

THE ROLE OF CHILDREN LITERATURE TO EXPOSE STUDENTS TOWARDS LEADERSHIP AND BROTHERHOOD VALUE

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Abstract

Teaching English for children can not be separated from literature. Literature such as fables, folktales and short stories will encourage children to love language, grow their interest in culture as well as strengthen their character building. On the other side, teachers often find it difficult to find ways to teach children about all those three matters. This paper will present how children literature play its significant role in exposing children towards character building, especially on leadership and brotherhood value. It will discuss a well known children short story entitled "The Scarlet Ibis" by James Hurst. A story, full packed by the expression of love from an older brother to his younger brother, and his way of leading his younger brother as well. It is proven from the analysis that the story can be designed as teaching material for children so that they are exposed towards leadership and brother value on the expectation that they will grow to be a wise and thoughtful person with a decent personality and intelligence.

Keywords: children literature, leadership, brotherhood

Abstrak

Pengajaran bahasa Inggris untuk anak tidak dapat terpisahkan dari sastra. Sastra seperti fabel, cerita rakyat, dan cerita pendek membuat anak menyukai bahasa, menumbuhkan minat mereka pada budaya dan juga memperkuat pembangunan karakter mereka. Di sisi lain, guru mengalami kesulitan untuk menemukan cara mengajar anak tentang tiga hal tersebut. Penelitian ini akan menunjukkan bagaimana sastra anak mempunyai peranan yang sangat signifikan dalam membantu anak membangun karakter, khususnya pada nilai kepemimpinan dan persaudaraan. Penelitian ini akan mengangkat cerita pendek anak yang sudah terkenal yang berjudul "The Scarlet Ibis" oleh James Hurst. Sebuah cerita yang bercerita tentang pengungkapan cinta dari seorang kakak kepada adiknya dan juga caranya memimpin adiknya. Hasil analisis menyatakan bahwa cerita dapat didesain sebagai materi ajar untuk anak sehingga nilai-nilai kepemimpinan dan persaudaraan mereka muncul dengan harapan bahwa mereka akan tumbuh menjadi orang yang baik dan bijaksana dengan perilaku dan kepandaian yang baik pula.

1. Introduction

Literature is universal. It definitely can be seen that everybody can enjoy literature. Not limited only to those who have money to buy books, novel or poems anthology. Literature is not limited only to those who can read words; even babies can enjoy literature such as

bedtime stories by listening to their parents retelling that before they off to sleep. Children have their own way of enjoying literature, unlike adults who tend to be picky, only reading kinds of stories they interested into, then sceptic to the stories they don't.

Children are both more and less literal than adults. They may find inconsistencies between two descriptions of a setting and hold the writer accountable for error. However, children may accept the fantastic more readily than many adults. As long as the world itself is so remarkably complex and incomprehensible, one more fantastic experience in story form, does not present an impossible hurdle. Often, for example, the personified animals and toys of the child's world, by behaving like humans, may show what humans are like. Children are frequently more open to experimenting with a greater variety of literary forms than many adults will accept-from poetry to folktales, from adventure to fantasy (Lukens, 2007, p.9).

Literature, especially for children, offers many kinds of understanding. Literature *shows human motives* for what they are, inviting the reader to identify with or react to a fictional character. Moreover, for children who are still in the early stage of learning the society, they need to recognise that in this whole world there are numerous people's character. Which one they should learn to be and which one they should avoid to be.

For children, literature may also *provide form for experience*. Aside from birth and death, real life has no beginnings or endings, but is instead a series of stories without order, each story merging with other stories. Fiction, however, makes order of randomness by organizing events and consequences, cause and effect, beginning and ending. By learning through literature, children will achieve understanding that in life, whatever they do will always bring consequences. One action will cause a matter and will also effect on another thing.

Literature also may *reveal life's fragmentation*. Not a day goes by without our being pulled in one direction after another by the demands of friendship. Life is fragmented, and our daily experience proves it. However, literature, while it may remind us of our own and society's fragmentation, does not leave us there. It sorts the world into disparate segments we can identify and examine; friendship, greed, family, sacrifice, childhood, love, advice, old age, treasures, snobbery, and compassion.

