



Helping the Students to Navigate the Cultures of Others through Literature: The Teaching Practice to the Students of English Study Program in UIN SATU

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ABSTRACT

The existence of hundreds of countries with billions of people absolutely has emerged the diversity of the culture in the world. Due to this fact, understanding the culture of different people will contribute some benefits to the students linguistically and culturally. The good comprehension of multicultural can make them be more aware of culture and be tolerant toward people whose backgrounds, perspectives and behave in the ways which are not the same. Having sufficient knowledge of diverse culture they can perform fine interpersonal communication to others better. Nonfiction literatures, science books as well as historical books are not the only media to gain the education of multicultural. Appreciating Fiction is another tool to nurture open-minded in the term of accepting of diversity of culture. The paper shares descriptively the teaching evidences how the students of University are driven to comprehend the culture of people in different areas of the world delivered by means of studying the literary works. This paper presents how the literary class run to equip the students with lesson of multicultural understanding. Firstly what are labelled as literature, specifically multicultural literature? Secondly how are the cultures told by the author? Thirdly why is it important to read literature? Fourthly, how multicultural literacy helps improving students' performance in daily life? The presentation of the four topics are expected to bridge the students open their minds to accept the presence of culture of others that may be quite different from their own. In addition, they also can take something good or positive of the cultures shaped by people of other places. The new gained insights of life experiences, religion, and customs of other people become their modalities to build the unity within the diversity. Being not closed mind, they can appreciate or respect other, then they make their interpersonal relation or friendship with different ethnic, race and so on.

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INTRODUCTION

It is broadly witnessed that the coming of globalization has cut the boarder of one country to another. The boarder less regions has brought people over the world get closer. The communication or interrelationship in the domain of social, politic, economy and culture

develop very fast. Being aware of the need of having friendship or relationship with citizens across the world, the horizon of cultural background of other is strongly demanded in order to avoid the behavior or the attitudes which can cause other people across regions feel injured, feel ill, disappointed, offended, suspected each other or prejudiced.

The insights of life experiences of other people in the past, present and future can be picked up in several ways by face to face interaction or even from reading nonfiction and fiction. The previous studies report different devices and methods to introduce lessons of the culture to the students of English language. Role Play, the celebration of holiday, musical drama, festival of drama and music have been used as the possible instruments to teach literature (Rezaee & Farahian, 2011), (Salih, n.d.). Nonfiction literary works such as any kind of books (social, science books, journal, articles, and brochures) can be resources of transferring global knowledge and cultural information the as well. Culture lessons are crucial in enabling people to perceive themselves from a different point of view since ethnocentricity confines the self, hence individuals must view themselves from a different perspective to overcome such a limitation (Matrix et al., 2005). From their research, by examining the mode of interpretation, we can see how visual poems counterbalance the traditional linearity of writing, how figurative equalizes the text during the process of meaning creation, and how reading is influenced by the sight of the picture, which validates the sight as well (Culture, 2017). In addition to several previously mentioned media to upgrade cultural comprehension, multicultural literatures or publicly known fictional literary such as play, poem, novel are believed also as very powerful references to enrich the ideas of cultures. Anyway, the two different learning sources to gain the understanding of cultures work in the different way. Nonfiction literary commonly merely provide knowledge and information. Meanwhile the fictional works do not only educate about life experiences but also give entertainment. The readers get the joys and moral lesson or the meaning of the pieces of literary works when they read them.

My teaching experience in English department, UIN SATU Tulungagung noted the facts that a large number of my students are not familiar with the nonfiction or fictional works which is also termed literature. The term "literature" sounds strange to the students of my literary class. When they are questioned what literature means, I do not get any response. There are not any student response to my question. They look very confused. Soon after I repeat the same question they admit do not know the meaning of the word 'literature'. It is the new term they very rarely know and do not know which are called by literature. When I do the interview with some of them they told that they do not know the meaning of fictional literature, they cannot mention the examples of literature, they do not have any idea about literature and why learning literature is necessary, how literature guides the understanding life, how the literature brings the lessons of cultures.

