence of maleness in the genre: active, tall, handsome, brave (Knowles and Malmjær, 1996; 87-89).

For example, in books written in the 19th century such as *The Tale of Peter Rabbit, Anne of Green Gables and Little Women,* males and females are stereotypically represented. In *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, Peter's sisters are conventionally passive. They obey their mother's instructions while Peter acts accordingly to traditional stereotypes of male behavior by challenging his mother, striking out on his own and seeking adventure. In *Anne of Green Gables* and *Little Women*, there is an attempt to portray the female protagonists as adventurous, yet their adventures are considered minor and happen in domestic areas. Plus, even though, they long for the independence of mind, they willingly accept the restrictions imposed on them by their culture's view of femininity. In other words, their rebelliousness does not exactly threaten conventional values. They give in to the need to remain acceptably feminine (Nodelman, 1996; 119).

Stephens provides more examples that in *Theodore Mouse up in the Air*, boys get to do things, but girls are cautious and repressive. Moreover in *Mouse Monster*, the mother is always seen with her apron and the father with his pipe. In addition, the father is the one who comes to rescue the child when he has problems outdoors while the mother is busy in the kitchen.

The examples in Nodelman and Stephens prove that since children's literature serves as a means for teaching gender ideologies to children, all characters are stereotypically displayed in the way deemed appropriate in the society.

Besides children's literature, textbooks also introduce gender ideologies to children. According to Pauwel, "educational texts and resource materials for young learners were among the first to be subjected to analysis." This arises from a strong belief that the effects of gender bias are most detrimental during the pre-schooling and primary schooling periods which is the early stages of socialization. The children's books are made to be sex-stereotyped and biased in the way girls and women are portrayed. Plus male and female characters are portrayed with strongly sex-stereotyped behavior: they participate in activities they consider appropriate for their sex. Moreover, male characters are visually and verbally more prominent since they engage in greater and more varied types of activities than women do in female activities (Pauwel, 1998; 21-23).

2.4 General Theories of Language

Language consists of two parts: verbal language and visual language. Therefore in order to analyze discourse, these two parts need to be examined.

2.4.1 Verbal Language

According to Ginneken, "the ideological nature of language is easiest to understand for separate words and labels". For example, some of the idiomatic expression in standard English can be derogatory towards some ethnic or racial groups such as the Chinese are identified with funny or weird and the word nigger or negro are considered so racist that they have to be replaced by the word "black" . When words or linguistic choices link between themselves and become sentences, they often unconsciously reveal ideologies. In terms of word combinations, there is a pattern in the way words associated with people, such as the words man and woman: men are often associated with professional roles, whereas women with household roles and children. In term of the sentence type, active and passive forms can make responsibilities more or less noticeable, for example, by foregrounding participants

in active forms or keeping them in the background in passive forms. In active sentences, the subject is the agent or the doer; therefore it is responsible for the results or the outcomes of the verbs. In passive sentence, the subject is the victim of the sentence so the doer or the agent is unidentified (Ginneken, 1998; 153).

The example of the power of verbal language to convey gender ideology in the texts written for children can be seen in the work of Freeboy and Baker (Cited in Powles, 1998). They investigated the elaboration of gender terms used to refer to the kinds of events and activities which are mainly expressed through verbs and adjectives with which girls and boys are associated. This research also reaffirms strong tendencies for gender-stereotyping in this field. They further found that

There is a wide range of verbs associated with boys, but not with girls (as subject: *answer, hurt, shout, think, work; as objects: come to, jump with, like, play with, talk to, walk with*, and a small subset of verbs of which girls are the object and never boys in these texts (*hold on to, kiss*).

Their analysis of adjectives associated with girls and boys in the readers mirrored the above:

We found that the most frequent adjective in the corpus is *little* and that this adjective is not equivalently associated with *boy/s* and *girl/s*. About 30 per cent of the boys appearing in these books are described as *little*, while slightly more than half of the girls are so described. In addition, there are a number of adjectives applied uniquely to either boys or girls. Boys, but never girls, are described as: *new, sad, kind, brave, tiny, and naughty*. Girls, on the other hand are exclusively attached to the following adjectives *young, dancing,* and *pretty.*

According to the analysis of the texts by Freebody and Baker, "most texts have an andocentric orientation" which means that the materials and knowledge are presented from a masculine-generic perspective, the sexist language practices are

employed by both male and female writers and they often presume their readers to be male if female is not specifically mentioned (cited in Powels, 1998; 20-22).