Literature can also *reveal the children about institutions of society*. Every week we are, even children are, presented with a new regulation in our personal lives, changing in school regulation, a lost when one of their mate moves from school, teachers who always teaches them everyday suddenly resign, etc. Thus by enjoying literature which is the miniature of life, children will learn to face all those life changing.

It is stated by Wellek and Warren (in Budianta, 1989, p.24)

“semua karya seni manis, dan sekaligus bermanfaat bagi setiap penikmatnya: bahwa perenungan yang diberikan oleh seni lebih dahsyat dari perenungan yang dilakukan sendiri oleh masing-masing penikmat seni. Kemampuan seni mengartikulasi perenungan itu memberikan rasa senang, dan pengalaman mengikuti artikulasi memberikan rasa *lepas*.”

Thus we can conclude that by introducing or exposing children to literature, they will experience all that precious things. Children who get used to activate their sense by “feeling” through literature will trigger their psychological sense to appear earlier than other children who do not familiar with literature. Children whose parents used to read bedtime stories for

them will grow their curiosity, mercy and compassion by reflecting on the characters in those bedtime stories.

Children literature, to be more specific in Indonesia is foregrounded in the time of revolution struggle, at least it is what historical expert can note. Christantiowati (in Sarumpaet, 2009, p.9) state:

“Belum ditemukan dokumentasi bagaimana anak-anak bersastra pada zaman kerajaan Majapahit pada abad 13-16. Kemudian pada periode 1908an, mulai muncul bacaan anak-anak. Dalam bacaan tersebut ada kecenderungan mengutamakan pengajaran, bahkan agama, misalnya. Akan tetapi pada kondisi saat itu, karena sosial dan ekonomi politik yang belum kondusif, anak-anak kebanyakan umumnya hanya bersastra dengan membaca cerita yang sangat pendek dalam buku pelajaran Bahasa Indonesia.”

“It has not been found how children do literature work at Majapahit Kingdom from 13 to 16 centuries. In 1980s, there appeared children literature. The literature emphasized on teaching, even religion, for example. However, in the circumstance the socio-economy and politics were not conducive. Therefore, most children read very short stories in bahasa Indonesia course books.”

Other than the backgrounds described above, this paper has another background, it is the choosing of “Scarlet Ibis” short story by James Hurst. Scarlet Ibis is one of the children literary samples which is great in its message. This James Hurst’s masterpiece is a story a siblings, two boys who lived in 90 century, who develop their bittersweet relationship through several memorable events and happenings.

This story is indeed beautiful since it used series of proper allegory and symbols, which actually we, ourselves can found it surrounding us in our everyday life. The bittersweet relationship, the brotherhood, the leadership sense displayed by the older brother and the lost he felt at the end of the story is the most valuable matter, a child can learn.

2. Research Method

This is a descriptive literature research which explain in detail about the short story parts, containing the thought of leadership and brotherhood value. By learning this short story, students are expected to retrieve the message in the story. it constitutes a means of bibliotherapy by training the hearts to absorb the messages that the story is conveying to its readers and listeners. As this is a mediatory method it enables observation of the heroes of the story and facilitates preparation of cognitive and emotional processing without a personal connection and as an analogy of internalizing messages. The story helps the process of acquisition of norms, in particular in children (Baratz & Hazeira, 2012).

The analysis of leadership and brotherhood value in the short story content is based on the theory of symbolic power by Bourdieu and reader psychology by Holland and Bleich.

Bourdieu (2011), who focuses his study on the theory of language and symbolic power state that language in literature can be functioned as a device to transfer a thought and to influence reader’s way of thinking. According to Bourdieu (ibid), the official language is bound up with the state, both in its genesis and in its social uses. It is in the process of state formation that the conditions are created for the constitution of a unified linguistic market, dominated by the official language. Obligatory on official occasions and in official places (schools, public administrations, political institutions, etc.) this state language becomes the theoretical norm (Adams & Searle, 1992, p.1405)

Beside the theory of Language and Symbolic Power, the theory of Reader Psychology by Norman Holland and David Bleich, in which approve Bourdieu, psychological sense can also be transferred to the reader by language in the literary works, also can influence readers interpretation.