Referring to the facts and teaching practice elaborated in previous paragraphs, the paper is written. The target is sharing what really happen in my class of literature in Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Hopefully this teaching practice can give theoretically and practically contribution in the field of literature class. This writing is focused on the four topics namely 1) what are labelled as literature, or multicultural literature? 2) How are the cultures told by the author? 3) Why is it important for the students to read or learn literature? How culture or multicultural literacy helps improving students' performance in daily life?

METHOD

First time, the literature class of the English Study program begins, the students who have ever learned or known the course are introduced with term and definition of literature. Some experts have different opinions on the definition about literature related to the time and social condition. Those different opinions result due to the complexities of literature over as the life. Intercultural communication refers to face-to-face exchanges between individuals from distinct cultures. Knowing how to teach a foreign culture is essential for foreign language teachers if they want to help their students become competent communicators across cultures. Language instructors at all universities and colleges across the globe argue against the notion that culture instruction should be included in the teaching of foreign languages (Sun, 2013). Jones states literature is simply another way we can experience the word around us thorough our imagination. Literature, in broadest sense, includes all written materials. This can be history books, philosophical works, novels, poems, plays, scientific articles, dictionaries, directories, instructional manuals, travel folders, magazines, school textbooks (Baym, N., & Levine, n.d.).

Further he classifies them into two different groups. In one group places those writings that mainly present information , take examples, biology books, mathematic book, social books, magazines, travel folders, instructional manuals, dictionaries and so on and in the other place those that entertain and present culture and moral values as well. Informative literature tells us what has been happening around the world. It deals with: facts, explanations, real peoples' lives, and history. Its main purpose is to offer knowledge. Imaginative literature, on the other hands, aims to arouse thoughts, feeling joys, sadness and to deliver moral messages. These things are commonly occurring conveyed by drama, poems and novels.

What the students can understand of literature from reviewing all cited definitions mentioned earlier, they get the fact literature has been a profound human creation to express ideas, or thoughts. It is human mind creativity in the form of written or oral. It has also been regarded as a great human treasure. It gives the readers information, knowledge, experience and pleasure. By reading literary works, the readers may increase their understanding about God, human life, and people's social interaction, lessons, frugality, husbandry, resignation, cooperation). Literature is a form art. It is the expression of human nature and significant human experiences. Literature is the art of written works. In Western culture the most basic written literary types include fiction and nonfiction. Literature is for learning how to read, write, spell, and sometimes talk. Literature is writing which is considered to be a work of art and includes poetry, novels and plays. Literature also refers to a printed piece of writing on a particular subject that creates beautiful sense to the reader and the listener' (http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_literature#ixzz1Z1lnpbGb, n.d.).

FINDING

This part of paper describes how the students are driven to have a competence to comprehend the message, culture or society norms that the writer conveyed through his work. However, before the students know the stages how to grasp the main idea of the works, they need to understand what the culture means. Different people have given culture numerous different definitions due to the concept's long history and the complexity in defining it. Previously hypothesis proposed, the concept of culture included studies of common identities, nationalities and entities. Today, however, due to the development of information technology and increased travel, the concept can be understood as a "constant process of change within and between cultures" (Tornberg, 2000, p. 60). By ram (1989) divided culture into three general categories to define it. The first category is called "ideal" and it describes culture as a state or process of human perfection in certain universal values.

The second category is “documentary” where human thought and experience are recorded in various ways because culture is the body of intellectual and creative work. From Such a definition, the analysis of culture is the activity of criticism.

