

STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING ON CULTURAL CONCEPT: CASE STUDY IN MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to know how far the Mathematics students in 2013/2014 have ability to know the culture of the cultures in short stories. The method of this research is descriptive analysis. While the approach that we use is culture's approach. Focus group discussion in this research is to find the result of analysis from the students. The result, first the students able to understand about the culture from the short stories that given. Second, almost the students do not know the short stories culture's. Third, all of the students agree that Focus Group Discussion is a good technique to help the students understand the literary works.

Keywords: culture, focus group discussion

1. INTRODUCTION

Presently education seems to have many problems. For busy parents, school is a place to put their children when they are working. This causes the children having more affects from school than from homes. This triggers a thought to make schools as a place for shaping the character of the children thus when they are grown up, those pupils will be a useful people for everyone.

Character education can be conducted by inserting the material of character building in all subjects, including english. The government has proposed this program of character education in previous school year. Because it is considered not bringing good results, the program of character education which was loudly announced becomes fade by itself.

This is an unfortunate event. We need to announce again how important the character education is for our children for the sake of their bright future. Building character for the future should be reflected from the past. The past which we had experienced becomes lesson for all of us. We leave all of the bad from the past and we take all the good from the past.

This is also reflected in learning process. The material of character building can be inserted in all subjects, including english. In english, that material can be delivered through folklores. We discuss not only the element of the language but also the moral value which want to be conveyed by the folklores. This can help to build the character of our pupils.

2. EDUCATION

Education is effort to change the attitude and behavior of a person or a group of people in order to mature them. Education can also means a process to guide poeple from knowledge illiterate to knowledge literate. That process can be conducted in many ways, such as: force, practice to shape behavior, and practice to shape inner voice. We can conclude that education is a process to change the condition of a person in many ways for preparing good and decent future.

Marimba, an expert in education, formulates that education is guidance or demand conciously by educator towards physical and emotional development of the pupil towards the shaping of supreme characteristics. Education is a process of interaction between a person and his environment. In that process, there sould be some elements, namely: the pupil, the educator, the interaction, the goal, the material, the method, and the environment.

The pupil is as subject, that is the one who is given the education. The modernist names it like that because pupil is autonomus subject or individu, who want to be acknowledged his existence. The characteristics of the pupil which have to be understood by the educator is that they are individu who has unique physical and emotional potential thus they are a unique person; individu who is growing up; individu who needs individual guidance and humane treatment; individu who has the ability to be independent.

Educator is a person who is responsible towards the running of the education with the pupil as the target. The pupil experiences his education in three environments: family, school, and society. Thus the responsibility goes to parents, educator, the leader of the learning and practice program, and society.

Basically educative interaction is mutual communication between pupil and educator which is directed towards the goal of education. Optimal achievement of educational goal is gained through the process of intensive communication with manipulation, content, method, and education tools. Here, educational method and tools are all of the things which is done and presented purposefully to achieve the educational goal. Specifically, the tools are for recognizing the categories, while the methods are for recognizing the efficiency and effectiveness.

Education is a complex activity, and covers various components which closely related one another. Therefore, if we want well-planned and well-structured education, there should be various factors involved in it. Those factors includes three education centers, namely family, school, and society. Family is a part of education tunnel out of school where it conducts and gives faith or religion, culture, moral, and skill. And in school, pupils get learning curriculum which is standardized with their level. Society always affects the process of the moral development of the pupils. If the pupils need to gain the goal of education, those three education centers should be well managed by educators.

3. LEARNING MEDIA

Media is a tool which has function to convey message (Bovee, 1997). Learning media is a tool which functions and is used to convey the learning message. Learning is communication process between pupil, educator, and learning material. This definition is proposed by *Asosociation of Education and Communication Technology* (AECT).

From the above definition, generally we can say that the substance of learning media is a tunnel, which is used to convey messages, informations, or learning material to the receiver or pupil. In other words, learning media is various kinds of components in pupil's environment which can stimulate pupil to learn.

The purpose of learning media as the supporter of learning process are to make easy the learning process in class; to increase the learning process efficiency; to maintain the relevance of the subject matter and the aim of learning; to help the pupil's concentration in learning process.

The general benefits of learning media as supporter in learning process are the learning process become more interesting for the pupils thus it can stimulate learning motivation; the learning material will be clearer thus it can be understood easier by the pupil and allows the pupil to master the learning purpose well; it varies the learning methods, it is not only verbal communication through educator's speech, the pupil does not get bored, and the educator does not run out of energy; the pupil conducts more learning activities because they do not only listen to the educator's speech but also conduct other activities such as observing, doing, demonstrating, etc.