The study of children's literature by Sorani et al shows that language is also used as a discourse to produce and reproduce ideologies. It frames people's perception about society. For instance, the word choice especially choices of verbs often have a hidden meaning which implies certain social ideologies. For example, the term "ให้" *give, let, make* or other verbs such as *give permission, order*, are associated with adults' behavior indicating power over children or the verbs, *tell, explain, answer,* showing their wisdom and experience. On the other hand, children are related to the verbs, *ask, want to know, appreciate* and *thank you*. These verbs show that they are innocent, powerless and not daring. Besides verbs, adjectives also provide certain characteristics such as "ลุงเต่าน้ำผู้เชี่ยวชาญ" *an experienced uncle turtle* shows that adult has more knowledge and skill "หนูนาเป็นเด็กหญิงตัวเล็กๆ แก้มแดงน่ารัก" *Nu Na is a pretty little girl with pink cheeks* shows the smallness and innocence of children. The sentence form, especially the passive form, also implies power of the doers which are mostly adults: "น้ำมนต์ถูกแม่กักตัวไว้ในนั้น" *Nammon is locked in the bathroom by his mother* or the word "ให้" *give, let, make* in active form also shows power of the doers: "พ่อแม่ให้หนูนาอาบน้ำสระผม" *parents make Nu Na take a shower.* The imperative or the conditioning sentence can also imply the power of the subject over the object: แม่เอาปลามาให้และพูดว่า "ยอดกินปลา" *Mom brings fish and says "Yod, eat this fish".* The conjunction such as "because" or "therefore" are employed to justify the subjects action: "น้ำมนต์ถูกแม่กักตัวไว้ในนั้น เพราะวันนี้เขาไม่ยอมอาบน้ำ" *Nammon is locked in there because he refuses to take a shower today.* Moreover, in Thai language, pronouns and particles can not only show politeness, but also the power relation. In children's books analyzed in the

study, the pronouns and particles of children are polite such as ผม, หนู, ครับ, คะ but those of adults are impolite such as ข้า, เอ็ง, ย่ะ or sometimes they do not use a particle at all. The study also reveals that gender ideologies are reproduced through language in children's literature. Female characters are portrayed as emotional with the pronoun "หนู" or with such adjectives as tiny or cutes or such verb as "ผวากอด ด้วยความตกใจ" *Suddenly gripped with fear* or "ร้องไห้โฮให้คนช่วย" *bursts into tears and cries for help*.

The pronoun "we" and the conjunction "and" can also portray the two characters or more as being equal in terms of relationship and the person in subject position is considered more powerful because he is the doer of the action and the one in the object position is powerless because he is the receiver of the action or the one who has to take the consequence.

In texts, verbal language plays an important role in framing people's perception through the selection of words, such as adjectives, pronouns and particles and a combination in a certain forms of sentences, such as active or passive forms in order to reach a specific purpose of the writer.

2.4.2 Visual Language

Visual language is as meaningful as verbal language. One of the factors that give meaning to the visual language is positioning. According to Kress and Leeuwen (1996), the position of each image endows its specific information values attached to the various zones of the visual space. For example, in New and Given position, the Given is in the left side. It is something that the reader already knows. So it is viewed as common-sense and self-evident which makes it more important than the New position in the right side, which is not accepted yet and therefore less important (Kress and Leeuwen, 1996; 55).

Sorani provides examples from her study that the positions of pictures also convey ideologies such as power relation. For instance, the picture in the center of a page is considered to be more important than the one in the margin. The pictures of adults are not only bigger than those of children, but also placed in the left side of the page and children are in the right. This indicates that the adults have power over children. Plus in stories about animals, the lion which is the king of the jungle is big and placed at the top of the page and the rest of the animals are at the bottom. This position of the lion on the top of the page shows that it is the most powerful animal in the jungle. For line and color, the books for boys often have curve or disorganized lines and the colors are mostly dark such as dark blue, purple or black. On the other hand, books for girls consist of straight lines and even lines and the colors are bright such as pink, green or yellow. The shot and angel also frame the perception of the reader. For example, the close-up and high angle can make the object look small and powerless whereas the close-up and low angle makes the object look big and renders it more powerful (Wongbiasaj, 2004; 170-171).