Finally, the last category is a “social” definition of the concept. In this case culture is described as a particular way of life, where certain meanings and values are expressed in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behavior. Kramsch (1995) has two different ways of understanding culture. The first perspective emphasizes culture as being the way a social group represents itself and others through materials such as art, literature, reproduction through history and mechanisms of preservation. The second perspective sees culture as resulting from the contributions of social sciences, and involves beliefs, attitudes, and different ways of thinking and behaving, shared by members of a community. Shiarev and Levy (2004), on the other hand, has tried to combine and merge the two different perspectives. They define culture merely as a set of symbolic systems that are learned by members of a society. Those symbolic systems include knowledge, values, beliefs, norms, art, language, customs, habit and skills (Salih, n.d.). Culture is composed of thoughts, feelings and emotions and the styles and personal ways of society, which as a general rule, can appear in terms of principles and respectful rules. The literature on the other hand, discloses and transmits these concepts to other generations and these relationships exist from the beginning of history until now (*Literature and Culture*, 2014).

To be able to appreciate the human creativity in the form of fiction, two steps are taken. The first, the students must be able to distinguish kinds of fictional literature. Is the work being read a play, a poem or a story? The second, it is important for the students to have sufficient knowledge of elements or components of those three types of fictional literature. As we know that components of the novel is different from those of plays and poems. In addition to the differences, it is by the elements of the works the culture or message delivered can be understood. For example, doing a poem analysis, the ability to be able to answer why the author of the work uses certain style of the diction (common, unfamiliar, formal, informal words), rhymed or unrhymed lines, rhythmic, or not rhythmic, numerous figurative languages (satire, metaphor, simile, personification etc.) will make the students easy to catch what the writer of works really wants to convey. The components by which the literary works built up must be treated as unity, by then they work in systemic way (Sylvan Barnet, Morton Berman, 1997). This view implies that they are not impartial substances. One component relates with another interchangeably as the vehicle to distribute the meaning or the theme of poem to the reader. The same strategy should be also done when the students do the drama and novel appreciation.

It is very important to know that the way the playwright and novelist brings the Centre theme is quite different from a poet in the case of the works devices. In defining world of the drama, for example, the students must start with understanding that drama has story and the story is played or acted by many actors such like antagonist and protagonist which all the supported characters making the hero or crook being clearer in the story. What the point of this theory is that the capability of the students to define the characters with the roles they play is quite important with regard to the place, the time the characters do and also conflict either internal /external confronted with them. The presence of the actors cannot be separated from the context of the physical world of the play and the structure of the plot.

There are some outstanding feature talking about character. Character is someone who acts, appears, or is referred to as playing a part in a literary work. It is stated characterization is the depicting of clear images of a person. There are two methods of characterization: the dramatic and the analytic. In the dramatic we form our opinion of the characters from what

they do and say, from their environment, and from what other character think of them. In the analytic method the author comments upon the character, explaining their motives, their appearance, and their thoughts. Furthermore, it is also explained characters in fiction are either “round” or “flat”. A flat character, usually a minor one in a novel, is constructed around a single idea or quality. A round character is a greater achievement than a flat character. It must be himself, an individual, and he must be fitting to his role. Simple character is less the presentation of human personality than the embodiment of a single attitude or obsession in a character, whereas complex character is obviously more lifelike than the simple, because in life people are not simply embodiments of single attitudes (Kenney, n.d.)

Further, some terms will be introduced in discussing character. One is called hero, the leading male role who “good guy” while, if, the hero is female, it is called heroine, who opposes the villain, or “bad guy”. However, those terms are not popular. They necessary are called protagonist and antagonist. The protagonist is the major character with whom we generally sympathize, while the antagonist is the character with whom the protagonist in conflict, it is generally not sympathetic. The term protagonist refers to the main or central character in fiction. The protagonist is generally the roundest, most fully developed character in a work of fiction. The protagonist may also be the most sympathetic character. Don’t be confused by that label. It doesn’t mean that the author has created a protagonist who arouses your concern and sympathy-even if you do not understand or like him or her. Rather, a more neutral and accurate word to describe the protagonist’s opponent is antagonist. Like protagonist, many antagonists will also be around character, though it is possible for an antagonist to be a flat character (Hall, n.d.).

