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THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL SCIENCES

5 - 7 JUNE 2015

BANDAR LAMPUNG UNIVERSITY
INDONESIA

PROCEEDINGS

Hosted by :
- Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
- Faculty of Economics and Business
- Faculty of Law
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3rd IMCoSS 2015

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL SCIENCES

5, 6 June 2015
Bandar Lampung University (UBL)
Lampung, Indonesia

PROCEEDINGS

Organized by:

Bandar Lampung University (UBL)
Jl. Zainal Abidin Pagar Alam No.89 Labuhan Ratu, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia
Phone: +62 721 36 666 25, Fax: +62 721 701 467
website :www.ubl.ac.id

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PREFACE

The Activities of the International Conference are in line and very appropriate with the vision and mission of Bandar Lampung University (UBL) to promote training and education as well as research in these areas.

On behalf of the **The Third International Multidisciplinary Conference on Social Sciences (The 3rd IMCoSS) 2015** organizing committee, we are very pleased with the very good response especially from the keynote speaker and from the participans. It is noteworthy to point out that about 112 technical papers were received for this conference.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the International Advisory Board members, sponsor and also to all keynote speakers and all participants. I am also gratefull to all organizing committee and all of the reviewers who contribute to the high standard of the conference. Also I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Rector of Bandar Lampung University (UBL) who give us endless support to these activities, so that the conference can be administrated on time

Bandar Lampung, 6 June 2015

Mustofa Usman, Ph.D
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TEACHING POETRY IN ELT CLASSROOMS: SOME CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Bastian Sugandi[1*] and Husnaini[2**]
[1]Magister Program of FKIP,Sriwijaya University
[2]Tarbiyah and Tadris Faculty of IAIN Bengkulu
[*]Corresponding author e-mail: bastiansoegandi@yahoo.co.uk
[**] Corresponding author e-mail: husnaini.1405@gmail.com

ABSTRACT *- Literature is one of the important things in the ELT classrooms. One of literary activities that EFL teachers can do to help students in learning English is through learning poetry. In ELT classrooms, teaching poetry is a challenge for teachers and a challenge for students to be learnt. There are some challenges in teaching poetry in ELT classrooms such as teachers and students should have extra thinking to get the meaning of poem that they read, they get difficulty because of linguistic aspects, some students feel bored in reading poetry activities, and teachers do not have the confidence to struggle. This paper presents not only some challenges but also some solutions to overcome with the challenges faced by teachers and students in teaching and learning poetry in ELT classrooms.*

Keywords: Literature, teaching poetry, ELT classrooms, challenges, solutions

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature is one of the important things in ELT classrooms. According to Hennessy, Hinchion and McNamara (2010, p. 178), English literature and traditional school subjects are the essential parts of the curriculum.Boas(1931, as cited in Violetta-Irene, 2013, p. 74) defines literature as the collection of human's expression, ideas, and emotion. It could be in written form and spoken form such as novel, short story, poetry, and many other forms of literature. Moreover, in the second language courses, literature has the important role especially for being resources in language teaching (Sharminnie, Vasuthavan&Kunaratnam, 2009, p. 3). It means that in teaching English, literature can be used as one of the authentic sources. Teachers can implement teaching English through literature in their ELT classrooms.

There are many benefits of literature. It can promote cross-cultural understanding and be a part of language teaching. It is also as the potential sources to know and identify the aspect of history, social, and culture of foreign language. Widdowson(2003, as cited in Chen, 2009, p. 49) states that through literature, students are able to identify and involve in multiple identities. In addition, Obediat (1997, as cited in Khansir, 2012, p. 244) states that students are able to learn English competence, show their creative thinking, learn the modern form of English literature, learn the linguistic system in English, and have the critical and analytical thinking through literature. In other words, there are many benefits that students can achieve in learning literature. It gives the positive effect for them to develop their skill in learning English.

In learning English, literature is very familiar used as a technique to teach four language skills and language aspects (Hismanoglu, 2005, p. 54). According to Collie and Slater (1993, as cited in Hismanoglu, 2005, p. 54), there are some important things why teachers use literature in the classroom. Teachers can get the authentic material from literature, they can gain cultural knowledge to their students, they can help students to improve their skills in language, and students can develop their personalities through literature. It means that literature is a powerful material that can be used in the classroom.

One of the literary activities that can help students in learning English in ELT classrooms is learning poetry. Poetry is all words that represent the author's feelings and experiences. Additionally, Olila and Jantas (2006, p. 1) state that "poetry is any kind of verbal or written language that is structured rhythmically and is meant to tell a story, or express any kind of emotion, idea, or state of being and it is used to achieve this artistic expression in several ways". Students can share their ideas and stories through learning poetry.