2.5 Previous Studies

2.5.1 Review of Discourse of Thai Children's Literature

The first part is the discourse study of Thai children's literature. The work of Sorani Wongbiasaj et al, *Award-winning Thai Children's Picturebook: A Literary and Discourse Analysis* (2004), aimed at finding discourse and ideology which are inscribed in Thai children's books as well as their relation to Thai children and society. The research was conducted using the board concept of social-semiotics. Moreover, since there is a connection between the verbal and the visual elements, an analysis was done of verbal elements such as word choices, sentence structuring, transitivity, pronouns, modality, as well as visual elements such as choices of images, colors, lines, sizes, and page composition. There is also the study of the ideologies inscribed in the text, power relations and social control among different groups of people in the society. The study reveals that ideologies are intentionally and unintentionally inscribed in all the 17 children's books through verbal language and visual language including literary conventions such as the narrativiszation and fictionality etc. It was concluded that these children's books are employed to

produce, reproduce and carry on ideologies such as power relations, hierarchy and gender in Thai society. Gender bias which is the result of these gender stereotypes is reinforced in these books.

Another work in this topic is the work of Worasuda Wattanawong. In her discourse study *The Comparative of Gender Ideologies in Thai Contemporary Children's Books* (2004), Worasuda examined eight Thai contemporary children's books written between 1998 and 2002: four books for boys and four for girls. Some of these selected books received awards during the past five years: *The Gift of Flower* and *the Little Lion* won the first prize from the National Book Development Committee Awards, *The Wonderful Present from the Fairy* and *The Magic Books* won the awards for the illustrations from the Children Foundation Annual Awards while some were popular reading at Prince Royal's College in Chiang Mai. The findings revealed that boys and girls are portrayed differently in terms of five main components: setting and space, mannerisms, social relationships, activities and interests, and ways of learning. It was concluded that gender ideologies were emphasized and reproduced verbally and visually throughout the series. Thus, it was considered to be a propagation of gender stereotypes to the readers.
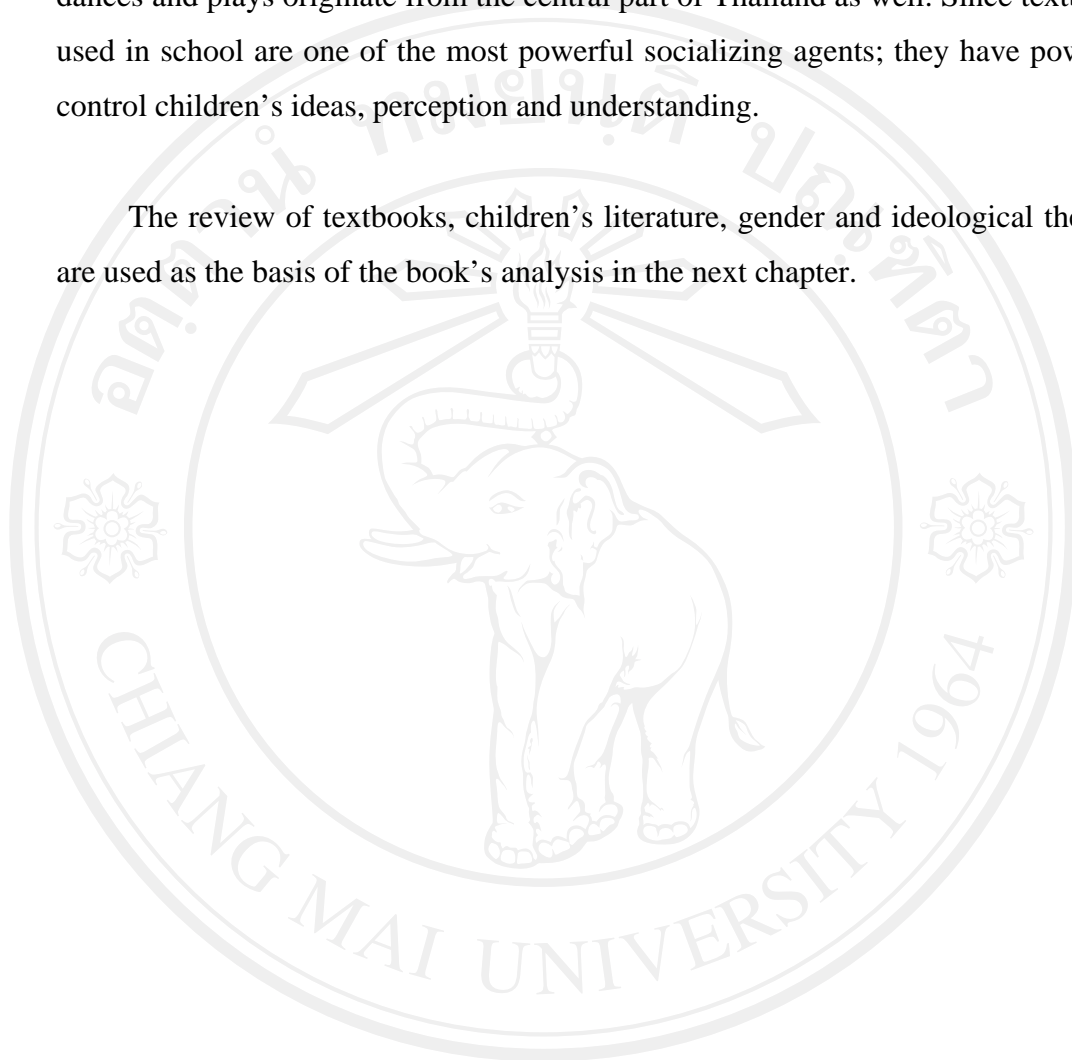
2.5.2 Textbooks Studies