The protagonist and antagonist comprise the major characters or forces in fiction. Characters other than major characters are classified as minor character. Major characters are typically limited to the protagonist or the antagonist, with sympathetic character generally being limited to protagonist and certain minor characters. Characters other than major characters are classified as minor character. Minor characters primarily function as foils, typically contrasts physically and or in personality with the main character, stereotypes, represent a category of people or pieces of furniture.

Character creation is the art of characterization-what the author does to bring a character to life, to provide the reader with a sense of that character’s personality, to make that character unique. Authors can characterize or develop a character directly or indirectly. In direct characterization, the narrator or a character summarizes or tells the reader what another character looks like or what kind of person he or she is. In indirect characterization, narrators and character describe, without comment, a character’s appearance or dress. In this way they suggest something about the character’s personality. A character’s repeated gesture or facial tic, for example, may imply a character’s arrogance or nervousness. We can conclude character is people or actor in a story.

The characters cannot be separated from the dimension of time, place and activities or action. The characters are always in relation to the happening or events. By this interconnectivity, the students get the idea that story will not exist without the presence of characters, conflicts s and settings. On another word it can be said that story can move from the beginning to the end of the play if the all components of works run systematically. Have an example of the structure of play. The beginning of the play is popularly named as an exposition. This refers to the explanatory information a reader needs to comprehend the situation in the story. The exposition establishes the setting, the major characters and perhaps

some minor ones, the situation, and any necessary background about what happened before the story began.

The initiating incident is the event that changes the situation accomplished in the exposition and sets the conflict in motion. The stage follows the exposition is the rising action. This phase illuminates the various episodes that occur that develop, complicate, or intensify the conflict. As the conflicts get severe, it is the process to reach the climax or it is known the point of greatest conflict, the emotional high point, the turning point in the plot, or the point at which one of the opposing forces gains the advantage. A story's climax often requires the main character to choose some form of action that will either worsen or improve his or her situation. The events that follow the climax are known as the falling action. The falling action leads into resolution or denouement. The term resolution sometimes refers to all the events that follow the climax, including the denouement. This sequence of happenings is recognized as plot.

The plot usually opens with an introduction that lets the readers know whom the action will concern and where the action will take place. Complication is an event or action that serves to establish the conflict. Climax is the point of greatest tension or the turning point, while conclusion is the ending of the work, which often shows the effects of the climactic action or decision. Other experts, Beaty argues plot simply means the arrangement of the action, an imagined event or a series of such events. Action usually involves conflict, a struggle between opposing forces, and it contains five points, 1) Exposition, introduces the characters, situation, and, usually, time and place. 2) The rising action, events that complicate the situation and intensify or complicate the conflict or introduce new ones. 3) The turning point or Climax, the point at which the action stops rising and begins falling or reversing. 4) Falling action, in which the complication of the rising are untangled. 5) Conclusion, the point at which the situation that was destabilized at the beginning of the story.

Another form of fictional literature is a poem. The poem is composed of some elements which are not found in either drama or novel. The components of poem contain diction (appropriate word or choice of word), Rhyme (source of pleasure and understanding), rhythm (an approximate recurrence on repetition in the pacing of sound), verse (lines of words), couplet (a group of verses), sound patterns, figurative languages (connotative meaning) and theme (moral values). Drama, by contrast, is written or performed on the stage with the help of characters (protagonist and antagonist), conflicts (internal and external conflicts), setting (time and place), plot (the series of events) and moral values or message (theme). Whereas novel tells the message by means title, point of view, dramatic conflict, plot, character and characterization, situation and style (Nina Baym, *The Norton Anthology of American Literature Volume I & Company*, n.d.)

Soon my students get the capability to identify the components of any kind literary work they are trained to have literary appreciation practice. They are given a chance to analyze drama, poems or novels. The samples of the literary analysis by the students written in the next part. The example of poem appreciation entitled *If* by Rudyard Kipling. To understand the poem my student does not only have structural approach (getting the moral or cultural teaching using components analysis or the structure of poem/diction, rhyme, rhythm verse, figurative language) but also try to learn the writer's life background and social condition when the work is written). The underlying reason why social or also called extrinsic approach is important, it is because literature may be a mirror or reflection of what happens in the society or social context. In conducting a poem analysis, the student, firstly describes the short biography of Rudyard Kipling. It is told that Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) was born in Bombay, but educated in England at the United Services College, Westward Ho, Bideford.