By learning poetry, students can improve four language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking). By listening and reading poetry, students can exercise both skills in order to guess the meaning and exercise to listen the words in English. Moreover, they can write other poems that are related to their experiences. By writing a poem, students can improve the language aspects such as grammar and vocabulary. After writing a poem, they can show up their writing in front of the class. This activity helps them to develop intonation, self-confidence, gesture, and emotion.

Although there are many advantages in integrating poetry in ELT classrooms, teachers should know the challenges in implementing poetry activities and how they overcome with these challenges. Killander (2011, p. 18) states that in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), teaching poetry is a challenge for teachers and students because they should have extra thinking to get the meaning of poem that they read especially if it is written in foreign language. In this paper, the writer would like to describe not only some challenges but also some solutions in teaching and learning poetry faced by teachers and students.

2. LITERATURE AND ITS IMPORTANCE

Literature has the important role in teaching and learning language. Vural (2013, p. 15) states that "literature can be a good means to achieve motivation in ELT classes". They can get motivation to develop their English skill through literature. Additionally, Ferradas (2009, p. 27) explains that there are some positive roles of literature in ELT classrooms as follow:

1. Literature gives motivation to students.
2. Literature gives the easy way to memorize the new vocabularies and structures, and motivates students in acquiring, learning, and developing language awareness.
3. Literature helps students to interpret context easily.
4. Literature gives the access for getting new socio-cultural meaning, providing the chance to develop cultural awareness.
5. Literature supports students' imagination and response whether in positive or negative response.

Literature supports students to develop four language skills. Reading and writing skill can be enhanced through literature by transferring both skills from the first language to the foreign language. Literature helps students gain their knowledge of language and improve reading and writing ability (Hedge, 1985, as cited in Vural, 2013, p. 18). In addition, Parkinson and Thomas (2000, as cited in Sell, 2005, p. 87) list the importance of literature as follow:

1. Students can understand about cultural awareness through reading literature.
2. Students can learn a good composition in writing through literature.
3. Students can exercise their mind and sensitivity.
4. Students can learn more about linguistic competence.
5. Students can learn directly because literature is an authentic material.
6. Students can learn how to memorize poetry and songs well and it can be applied in learning English when they want to memorize the new words.
7. Students can motivate themselves through literature because it is generated by some authentic impulse on the part of the writer and deals with subjects and themes that are interesting to the students.
8. Students can interact with each other because literature gives open interpretation in terms of meaning.
9. Students can write directly because it is a handy resource.

Moreover, Lazar (1993, as cited in Sell, 2005, p. 87) suggests that "literature in the FL classroom motivates, offers access to cultural background, encourages language acquisition, expands language awareness, develops students' interpretative abilities and educates the whole person in so far as it enhances our imaginative and affective capacities". Alam (2007, as cited in Yeasmin, Azad, &Ferdoush, 2011, p. 285) points out that literary texts can stimulate the imagination, offer learners specimens of real language use, allow for group discussions and individual exploration, and are intrinsically more dialogic.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING POETRY AND ITS IMPORTANCE

Teaching poetry is one of the important activities in ELT classrooms. Khansir (2012, p. 241) states that "poetry is example of a more intense use of language". Through learning poetry, students can use the language more and express what they want to write. Teaching and learning poetry give many advantages in ELT classrooms. Hismanoglu (2005, p. 61) explains that there are some benefits of poetry in ELT classrooms as follow: Students can appreciate the process of writing poetry, students understand about the composition and structure in composing poetry, students are to be sensitive for new words and are able to find out the meaning to get deeper interest and to be analytic person. Moreover, Saraç (2003, as cited in Hismanoglu, 2005, p. 61) also explains the educational benefits of poetry as follows: Literature provides readers with a different viewpoint towards language use by going beyond the known usages and rules of grammar, syntax and vocabulary; literature triggers unmotivated readers owing to being so open to explorations and different interpretations; literature evokes feelings and thoughts in heart and in mind; literature makes students familiar with figures of speech (i.e. simile, metaphor, irony, personification, imagery, etc.) due to their being a part of daily language use. Moreover, poetry employs language to evoke and exalt special qualities of life, and suffices readers with feelings. "Poetry is one of the most effective and powerful transmitters of culture. Poems comprise so many cultural elements- allusions, vocabulary, idioms, tones that are not easy to translate into another language" (Sage, 1987, as cited in Hismanoglu, 2005, p. 61).

Other advantages of teaching poetry in ELT classrooms are explained by Panavelil (2011, p. 177) that teaching poetry can promote cooperation and communication among students in the classrooms. Hughes (2007, as cited in Ward, 2013, p. 17) explains that "poetry is a powerful medium for building on students' knowledge and allowing for the connection to self, others, and the world because poetry encourages expression of emotions, can help to develop higher order thinking skills, and develop ways of knowing".

