

• Cultivating Compassion through Creative Reflections in Literature Classes Henny Herawati	349
• Opening Students' Awareness on Abortion: A Mimetic Reading on Hemingway's <i>Hills Like White Elephants</i> Tatang Iskarna	354
• Incorporating Character Building into Project Based Learning Approach in Teaching Translation Weningtyas Parama Iswari & Noor Rachmawaty	361
• Character Building Through Poetry: an Approach of Language Learning Christinawati	367
• Lexicon Study for Teaching and Learning Vocabulary Maria Arina Luardini	370
• Extensive English Approach: Character Building through Increasing Students' Reading Interest in the Class of Reading III Yulia Indarti	375
• Promoting Senior High School Students' Autonomy in Learning English through Learning Strategies Halimatus Sa'diyah	381
• YouTube: An Alternative Medium to Improve Students' English Pronunciation Budiawan	391
• Integrating Critical Thinking Model In Reading Comprehension Class: Developing Students' Intellectual Integrity Toward Cultural Issues Sahiruddin	396
• Integrating Character Building into Language Learning Activities Sugeng Susilo Adi	401
• Mirror, Mirror On The Wall: Designing Character-Based Language Teaching Through Folktales And Storytelling Rahmila Murtiana	407
• Students' Understanding On Antonyms In English Narrative Texts Drs. Muhklasin	412



Proceedings
58th TEFLIN International
Conference



*“Language Teaching
and Character Building”*

IKIP PGRI SEMARANG

3rd-5th November 2011

**English Education Department
Faculty of Language and Arts Education
IKIP PGRI Semarang**

CHARACTERBUILDING THROUGH POETRY: AN APPROACH OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Christinawati^{*)}

English Department-Faculty of Humanities
AirlanggaUniversity
Surabaya-INDONESIA

INTRODUCTION

Reading poem makes people addict to read more and more for those who like poetry. By reading it repeatedly they will know what is discussed within it, and finally they know the meaning and the significance behind it. The poets in expressing their feelings and emotions are affected by themselves and their environment. The social conditions give much more influence to develop their thought.

The function of reading poetry in character building is the same as the one of reading other literary works that is to make someone wise. In language learning, the process of understanding the language of poetry is as important as the process of understanding the content of the text. Since the text is poetry, so a specific method should be used to meet the approach, for the structure and the language of poetry are different from the other texts in general. Through that method, the aspects of character building according to Directorate of Nation Behaviour and Character Building - The Directorate of Film, Arts and Cultural Values - The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of The Republic of Indonesia, in the book entitled *The Strategy of Nation Behaviour and Character Building* (page 51), such as source of values, basic values, social harmony, social relation, social attitude, the relation among social systems, self-esteem, and leadership can be dig and disseminated in language teaching.

LANGUAGE LEARNING

In language teaching, there are many approaches used from the very standard e.g. structural approach by using audio-lingual method, communicative approach using grammar-translation method and the other approach considered to develop the learners' ability that is called humanistic approach. The above approaches have not presented maximum result in case do not fulfil the natural standard of teaching language without making learners be forced in learning the language, especially English as a foreign language. Then, it appears any other approaches which make learners take part in giving response to the material they learn. Those approaches were suggested by SoenjonoDardjowidjojo in his presentation on the seminar of language teaching (Sumardi, 2002: 31), e.g. community language learning, total physical response, the natural approach, the silent way, and suggestopedy. These five approaches combined pedagogy, linguistics and psychology in approaching the learners' condition.

In this paper the writer would like to suggest method in language learning by reading work of literature, in this case poetry, as a learning media. It appears that using certain approach is not adequate since poetry needs an ability to recognize terms (expressions) including its background. The combination of approaches will be used, but the main approach is humanistic one. Due to reading, learners will take a note on some difficult words or expression and finally

understand the meaning of those written on the poem lexically and grammatically. Reading works of literature is not supposed to only understanding about the written expressions but also the significance behind the expressed.

