

THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN ELT

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ABSTRACT

Learning English is lifelong process and it needs the perfect strategies or techniques to keep learning it the whole life. One of the best ways is to introduce them to any kinds of literature. This strategy should be introduced as young as possible because it will become their habitual which will help them to understand English fully. It means that English as a language for communication contains many aspects that should be introduced, like culture, habits, social, etc. Teaching English through literature will build a bridge between English and its soul which will facilitate the students to learn and create a closer interaction with the target language and its complex soul.. Therefore this paper will explore what is Literature, kinds of literature and why teachers can use it as a powerful resource in teaching English

ABSTRAK

Belajar bahasa Inggris adalah proses seumur hidup dan memerlukan strategi atau teknik yang sempurna untuk terus mempelajarinya sepanjang hidup. Salah satu cara terbaiknya adalah dengan mengenalkan mereka pada jenis sastra apa pun. Strategi ini harus diperkenalkan sedini mungkin karena akan menjadi kebiasaan mereka yang akan membantu mereka untuk memahami bahasa Inggris sepenuhnya. Artinya bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa komunikasi mengandung banyak aspek yang harus diperkenalkan, seperti budaya, kebiasaan, sosial, dll. Pengajaran bahasa Inggris melalui sastra akan membangun jembatan antara bahasa Inggris dan jiwanya yang akan memudahkan siswa untuk belajar dan menciptakan hubungan yang lebih dekat. interaksi dengan bahasa target dan jiwa kompleksnya. Oleh karena itu tulisan ini akan mengeksplorasi apa itu Sastra, jenis-jenis sastra dan mengapa guru dapat menggunakannya sebagai sumber daya yang ampuh dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris.

Introduction

Language plays a crucial role in many ways, namely enhancing daily life communication, completion of business transactions, more importantly, in the transfer of knowledge and many more (Barzani, 2020). In this globalization era, English takes the important role in our life. Throughout the world, when people with different languages come together they commonly use English to communicate. As a universal language, it is really helpful people in order to build a good communication. English is also used in many books, articles, newspapers, magazines, or even most of the websites in internet use English. Therefore, English as an international language is really important to be learned. There are three main reasons why English is really important to learn.

The first reason is English is one of the most important language which is used by many people in the world. By using English, people can travel to many countries in the world without worrying about the language in the certain country. The second reason is English is the most language that is used in order to provide the knowledge whether it is in the books, newspapers, websites in internet, etc. Therefore, people should learn English if they want to be able to understand the meaning of the information that they read. The last reason is English will offer a good opportunity to get a good job. Nowadays, most of the companies should build a good relationship with international clients and need someone who can represent the company and can speak English well. And so, English is an important language to be mastered by all the people.

As Coleman (2010) describes the important roles of English in some fields like education, tourist, information, and culture. Therefore the needs of learning English is growing all over the world. And now the most important job for educators is to prepare any tools or technique to support the demands of the language learners. learning English is really necessary today. English as the most common language that is used nowadays which is useful for communication with other people. It can help people accessing any information easily in order to enrich the knowledge. Besides that, by mastering English, people will get a good chance to have a good job and have a better future.

In teaching English successfully, teachers should consider many things to run the process well. One of important things that teachers should consider is what kind of materials

that they want to use for the students. It is like a perfect designed bullet that teachers will use to hit the target. But some problem arise when teachers do not plan anything and just teach grammar depending on one single textbook. As Ivone (2005, p. 196) said that learning English in Indonesia is just a set of grammar rules and a bunch of vocabulary items that students need to memorize along with the same textbooks. However, Chen (2012, p.89) explained that most texts used in EFL classrooms are simplified in style, structure and vocabulary and offer a limited context for the students. Paralell with Hismanoglu (2005) says that there are some problems face by language teachers within area of teaching English through literature. The first is very few pedagogically-designed appropriate materials that can be used by language teachers in a language classroom. The second is there is lack of preparation in the area of literature teaching in TESL/TEFL programs. The third is there is absence of clear-cut objectives defining the role of literature in ESL/EFL. The last is many teachers try to include literature in classroom but lack the background and training in that field. Hence, students are lazy to read anything especially in English text. It means that, there is a problem of Indonesian in reading.