“Penguasaan bahasa anak-anak, memungkinkan untuk menetapkan kontrol pengalaman yang subjektif. Tiap ucapan menunjukkan sebuah maksud dan tiap laku penafsiran sebuah ucapan adalah suatu pemberian arti. Kita akan lebih mengerti seni jika bertanya motif apakah yang mereka pakai untuk menciptakan kisah pengalaman yang simbolik?” (Bleich in Selden, 1991, p.130)

“The mastery of language for children enable to show the control of subjective experiment. Every utterance tells a meaning and every interpretation of utterance gives a meaning. People will understand arts more when they inquire if what they are wearing is to create a simbolic experiment (Bleich in Selden, 1991, p.130)

3. Findings And Discussion

3.1 Leadership and Brotherhood Value in the Story

The discussion of leadership & brotherhood value in this short story is best started by discussing the plot. The backward plot used in this story begin with the time when the narrator remembered his deceased brother, reversed to the past, on the birth of his little brother who then he nicknamed “Doodle” as he is unfortunately handicapped and almost cannot move, makes him looks like a doodle bugs. The story then goes to the older brother’s feeling of shy to his friends since he had a “different” brother. But love can be bound from hatred, can’t they? The two brothers then shared many things and happenings, makes their relationship goes sweeter by the day. Such as when the older brother thought Doodle to walk, showed him the beauty of “Old Woman Swamp”, a certain scenic place near their house.

Regrettably, caused by the older brother recklessness, egoism and agony, Doodle passed away of pain in the effort of running, tried to chase his angry brother. When he died, he seems just a like the death scarlet ibis, a particular species of bird which he found near their field, several days before. Feeling a disappointment to himself, feeling regret, guilt and so forth, makes the older brother learn his mighty lesson of life. Wish that he had treated his younger brother Doodle in a so much better way, wish that he wasn’t that angry and egoist that day, perhaps it can makes the situation better, he can still hold his brother in his arms. Not only looking at his gravestone, silently, sadly. The detail of each analysis can be found in the table as follows:

No.	Story	Value	Symbolic/ Psychology
1	I sit in the cool green parlor, and I remember Doodle	Brotherhood. Time when he reminiscing about his deceased brother.	Psychological sense of an older brother who lost his younger brother.
2	Daddy named him William Armstrong. Such a name sounds good only on a tombstone.	Leadership. Since he is older, he thinks that he can judge his brother’s name.	Psychology, a feeling which appear when he get a handicapped brother, he is sure that his brother isn’t going to make it out alive.

No.	Story	Value	Symbolic/ Psychology
3	Renaming my brother was probably the kindest thing I ever did for him, because nobody expects much from someone called Doodle.	Leadership, (yet in negative way). He thinks that being the older means he can call his brother as he like.	Symbolic, only a bad name, appropriate with a little brother like his brother.
4	So I dragged him across the cotton field to share the beauty of Old Woman Swamp. I lifted him out and sat him down in the soft grass	Leadership, when a brother baby sits his siblings.	Psychology, even he doesn't really love his brother, his love encourage him to baby sits Doodle.
5	There is inside me (and with sadness I have seen it in others) a knot of cruelty borne by the stream of love. And at times I was mean to Doodle. One time I showed him his casket, telling him how we all believed he would die.	Brotherhood, without any doubt siblings usually become a little wicked to the younger one.	Symbolic, a casket is representative of death. It hurts Doodle knowing the fact that once his family believe that he will never be alive, and died as a baby.
6	Doodle was five years old when I turned 13. I was embarrassed at having a brother of that age who couldn't walk, so I set out to teach him. We were down in Old Woman Swamp. "I'm going to teach you to walk, Doodle," I said.	Leadership, even if the older brother doesn't really love Doodle, he finally managed to teach him to walk.	Psychology, people are often couldn't accept the fact that there is a handicapped member in their family then feel embarrassed.
7	He collapsed on to the grass like a half-empty flour sack. It was as if his little legs had no bones.	Brotherhood. The feeling of love and pity of the older brother as he saw doodle felt down to the ground, hopelessly.	Symbolic, a weak leg is often time said as a flour sack which is not full, so it could stand well.
8	At that moment, the bird began to flutter. It tumbled down through the bleeding tree and landed at our feet with a thud. Its graceful neck jerked twice and then straightened out, and the bird was still. It lay on the earth like a broken vase of red flowers, and even death could not mar its beauty	-	Symbolic, the scarlet ibis (bird) which is fall down death in Doodle's arm are believed to be the sign that Doodle will have the nearly same destiny.
9	Doodle was both tired and frightened. He slipped on the mud and fell. I helped him up, and he smiled at me ashamedly. He had failed and we both knew it. He would never be like the other boys at school.	Brotherhood, the act of helping Doodle to stand up again and knowing that somehow, his brother is always going to be "different"	-
10	We started home, trying to beat the storm. The lightning was near now.	Leadership. When they walk together, coming back home, the older brother is walking in front, leading his younger brother.	Symbolic, displayed a human effort trying to avoid the nature amuck and instability.
11	The rain came, roaring through the pines. And then, like a bursting Roman candle, a gum tree ahead of us was shattered by a bolt of lightning.	-	Symbolic, described how great and scary the nature is, in a storm condition.