In 1882 he returned to India, where he worked for Anglo-Indian newspapers. Rudyard Kipling made his amazing poem with the title *If* at 1895, when his son was born in this world. He married with a woman from AS Caroline Balestier at 1892. He made this poem to open the mind of his little son that life in the world is hard. The poem is a beautiful poem because the poem is written in a-a-a-b-b absolute rhyme and rhythmic (euphony), the title is just one word. The diction uses daily words which are familiar to the student.

The choice of word 'if' is intended to say nothing is to worry if everything you do run on the rules. Do not be doubtful some people will blame if nothing wrong with you. Be brave, honest and hold always the truth. Do not ever feel being a superior or arrogant if someone else cannot do what you can do. The feeling of proudness will only drive to the fool, not a wise and not a mature person. At the end part of analysis, the student comes to the conclusion that the core theme of poem is about how the way to be a real person. The poet depicts the main topic of poem with many examples of one's life experiences, the obstacles of life using the repetition of word "If" in every line within the verses.

Next student's paper is the example of analyzing drama "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Bronte. Finishing reading the drama text, my student named Indri puts down what she got from her reading in her full paper. She starts her analysis with the life of the play writer cited from any references. Charlotte Bronte, born in Thornton, Yorkshire in 1816, was the third child of six children from the couples Patrick Bronte and Maria Bronte. Maria Bronte died of cancer on September 15th, 1821. In August 1824, Charlotte and her three siblings were sent to a girl's spiritual school at Cowan Bridge, Lancashire (which she called the Lowood School at Jane Eyre). In June 1825, Charlotte's two sisters had died of tuberculosis. At home in Haworth Parsonage, Charlotte and other surviving children Branwell, Emily and Anne began to record the lives and struggles of the inhabitants of their imaginary kingdom. Charlotte and Branwell wrote the Byronic story about their country then Emily and Anne wrote articles and poems about them. A complicated and complicated story gives them an obsessive interest in childhood and early adolescence. Charlotte continued her education at Roe Head, Mirfield from 1831 to 1832, where she met her lifelong friends and correspondents, Ellen Nussey and Mary Taylor. In June 1854, Charlotte married Arthur Bell Nicholls. And soon she was pregnant. At that time his health dropped dramatically because he was attacked by lung disease, eventually he and his son died together. Charlotte is buried in a family funeral at the Church of St Michael and All Angels, in Haworth, West Yorkshire, England.

My student proceeds focusing on the structure of drama, identifying the characters and characterization, the place and time they perform their roles, understanding how these literary instruments contribute its significance one to another to construct the meaning of the drama. The result of reading and interpreting drama, the student finds several themes. He opines the drama is about family, religion and social caste discrimination. The story portrays the life of poor woman who lives in the rich family and gets unpleasant treatments because she is from different caste. Freedom is not easy to obtain by Jane. She was a bit depressed over the reality. Being seen as a minority she feels inferior and loses self-confidence. She was afraid if after married, she will be made a slave by her own husband. Due to the social context, what is told in the story is supposed to represent what is going on in the society in the period of the work published. Women from lower class do not have a good job. They have a lower position than men.