Literature is the answer of those problems. Why? Because literature offers many opportunities for both teachers and students to feel the enjoyment in adventuring the stories from different genre. As Ur (1999, p. 89) describes that literature will invite students in reading enjoyment. Collie and Slater (1987, p.3) also stated that valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment, and personal involvement are four main reasons why teachers should involve literature in the classroom. Those four reasons show that literature offers not only learning the language but also the meaning of the language. As Farel and Jacobs (2010, p.8) explained in their diagram of eight essential for successful of second language learning which one of them explain the importance of the meaning of the language that is not only to teach but also educate the students.

Literature is really close to our daily life and even teachers can find it easily in their surrounding life. After all this paper will explore what the role of Literature, kinds of literature and why teachers can use it as a powerful resource in teaching English.

The Role of Literature In English Language Teaching

English Literature as a curriculum activity is a significant pursuit that has a wide cognitive dimension and a valid contribution to make on the quality of life (Crujar and Briffa: 2004). Literature has not only many functions, but power. Many experts identify this power, for instance what is said by Kelly (1996:8) that some of the major values of (children) literature are enjoyment, aesthetics, understanding, imagination, information and knowledge, cognition, and language. As one of the main sources that can be used by the teachers in teaching English, literature will bring the students to experience a wonderful way to read and learn English language. Literature is seen not only as an entertainment but also as an art of language (Zhen, 2012, p. 35). As an art of language, teachers can use this as a powerful source in teaching English and the meaning of the language itself. Literature offers many opportunities for the students in developing their skills, vocabulary, and linguistic competence as the whole process in English language acquisition (Turker, 1991; Lazar, 1993; Liach 2007).

Reading English literature often enables its readers to become another person and experience another life. When we read English literature, we will learn many things from our readings. Thus, the essential nature of the importance of literature in literacy learning is so immense that it could not be measured fully. When studying Literature, students can learn not only language aspects such as vocabulary items but also the language can be used for specific and aesthetic purposes. Familiarity with the concepts of beat, meter and rhythm can improve their own writing as students are able to appreciate and apply these ideas. Finally, the study of Literature can provide students with a fresh and creative angle with which to approach their studies in particular and their lives in general. So the next time you are reading a newspaper article lamenting the lack of creativity and initiative in the local workforce, remember that in a small way the study of English Literature can help to add a refreshing and further dimension to a person's life. Another benefit of learning English literature is that we will know how the language had changed over the years or so. We will realize that there has been a revolution in English studies: teachers and students have challenged the 'traditional' approach to English and argued that there are other important ways of reading and studying literature.

Literature is also seen as a key of various cultures that can help students to touch, see, and understand the issues of various cultures. The way that students learn the culture

indirectly through literature, will influence the way they act and respond of many issues of diversity. They start to learn how to see, respect other opinions, and socialize with their environment without seeing their differences. This changes will lead to their personality of viewing the problems and the way to solve it which derive them to give a huge contribution in changing the world. Furthermore literature also offers learning in enjoyment to the students. It is because literature portray and frame the living and the needs of human which attract the students' attention to read more and more. The stimulation as the result of reading literature has brought the students to the next level of loving reading. They are motivated and provoked to seek more literary texts and access to their personal experience. This motivation play a powerful and important role in learning English because it deals with the students' will to learn more and more (Sage, 1987; Turker, 1991; Lazar, 1993; Ur, 1999; Van, 2009). Those reasons above have showed that literature needs to be used and integrated with the strategies that teachers use in the classroom.