A reeve (1963, as cited in Khansir, 2012, p. 241) argues that "in the teaching of poetry, basically there are four factors to be considered. The pupils; the poems to be taught; the methods adopted and the personality of the teacher".Chen (2009, p. 56) states that it is important to point out that including poetry in the curricula of foreign language classes can help develop greater awareness of and sensitivity to (foreign) language and culture and at the same time introduce a cross-cultural difference to discussion.

Additionally, Ruurs (2001, as cited in Nieuwenhuis, 2009, p. 4) poetry can be so satisfying and support a

wide range of learning because rhythm of poetry comes naturally to children. The use of poetic language in the classroom brings along with certain energy, a joy that is hard to capture in prose. Moreover, Harrison and Holderith (n.d, as cited in Nieuwenhuis, 2009, p. 5) explain that "poetry helps children and adults to ponder, to observe, to ask questions, to discover sights, sounds, and feelings that otherwise might remain untapped". It brings balance and beauty to our increasingly complex world. Poetry can awaken our senses or bring the element of surprise into our lives. It makes us laugh, teaches us powerful lessons, and renews our souls.

KalliDakos (2001, as cited in Nieuwenhuis, 2009, p. 5) states that "…children need healthy places, like poems and stories, to put their feelings of sadness, pain, and loss" (p. 35). She has found that writing poetry has helped her students to work through their emotions over events like death or their parents' divorce.

Panavelil (2011, p. 12) states that teaching a poem in an EFL class will also promote cooperation and communication as well as individual expression in the EFL classroom. According to Lazar (1996, as cited in Panavelil, 2011, p. 12) , poems also provide students with insight into developing cross-cultural awareness and this in turn will help them in acquiring fluency in the target language.

3.1 THE CHALLENGES IN TEACHING POETRY

Killander (2011, p. 18-19) describes four challenges in teaching and learning poetry in ELT classrooms: Teachers and students should have extra thinking to get the meaning of poems that they read, teachers and students get difficulty because of linguistic aspects, some students feel bored in reading poetry because they cannot get the benefits from that activity, teachers do not have the confidence to struggle, bare all or take such chances in teaching. Teachers sometimes do not know the level of their students. They just give the material without considering students' level. Additionally,Cubukcu (2010, p. 7886) explains that "poems pose a challenging cognitive task. Readers must first have a basic understanding of a concept or emotion and then transform that understanding into meaningful creative expression by exploring and distilling complex ideas". It is difficult for students to know the meaning of poem because they have to understand the basic concept of poem.

3.2 THE SOLUTIONS IN TEACHING POETRY

There are some solutions to overcome some challenges in teaching poetry in ELT classrooms. Dymoke and Hughes (2009) state that it is important for teachers to be teacher-writer and to model themselves as both writers and readers of poetry to support students in writing, although it is not embedded with the curriculum (p. 92).

Additionally, Hennessy, Hinchion and McNamara (2010, p. 182) state that to gain pupils' understanding in poetry, the use of illustration of poetry, drama-in-education techniques and poetic composition are very helpful in the classroom.

Moreover, Stange and Wyant (2008, pp. 202-208) give the solutions to face the challenges during teaching and learning poetry as follow:

1. Teachers should create a positive classroom to encourage their students and to improve learning process of literacy.
2. Teacher should incorporate some strategies in curriculum that are useful in the classroom.
3. Students should write their own poetry to improve the ability and teacher must support them.

Sharminnie, Vasuthavan, and Kunaratnam (2009, p. 7) explain that in helping students develop an appreciation and understanding of poetry, there are two fundamental principles to keep in mind. First, poetry must be read aloud. Second, poetry should be enjoyed. In teaching poetry, teachers must have great effort to make students enjoy with this activity in order to get the effective teaching and learning especially in poetry material.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Literature is one of the important means in ELT classrooms. It is as the authentic material and be a part in language teaching. Poetry is one of the interesting materials that can be integrated in teaching and learning language in ELT classrooms. There are some challenges when teachers implemented poetry in their classrooms. Some of them are: Teachers and students should have extra thinking in learning poetry to get the meaning of poetry that they read, teachers and students are difficult to learn poetry because of linguistic aspects, some students feel bored because they cannot get the benefits from learning poetry activity, teachers and students are shy when they read poetry in front of the classroom. There are some solutions to overcome those challenges. The solutions are teachers should create a positive classroom to encourage their students and to improve learning process of literacy, teachers should incorporate some strategies in curriculum that are useful in the classroom, students should write their own poetry to improve the ability and teacher must support them.

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