No.	Story	Value	Symbolic/ Psychology
12	I peered through the downpour, but no one came. Finally I went back and found him huddled beneath a red nightshade bush beside the road. He was sitting on the ground, his face buried in his arms, which were resting on drawn-up knees. "Let's go, Doodle."	Leadership, the older brother wisdom to wait for Doodle and then encourage him to keep going, avoiding the storm.	-
13	He had been bleeding from the mouth, and his neck and the front of his shirt were stained a brilliant red. "Doodle, Doodle." There was no answer but the rosy rain. I began to weep, and the tear-blurred vision in red before me	Brotherhood. The older brother regret of treating Doodle in such a bad attitude, resulted on Doodle's hurt and bleeding.	Psychology, the sad feeling when the older brother regret of treating Doodle badly.
14	For a long time, it seemed forever, I lay there crying, sheltering my fallen scarlet ibis.	Brotherhood. The older brother cry for Doodle.	Symbolic, when we cry of a shock, the pains seems to be forever with us.

3.2 Integrating the Value in Children Literature in Learning Activity

By getting students (in this case children) to know about the brotherhood and leadership value from the story, thus teacher can direct it to the learning activity. However what is the best way to integrate the literature into learning activity in the class? Well, that is the big question. It is not an easy thing to do, since teacher needs to be wise in determine that.

Memilih karya sastra sebagai materi ajar merupakan solusi yang menarik. Tentu saja dengan memilih materi ajar berupa karya sastra dibutuhkan pertimbangan yang bijak. Karya sastra yang bagaimana yang tepat untuk materi pembelajaran ketrampilan menulis, membaca, berbicara dan menyimak, seorang pengajar dituntut bijak untuk menentukannya. (Setiawati:without year)

Below are several learning activities we can use to integrate the children literature in learning activity which is suitable for each skill.

- The first skill is reading. Here we can use "hand pick stories". Teacher ask students (in group) to pick the activity such as, drawing posters based on the story then the other group will read and observe it, doing jigsaw reading which teacher previously chunk up the story in to several parts.
- For writing skill, teacher can ask students to write letter and pretend to adress it to one of the character, discussing the character's part in the story.
- For speaking skill, teacher can ask students to act out in a short drama. Or else to have a small group discussion, discussing about the alternative ending for the story.
- For listening skills, teacher can record his/her voice saying the character's sentences taken from the story, then students need to guess which character is that.

4. Conclusion And Suggestion

All in all, after analyzing the short story, we will obtain that it is truly, a language in literary works can teach us lots of values such as leadership and brotherhood. Language also reveals the sense we feel after reading literary works. Life lesson can be learnt by the reader, triggering the psychological sense, especially for children. Encouraging them to grow and possess soft skill ability such as loving, caring, leading, apologizing, feeling guilty and so forth.

For children, symbolic language can train them to be more aware and sensitive

towards their diction and vocabulary. It is expected that the children will be aware of using appropriate wording to the addressee. Since nowadays, so much we can find children who do not show respect when they are talking to the elders. May we can avoid that by introducing literary works to our children and students.

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