READING POETRY

Poetry, as well as prose and drama, are using language as the media, but the language and the way to write poetry are more specific because it uses an intense language. Ezra Pound called it "a composition of words set to music". (Brumfit, 1983: 7). Even though the appearance is very compact, students should understand the implied meaning of language written within the work. Accordingly, the objective of language teaching and teaching of literature is extremely different. The objectives of teaching literature are planting, growing and developing sensibility to the humanistic problems, introducing and honouring values, either individually or socially (Oemarjati in Sumardi, 2002: 96). Nevertheless, if language learning can be integrated in literary learning, it will, indeed, produce learners who not only have competence in language but in values and philosophy of the work as well, particularly poetry which language is figurative and rhythmical. In learning poetry, learners will perceive the sensible impulse through sense of vision, hearing and touching. The sensible impulse, according to the writer, is the element of character building needed to be stuck on the learners who learn the language strictly.

Reading poetry, here, does not merely mean reading the poem aloud without taking care of its content, but reading to understand the meaning and everything in the poem. Eagleton wrote in his book about reading poetry, "Before we dissect it piece by piece, however, let us note what it doesn't say, rather than what it does." (2007: 25). That is why, reading poetry will make students understand both the language used in the poem and the meaning behind the use of language, or the implied meaning through the notes learners make about it. Because the poem is a unique genre in literature, it requires the reader's mind's eyes. It means that reader's spiritual experience plays an important role in understanding the poem.

ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER BUILDING IN READING POETRY

Learning the language is the same as leaning the nation's character. If someone learns English, indirectly, he/she learns the accustoms and culture of the nation who owns the language, in this case English. For instance, the use of a certain word will remind learners about situation when the word is used or uttered. If reading poetry is used as an approach, there will be multiple results, e.g. understanding the language and also values on it. For instance in John Keats' poem entitled "Ode on A Grecian Urn". In this poem, learners will reveal the existence of the urn meant by the poet. Keats tries to show that history is as important as its historian, and readers should understand it well. Another example is Emily Dickinson's poem "There is No Frigate Like a Book", she wants to emphasize about how important the book is, and without great expense people can take journey. But don't forget that poetry is more interesting to get a journey. This is what Dickinson has signed in her poem.

A teacher, in this case, is not only as an instructor, especially in grammatical aspects, but he/she is also an advisor on how to understand the values and to give opinion as well as to write their opinion all at once. He/she should also remind learners about specific expressions related to local wisdoms and national happenings to reawaken their national awareness. The way the students to behave, to give opinion, to cooperate, to have tolerance, to support or refuse opinion, etc., is a process of learning that is closely related to the personal trait. That trait is a character and if it is being the nation's characteristic, that is the nation's character.

Education in Indonesia is the implementation of the National Education System Act of 2003, where in Article 3 is stated that national education functions to develop and shape the dignified nation's behaviour and civilization in order to sharpen nation's mind, and purposes to the development of students' potency to become faithful and believe in The Almighty God. It means that language learning of any language, particularly foreign language, must be based on that Act.

CONCLUSION

By presenting this paper, the writer hopes that the approach of language learning by reading poetry model, will make learners able to have good language competence, recognize culture, accustoms, values and life of the nation whose language they learn as well as they recognize and aware of their own nation's character. Thus, the objective of national education in English language teaching must be in line with the national education system Act to strengthen Indonesian nation's character building and attitude towards life.

REFERENCE

- Brumfit, C.J. *Teaching Literature Overseas: Language-Based Approach*. Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1983.
- Direktorat Pembangunan Karakter dan Pekerti Bangsa. Direktorat Jenderal Nilai Budaya, Seni dan Film Kementerian Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata Republik Indonesia. *Strategi Pembangunan Karakter dan Pekerti Bangsa*. Jakarta. N.d.
- Eagleton, Terry. *How to Read a Poem*. Malden, USA: Blackwell Publishing. 2007
- Meier, Dave. *The Accelerated Learning*. New York: McGraw Hill. 2000.
- Montgomery, Martin et al. *Language and Social Life*. London: The British Council. 1994.
- Perrine, Lawrence. *Sound and Sense*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. 2004.
- Rader, M.&B. Jessup. *Art and Human Values*. Englewood Cliffs.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1976.
- Sumardi, Muljanto (eds). *Berbagai Pendekatan dalam Pengajaran Bahasa dan Sastra*. Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan. 2002.