The first study is the gender discourse study by Majorie U'Ren who is a former English professor at Stanford University and is now a member of the National Organization for Women in United States. Her research, *The Image of Woman in Textbooks* (cited in *Woman in Sexist Society* edited by Gornick and Moran, 1969), examined the content of the stories in the textbooks adopted and recommended for second-through sixth-grade use in the California school system. The result shows that 75 percent of the main characters in the stories in the textbooks were male. In all, only 20 percent of the space was devoted to females. Accounts of adult females are almost nonexistent while adult males appear frequently. Moreover, stories about females are not as long as those about males. As a result, in page by page calculation, the average book devotes less than 20 percent of its story space to the female sex. Furthermore, many of the stories center round

a male figure while the female-centered stories, in nearly every instance, include several males with whom the lead females interact. Apparently, the female world is dependent upon male support and interest. Moreover, stories about girls are considerably less interesting. From all the textbooks, males are taught to accomplish, to advance, and to create. Therefore, male characters in the textbooks often encounter the adventures that stretch the limits of possibility. Moreover, they receive the freedom to be in a situation that few parents would be willing to grant to a girl. On the contrary, the story about girls is much less interesting since the girls are often confined to the domestic surroundings which allow neither pleasure nor opportunities for success. This work of U'Ren provides evidence that during the schooling period, textbooks play an important part in forming gender behavior since all the male and female characters are stereotypically portrayed in the story in the books which all students are required to use.

The second one is the study by Nidhi Eoseewong on the construction of nationalism in Thai school textbooks. In his study, *Chat Thai, Meung Thai, Babrien lae Anusauwaree* (Thai nation, Thailand, Textbooks and Monuments (2004), Nidhi bases his study on the quotation of Benedict Anderson from his book *Imagined Communities*, "nation and nationalism are specific cultural invention" (cited in Nidhi, 45). He also mentions the words from King Rama the sixth, "the government has power to shape people' behaviors by writing textbooks for students…therefore the price of textbooks is not expensive at all" (46). From Anderson's view, a nation is compared to an ideal village where people live together in harmony. Nidhi aims to find out how this image of an ideal village is constructed and to whom it is related. Textbooks used in this research are mainly Thai and Social study textbooks at Primary levels grades 1-6. The result shows that conflicts and differences barely exist in these textbooks. Everybody knows his/her duty and responsibility. It is an ideal village with an effective governmental system. The characters are ideal types: children respect adults; people are humble, considerate and ready to sacrifice for the common interest; and the most important characteristic of Thais is to be grateful and to respect the monarchy. The unity creates the sense of Us and Them which leads students to think of others who do not belong to their groups as enemies. Nidhi also

suggests that textbooks are where the centralization takes places: the proper manners in the book mostly belong to those of middle class people in Bangkok. Songs, dances and plays originate from the central part of Thailand as well. Since textbooks used in school are one of the most powerful socializing agents; they have power to control children's ideas, perception and understanding.

The review of textbooks, children's literature, gender and ideological theories are used as the basis of the book's analysis in the next chapter.