One more example of drama analysis is by Moch. Samsul Arifin. The title is *Winterset* Written by James Maxwell Anderson, an American playwright, author, poet, journalist and lyricist. Anderson was born in Atlantic in 15 December 1888 and died in 28 February 1959. *Winterset* is a drama tells the life story of how race discrimination and injustice experienced

by the black people whose status is different from the white ones named Mio. His father is accused to be a murder of robbery and punished with dead sentence because he, by accident, is in the location when the robbery happened. In the court, the witness is forced by the judge to say that he is the murder. Since Mio and his father are from low class or not high class, live in poverty they do not have power to fight against the court. Soon after his father died, Mio has struggled to find the real murder, Trock Estrella. He has wondered from one place to another for years to find an evidence of the injustice suffered by his father and aimed to proclaim that his father is a victim of injustice. At the end of the play, the truth comes true. Mio meets the real one who did the crime and has escaped from his town to avoid the punishment. He finally admitted he is the guilty one and did commit suicide. There are still some more examples of my student's papers with the diverse theme. Take the examples, there are issues of adultery illustrated in novel *Scarlet Letter* (written by Nathaniel Hawthorne in the Puritan Decade), the issue of ambitious man depicted in the drama *Death of Salesman* by Arthur Miller, being optimist illustrated through a character Barnum in the drama entitled *The Greatest Showman*.

DISCUSSION

When the students are questioned why reading or learning literature is advantageous, 99% students' answer that literature school give them several advantages. The students' response is in line with the existing theories discussing the function of literature to enrich the tenet of culture. It introduces them the variety of aspects of society and cultural awareness. The knowledge of different situations, circumstances, customs, norms and people not otherwise familiar to them can be learned through the fictions. The fictional works can be taken as a source of information and as a means for ethical-moral growth. The literature is a very effective way of understanding a culture of a particular time, of a particular class and of a social group. With Literature, they see the countries and people as they were. They feel experiencing the different climates, language and tone. The literature also gives them the glimpses of much earlier ages or what happened in the past. It also allows them to transmit the profound meanings of a determinate culture, its stereotypes, and archetypes and collective in conscience, creating the possibility of social change through a critic that is able to act into the social life. The literature entertains and educates them. It can teach them about the past, help us understand the present and empower us to create the future.

The greatest literature goes still further. It reveals not only insights of individual and social character but of the character of Life itself. Studying of cultural or multicultural literature will promote an individual to become open-minded. They learn about other cultures and their development, which would be impossible to understand by simply reading the pieces of work, will allow the individual to see and appreciate new things in all regards. They opine stories they have read can inspire them to become better human and to understand the world better (Rezaee & Farahian, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Students are given the opportunity to directly interact with real data and work through open-ended problems when teachers use sophisticated technological tools into their lesson plans. By incorporating technology in this way, the learners assume the majority of the duty for negotiating meaning. Students can construct their own cultural understanding by beginning with what they already know according to this learner-centered approach. For those studying a foreign language, a rich and engaging learning environment is promoted through the combination of content, pedagogy, and instructional technology (Dema & Moeller, 2012).

The previous studies claim reading a material that have close sameness of context of the reader is much more comprehensible and prompt them to practice something good. Broadly realized that literature works take its own way to talks about human life and experience. Moral lessons gained by the reader or audience with feeling of joys. When the question about how their life performance after they learn, read, and appreciate literature/multicultural literature they admit that they come to the cultural awareness. The portrait of human life journeys in the novel, poem and play which look like the real world although they are really just mirrors echoing people's doings inspire them. They discover many new insights, being distinct socially, physically, mentally is God given. Becoming aware of this belief, the acknowledgement to the existence of being dissimilar the students get open minded, can respect values of differences. The possession of awareness of cultural diversity are highly required to manage the conflicts that may happen in the area of personal, institutional life. In addition, the readiness to accept the presence of cultural diversity can not only be modal to promote peace, but it also makes our society a peaceful place to live. The attitude to be intolerant, arrogant, in human, superior, unjust, unfair which very often result with bullying, persecuting, oppressing will not happen. They become quite aware that there are many different cultures other than their own. It is important to take the positive aspects due to different race, norm, religion, orientation and customs of people of any place. Racist, fascist, minority discrimination, violation of human rights and intolerance can be eliminated with the openness to receive cultural heterogeneity. By having open minded they can make friends with different cultural background in the case of ethnic, nation, gender, belief, social status.

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