Selecting the Stories

In teaching English, stories as the materials that teachers will use, should be considered carefully. It is because instructional materials include the content or information that will guide the students during process of instruction (Dick, Carey, & Carey, 2005, p. 241). Therefore, teachers should know how to select the stories that are suitable for the certain students. The first thing that teachers should understand is students' choice of stories. As Chen (2006, p.221) found out that in selecting the stories, students tend to select the story with the simple language, good writing models, varied cultures, short/comfortable length and universal topic.

Collie and Slatter (1987, p. 8) defined the criteria that teachers can consider in choosing the literature. Teachers should see what language level their students at in order to match the stories that teachers will use. Besides that, teachers also need to analyze and see their needs related to English language as well as their interest. These all are important because it relates to the students' motivation and the result of the progress that will be useful for them. Then, teachers can also check their cultural background which is useful for teachers to include the learning of cultures. Furthermore, they explained that the books or the text that teachers will use, should be related to the students life experiences, emotions, or

dreams while it will stimulate the students' personal involvement and their interest, and encourage them to react and critique the text positively. As Ezeigbo (2013) also stated that books or stories with familiar backgrounds are more accessible and comprehensible to children.

In line with them, Mckay (1982, p. 531) also described that simply texts can be chosen as the material in the classroom. However, the texts also need to include some difficult vocabulary and syntactic complexity, such as the length of the sentences. Besides that, the theme that is familiar with students' experience is also need to be considered carefully. Bibby and Mcllroy (2013, p. 20) supported that the relevance and accessibility of the texts are some criteria in choosing the right literature. Various genre and narrative structure can be considered as well as the syntactic and lexical accessibility. And finally, teachers also can choose the passage that they like. However the criteria before should be included too.

Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum (1996, p. 54) also defined that the resource of learning English language should be motivating and challenging for the students in order to stimulate their critical response and develop their personality. Literature, as the resource in English Language Teaching (ELT), needs to offer various experiences and values of diversity in order to enrich the students' understanding of diversity and develop their sensitivity of cultural issues, like gender, ethnicity, disability, or class social.

Kinds of Literature

One genre in literature that teachers can use as their material in teaching English is Traditional Literature which contains literary texts that are written anonymously because it is passed down mouth to mouth through generations (Anderson, 2006, p. 8). This type of literature offers an original uniqueness with its meaningful words that can attract students' attention to explore it. Traditional Literature has its own characteristics besides anonymous writer and passing down from one generation to generation.

Traditional literature always use standard opening like "once upon a time" or "a long time ago". Simple storyline, stereotypical characters which are good or evil, structural action with suitable endings, and magical things will also be found inside the stories cultures

(Norton, 1991; Young, Tuiaea & Ward, 2010). Traditional Literature offers more than just enjoyment but also a meaningful experiences in learning the language by offering the practical opportunities in comprehending the text like inferring, questioning, synthesizing, and visualizing as well as the learning of the values. Therefore, Folk Literature or Traditional Literature is believed as an alternative source that can entertain and amuse the students while learning the language and developing their personality along with their cultural awareness (Young Tuiaea & Ward, 2010) as the result of globalization era that requires them to communicate with other people from different cultures (Palmer, Sun, & Leclerc, 2012, p. 49).

In line with them, Carlson (1972) cited in Norton (1991, p. 230) also stated how Traditional Literature can help children to understand the world. Through Traditional Literature, children learn to see the nonscientific cultural traditions of ancient times by reading the words or seeing the illustration. They also learn the differentiation of cultural from any other countries which is portrayed in the same tales but different version. Besides that, Traditional Literature also offers factual cultural information about different countries as well as the dialect that they might use. Through those stories, teachers can integrate them in any kind of activities in the classroom, like drama. This whole process will contribute to students' development because they will learn many values at the end of the process (p. 231).

Genre of Literature

Traditional Literature is consisted of some genre which will attract the students' interest with its various stories, like humorous stories, magical stories, or adventure stories (Norton, 1991, p. 226). Folktale, Fable, Legend, and Myth are some kinds of traditional literature that teachers can use in the classroom. Those kinds of stories offers many chances for the students in exploring a meaningful reading experience with their own characteristics.

Folktale

Folktale is simple story which is set in the past without knowing the author and most often involve magical things or animals who can talk like human (Barone, 2011, p. 60).

Every country has their own folktale, like in Indonesia, Sangkuriang, Lake Toba, and one of the most popular one is Malin Kundang are three examples of Indonesian folktales. Another folktales are Jack the Giant Killer from British, Sleeping Beauty from French, Hansel and Gretel from German, and many other folktales that teachers can use to teach English language. According to Norton (1991, p. 232), folktales has its own characteristics. First, folktales is opened with the common opening, like “once upon a time” and it will always involve the conflict and action of good and evil in the plot of the story. By using the same characters of good and evil, straightly simple style, and universal themes, folktales will create a meaningful time of reading literature for the students (p. 236).

Another characteristics is the motifs that are written in the stories which create the folktales are recognizable easily. Supernatural Adversaries (e.g. ogre, troll and giant) and Helpers (e.g. fairies, fairy godmother, and jinny), Magical Objects (e.g. magical lamp or magical clock), Power (e.g. granted wishes or humans with extraordinary power), and Transformations (e.g. prince to beast or bird to human) are some common motifs in folktales (p. 237).

Fable

Traditional story that educates the readers with the values of good behavior through mostly animal characters is called Fable (Anderson, 2006, p. 8; Young, Tueaia, & Ward, 2010). This type of Traditional Literature is also popular among readers especially children who like animals with its humorous climax (Norton, 1991, p. 258). Lenaghan (1967) cited in Norton (1991, p. 257) described that fable is poetic fiction story which has purpose to entertain the readers with its stories and educate them with the moral lessons. Some examples of fable are Kancil and the Giant Story from Indonesia, Tortoise and the Hare from Greece, and The Crow and The Fox from French.

Myth and Legend

Myth and Legend are closely related each other as a combination of history and myth based on historical truth. They tell the historical answers to the questions of the creation of earth or any other phenomena (Norton, 1991; Anderson, 2006; Young, Tueaia, & Ward, 2010). These two type are parts of the Traditional Literature which tells the stories that are

considered as true in the past. The examples of myth are The Olympians and Hercules from Greece or TantuPagelaran from Java, Indonesia. Meanwhile, the example of legend are RoroJonggrang from Indonesia and The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood from United States. They also have their own characteristics like showing complex phenomena, bringing natural history, and telling about human civilization. These type of stories are influenced by the religion or social life as the origin of the stories belong to (Sutherland & Arbuthnot, 1986 as cited in Goh, 1996).

Conclusion

Effective use of literary materials may offer the teacher the opportunity to integrate reading comprehension skills with other essential skills, including writing and speaking (Khatib & Nasrollahi, 2012). In addition, if such materials happen to have elements of actual natural dialogue scenarios, the learners might have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with authentic, functional use of daily language (Khatib & Nasrollahi, 2012). Traditional Literature or Folk Literature are filled with amazing elements that can contribute to students' development in language skills as well as their personality and understanding of the world. This type of literary texts with its uniqueness offers undeniable fact that it can play an important role in English Language Teaching Process (ELT). By using Traditional Literature that are rich of educational elements, teachers along with parents can utilize this resource and support the process of students' development in cognitive, affective, and even psychometric by involving them in certain instructional activities. However, teachers need to be careful in selecting the texts because the students are different in their English level, interest, or even cultural background in order to reach a successful result of not only teaching but also educating the students through literature.

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Declarations

I hereby declare that the disclosed information is correct and that no other situation of real, potential or apparent conflict of interest is known to us. I undertake to inform you of any change in these circumstances, including if an issue arises during the course of the meeting or work it (2024)