The benefits of learning media for educator are providing guidance and direction to achieve goals; explaining the structure and sequence of the learning process; providing systematical frame; facilitating the educator to learning materials; helping the accuracy and thoroughness in the presentation of learning; raising the confidence of the teacher; raising the quality of learning.

The benefits of learning media for student are raising learning motivation of the students; giving and raising learning variation to students; providing the structure of learning material; providing the core information of the subjects; stimulating the students to think and to analyze; creating the learning condition and situation without pressure; supporting the students to understand the learning subjects systematically which is presented by the teachers.

Media selection which will be used in learning process becomes the main consideration because the selected media should comply with the learning purpose, the learning subject, the learning method, the tools required, the teachers' character, the interest and the ability to teach, and the ongoing learning situation.

The linkage between the learning media with the students' purpose, material, method and condition should be teachers' attention and consideration in choosing and using the media in learning process in class. Thus the media being used is more effective and efficient in achieving the learning purpose. The learning media cannot stand alone but it connects and has reciprocal relationship with the four aspects mentioned above. Thus the learning equipments, facilities, and media being used should be in accordance with those four aspects to achieve the learning purpose effectively and efficiently.

4. FOLKLORES

Presenting the learning subjects should use media or stimulation, one of which is folklores. Folklore can be categorized as short story. Folklore is a media in the printed form. Folklore is a learning media which carries moral value, one's life story, hero's story, and it is also liked by students. The content of short story can be about life story of a certain person. This is almost the same with the definition of the balads that is a poem which tells about someone who is idolized or someone who is considered an important person.

The media of folklore can also stimulate the students' positivity towards the learning material and process. Reading folklores becomes more interesting and encourages students to be more creative in finding ideas for their writing assignment. By reading folklore, the students are directed to acknowledge the content of the story which refers to the moral value and the culture of the place where the folklore comes from.

The folklores selected by the writer to be the learning media are The Legend of Coconut Tree from Papua, Tangkuban Perahu from West Java, and Toba Lake from Sumatra. The writes had been read and understood the content fo those folklores. Those folklores implicitly tell the reader how to be a good person. Thus these folklores can be used as learning media for building character.

Folklore is fiction which consists of a slice of one's life story or a short version of one's life story which focuses on a certain character. The characteristics of folklores are almost the same with short stories, they are fiction; having more or less ten thousand words; cab be fully read in once time; having a single impression of life aspect; is solid, dense, and intensive; having conflict but not creating life changing for the main character; having only one plot; describing the characterization shortly. The intrinsic elements of floklores are plot, character, characterization, setting, point of view, theme, and message.

Plot is the sequence of actions which creates a story. There are five parts of plot. The first part is introduction: the opening part that gives early information especially functions as the base of the story that is told in the next part. The second part is rising action: the beginning part where the conflict appears; conflict can develop in the next part; the actions of the core story become astounding and thrilling. The third part is climax: the conflicts happened to the characters reach the peack intensity which is usually experienced by the main characters. The fourth part is falling action: completion of the climax; tension loosened; additional conflicts given a solution; the story ends adjusted to the above final stage. The fifth part is resolution: the conflict has been overcome by the characters; the story may have a happy ending or a sad ending.

Character is the doer in a story. Every characters has certain personality, attitude, nature and physical condition that is called characterization. In the story, there are protagonist, antagonist, and supporting roles.

Characterization is giving personalities to the characters. The given personalities will be reflected in the character's thought, speech, and viewpoint towards something. There are two methods of characterization, namely analytic and dramatic. Analytic method is characterization method which directly describes the character's personalities, for example: grumpy, fearful, arrogant, shy, stubborn etc. Dramatic method is characterization method which indirectly describes the character's personalities which can be conveyed through: physical description such as clothes, posture, hair, skin color etc; the description through dialog of other characters; the description through the reaction of other characters in the form of viewpoint, opinion, attitude, comment etc.

Setting is information about time, place and situation of the occurrence of events in a literary work. There are three kind of setting, namely setting of time, setting of place, and setting of situation. The setting of time is the information about when the occurence happens, such as in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening, and in the night. Setting of place is information about where the occurence happens, such as at home, at school etc. Setting of situation describes the occurence that happens, such as happy, sad, romantic etc.

Point of view is the author's position in a story. There are four kinds of point of views. The first is the first person point of view: using the pronoun "I" as the main character. The second is the second person

point of view: using pronoun “you” as the main character. The third is the third person point of view: using pronoun “he, she, they” as the main character. The fourth is mixed point of view: using pronoun “I” and “you” as the main character.

Theme is the main idea. Theme is the underlying subject of the story. