

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO TEACH LITERATURE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstrak

Sastra dan budaya merupakan dua unsur yang tidak dapat dipisahkan sebagai suatu keseluruhan pengetahuan umum. Dengan demikian, jelas bahwa pembelajar EFL disarankan untuk belajar sastra dan mempelajarinya ketika belajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing. Hal ini disebabkan karena sastra dapat dijadikan sebagai bahan motivasi yang terwakili dalam nilai yang tertera pada cerita. Jelas, sastra mampu memberikan siswa EFL untuk mengakses orang lain yang bahasanya mereka pelajari. Sayangnya, penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengajar bahasa Inggris di perguruan tinggi merasa sulit dan tampak membosankan untuk mengajar sastra di kelas EFL. Dengan demikian, makalah ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan beberapa strategi yang mungkin digunakan guru EFL untuk mengajar sastra di kelas mereka sebagai bagian dari aplikasi pendekatan berbasis genre. Strategi dibagi menjadi tiga bagian, seperti pra-kegiatan, sementara-kegiatan, dan pasca-kegiatan.

Kata Kunci: *sastra, strategi, kelas EFL, genre-based approach*

Literature and culture are two elements which cannot be separated as an overall general knowledge. Thus, it is obvious that EFL learners are suggested to learn literature and studying it when learning English as foreign language. This is due to a reason that literature can be used as motivating material that represented in value listed on the story. Clearly, literature is able to provide EFL students to access another people whose language they are studying. Unfortunately, research shows that teachers in high school find difficult and seems boring to teach literature in the EFL classroom. Thus, this paper is aimed to show several strategies that EFL teachers might use to teach literature in their classroom as part of genre-based approach application. The strategies are divided into three parts, like pre-activity, whilst-activity, and post activity.

Keywords: literature, strategies, EFL classroom, genre-based approach

I. INTRODUCTION

Literature and culture are important in learning language. By knowing literature, people directly will learn about the culture. These two elements are intertwined each other and can contribute to the successfulness of language user. Talking about literature, literature is potential to foster emotional intelligence of human especially for young adults as it provides vicarious emotional experiences from the story value that stimulate brain to respond to empathy and help human especially young adults to gain insight of human characteristics and behavior. Most importantly, it is believed that literature presents a

language learning especially for developing vocabulary and modeling new language structures. Furthermore, literature can promote a new context in language learning nature.

In this paper, literature can be defined as the term below by Wolfreys, Robbins and Womack (2011), as:

any written textual production; more specifically, any work of prose or poetry involving what has been designated 'imaginative', 'creative' or 'fictional' writing; thus, those works defined by the major genres – epic, ode, drama, novel, lyric, and so forth. (p. 343).

In a more narrow sense, and for the purposes of this paper, the term *literature* will refer to English language literature like imaginative, creative or fictional writing in epic, ode drama, novel, lyric, and others.

Unfortunately, reading English literature seems to be seen as a complex activity to do especially for young adults in senior high school in Indonesia. In fact, reading literature still relates with understanding written texts that combines perception and thought and it is actually similar with what people generally do in their every day's activity like reading bills, billboards, names and addresses, names of streets, newspapers, advertisements, brands, menus, prices and fares, notices, manuals, medicine directions, forms, invitations, TV programs and announcements, train and plane schedules, song lyrics, film subtitles, on-line articles, and books. Unfortunately, young adults still find reading literature as something difficult to master.

Moreover, it can also be perceived that several problems in reading literature are faced not only by teachers but also by students. The problems are most of the English classes in Indonesia have large number of students. This might become difficult for teacher to differentiate the teaching style as there is a minimum capacity of teacher to control large number of students to serve them with diverse teaching style and control the balance of interaction with all students in a limited teaching time. Second, teaching literature is difficult to be undertaken in the classroom as it will spend more time for teachers to bring the students to the nature of literary words which generally will disrupt the accomplishment of another studying topic in the syllabus.

Additionally, comparing the old Indonesia curriculum a decade ago where English literature had been abandoned in English class of high school in Indonesia, to the latest curriculum, the 2013 curriculum in which English literature has took a place in the EFL teaching and learning at high school, we can perceived that there is a changing of learning needs in the trend of EFL teaching in Indonesia. This links with a fact of the 2013 curriculum where this curriculum emphasize the English teaching and learning not only to understand linguistic aspect of English but also to master what it is known as literature. However, lot of English teachers still doubt about the strategies to set up a better reading atmosphere when teaching literature to students. As a result, many people are still wondering if English literature will be well-implemented or not in the class.

In contrast, it is believed that getting students to read English literature should become one focus of the English teachers' duty because of the following assumptions. First, many students expect to be able to read English texts for many purposes like for their present study, future career or simply for pleasure. Second, the more students read,

the better readers they become (Harmer, 2007: 101). This leads to an understanding that better readers generally able to gain more vocabulary from their reading activities and so does the grammar of the language they are reading, as the indispensable part in language acquisition. Third, reading literature provides good models for English writing, concerning construction of phrases, sentences, paragraphs and whole texts. Fourth, literature is included in Indonesia. Finally, good literature reading can improve students' higher-level reading comprehension skills.

Thus, the idea of modifying the old concept of teaching reading, "pre-reading, whilst reading, and post reading" to create a modification strategy to teach literature are discovered. Previously, the idea of "pre-reading, whilst reading, and post reading" connects with the theory of schema reading where the best way to activate students' schemata to read is through activate their background knowledge. This links with what Johnson (1982, p.504) said that readers' past experience might influences their comprehension and retention in reading. Therefore, integrating three process of reading is beneficial to stimulate students to understand literature in progress and teachers should help learners to develop their schemata and create connections between ideas through discussions, songs, role-plays, illustrations and visual aids.

Furthermore, comprehending a text is an interactive process. Celce-Murcia (1991,p.197) explains that interactive process contributes importance aspect to previous knowledge and prediction as well as accurate processing of the actual words of the text. Related to this process, clues are taken from the page by the eye and transmitted to the brain. Then, the brain tries to match existing knowledge to the data to facilitate the further processing of new information. On the basis of this previous experience, predictions are made about the content of the text

Based on the previous explanation, this paper aims to describe some strategies that language teachers may do to teach literature in their classroom. The teaching stage was divided into three major stages. They are pre-activity, whilst-activity and post activity. The creative techniques can trigger students' accomplishment and interest to read literature.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted to find out the effective strategies to teach literature based on library research and review of any theories that are used to facilitate and teach students how to understand literature with effective reading strategies. The focus of this research is to explain the sequence of the strategies and how to effectively integrate the strategies in classroom practice. The strategies presented in this paper were chosen from any sources that list a modification of pre, whilst and post reading especially centers on understanding literature.

The process to gather the data is the researcher discovers several sources of strategies to teach literature effectively from offline and online source. Then, researcher reviews and paraphrasing the theory by linking the information of the sources with the need of teaching literature in high school at Indonesia. After reviewing the strategy, researcher discussed the theory with the current implementation of teaching literature including the positive and negative aspect of implementing the strategy, so that how to control the bias in explanation.

III. DISCUSSION

As mentioned before that there are three major strategies that teacher basically may implement while teaching literature to students. The three aspects are pre-reading, whilst-reading, and post reading. In general, these three stages of reading have been implemented by teachers to develop students' deeper understanding when being asked to understand the text. However, when it goes to reading literature, teachers seem doubt to decide the appropriate design of the process that suitable with students' need. Thus, the explanation of what to do in each process is represented below.

Pre-activity; In order to activate students' background knowledge or schemata, before teaching or asking students to read literature, it is suggested for teacher to assign a small project to students regarding to which the story related like the introduction to the setting of time and places where the story happened and also the characteristics of country. This kind of situation will familiarize students with the story as they have known the introduction and background of the story before they read them. This project might be given one day or a week before reading practice is done. Beside asking students to look for the information dealing with setting time and place of the story, it is also better for teachers to assign the students to collect pictures, images, traditions, clothes and others which relate with the story. In a higher level situation especially for advance students, teachers might also share several anecdotes, jokes, proverbs or showing/ drawing pictures relates with story and asked the students' opinion and ideas after presenting them.

Hence, from the previous strategies of pre-activity, it can be perceived that pre-reading strategies actively involve students in the themes, concepts, and vocabulary of the text before they even pick up the piece of literature. Effective pre-reading strategies also stimulate students' prior knowledge about a topic; when the knowledge that we already have in our heads about a topic or a related topic is pushed to the forefront of our minds, it is easier to make connections between what we are learning from the text and what we already know, make predictions about what will happen next, and organize what we read into the mental file folders that already exist in our brains. As the matter of fact, the above strategies are possibly to be followed by series of activities to check reading comprehension like KWL chart, List-Group-Label, Anticipation Guide, and Character Quotes. To make it clear, the directions to do these five strategies are listed below

KWL chart; teachers may ask students to create three columns of chart about what they know, what they want to know, and what they learned. The aspect of what they know about the topic might be activated from what students have got after researching the literature. Next on the selection of what they want to know, it is better for teachers to re-check first what students have written about what they know, and construct questions about their answer. Next, on the aspect of what they learned, it will be filled on the post-activity section.

List-Group-Label; similar to KWL chart, this strategy provides the students with three major columns to access students' prior knowledge at the beginning of the study or before reading the text. "List" column is function to determine the word or phrase that connects to the reading which students have been familiar with. For example, in case of reading "Romeo and Juliet", and teacher identify one popular word to represent the story like "Love", teachers may ask students to write several words that associate with the word "love". Next, on the group section, teachers may assign students to sit in the group and

create categories based on the list of words that they have already created. Next, on the labeling process, students are asked to determine the appropriate label of the word they have already clustered. This strategy is beneficial to obtain students to relate the phrases into an understanding about the text.

Anticipation Guide; this strategy provides a structured form of students to think carefully about the themes or concepts before they actually read. In this case, teachers might create a list of statements that contain the events in the story, then gather students' idea by marking agree or disagree on the content of the story, for example on the case of Shakespeare below,

Romeo and Juliet (Modified from Allen, Janet (2004))

Before Reading		Statement	After Reading	
Agree	Disagree	It is acceptable to disobey your parents	Agree	Disagree
Agree	Disagree	It is always wrong to commit suicide	Agree	Disagree

Here, the statements above can create a provoke discussion before and after they read the story. Next, it can be followed by engaging the students into class discussion in pair and group to discuss the beliefs toward the conception. Next, it might be continued to whilst and post activity.

Character quotes; this pre-reading strategy pulls students into predicting the perspectives, personalities, and behavior of a character or characters they will soon meet in the reading. This strategy is suitable to be used to introduce characters in fictional literature or to start discussions about historical figures like preview the selection or unit to identify key pieces of information about a character or historical figure. Then, pinpoint and select quotations by or about the character that are interesting enough to generate discussion. Next, organize students into groups of three or four and Give each group a different quotation to consider. Each group must generate as many words as it can that might describe the character based on the person's quote. Finally, each group should predict what they might learn as they read more about this character or historical figure, recording its predictions and returning to them to evaluate accuracy while reading. Generally, this strategy can be implemented to intermediate to advance HIGHER EDUCATION.

Whilst-activity; after activating students' background knowledge or schemata, it is essential to ask students to read between the lines to speculate the meaning of pieces of literature. By having the lines reading, it might activate students imaginative powers and mental horizons before obtaining what they've got from the story. Next, it might be continued to encouraging students to have student-to student-conversation. Students need to be asked to talk with their peers about the reading when they are reading, and they need to be taught a strategy to do it. Because students need to practice an integrating skills for applying their comprehension skills, their conversations shouldn't simply focus on plot development, sequence of events, or key concepts, but instead on predicting what will happen next, asking questions, making connections, etc. The strategies that might be done in this whilst-activity are

Say something; Kyleene Beers (2003:107) explains this technique of whilst activity that might build in frequent but brief student-to-student conversations while reading. In this strategy, students stop after every stanza, paragraph, section, or set number of pages to engage in structured dialogue about what they are reading, to clear up any confusion before moving on, and to break the habit of reading without stopping to think.

Rules for Say Something

1. With your partner, decide who will say something first.
2. When you say something, do one or more of the following:
 - a. Make a prediction
 - b. Ask a question
 - c. Clarify something you misunderstood
 - d. Make a comment
 - e. Make a connection
3. If you can't do one of these five things, then you need to reread.
4. Your partner should comment on what you have shared, by doing one of the following:
 - a. Agreeing/disagreeing with your prediction
 - b. Answering your question or asking a follow-up question
 - c. Making an additional comment or connection

When implementing this strategy, students can work in pairs or small groups; either one person reads each section aloud, then “says something” to the group that others then respond to, or all students can read silently and a designated person must start the Say Something process. Kyleene Beers recommends creating specific “rules” for participating in Say Something (rules which you should model, explain, and allow students to practice). Beers displays the following poster in her room. To further structure this process, some teachers can create “starter statement” for Say Something comments. For example, students could refer to a list of Make a Connection stem starters, such as “This character makes me think of...” or, “This reminds me of...” to help students begin their statement.

Save the last word for me; Harvey, Daniels & Steven (2004:133) defines this strategy as a technique that help students to see how the meaning of any piece is continued by the reader. Readers have chance to invent their own continuation of the story by selecting three to four key statements or passages on the text that particularly interesting for them. Then, students can create the statements directly from the text in two side paper, while another side is fulfilled with their reaction on the story like they might connect the statements with their own life and etc.

Moreover, on the post activity, students might conclude what they have learned by check their understanding using KWL chart, List-Group-Label or Anticipation Guide before. Next, for advance and intermediate students, teachers can ask the students to imagine different ends to the drama, story or novel. It is interesting to listen to various

possibilities to end the work. Students can brainstorm a lot and bring out their creative talents. It ignites their heart, mind, and love for literature. They become competent to express their creativity by constructing the end of the story.

Instead of only having discussion at the post reading activity, it is suggested for teachers to create an activity like Very Important Points (VIPs) which possibly to encourage students to pick out the key concepts through sharing notes of their ideas after the whole class finish to read. The sequence of the strategies are students write questions on the sticky note about what they have read and mark three most important points on the text. Next, divide students into groups of three to five (depends on number of students) and ask them to discuss the answers of each questions as critical as they can through justifying the answer that they marked as important.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Teaching literature for HIGHER EDUCATION especially in EFL context like Indonesia is generally viewed challenging. This might be happened because of the difference in culture which triggers teachers to think about proper strategies to be set up in the classroom. Thus, the modification of concept pre, whilst and post activity in teaching literature especially in reading literature are proposed to help teachers to find the appropriate technique to teach literature to students.

It is also suggested to English teachers to be active in implementing new concepts of teaching literature as it is also one requirement in the latest curriculum, The 2013 Curriculum. Therefore, effective classroom atmosphere in literature teaching should be generated in order to fulfill the goal of curriculum.

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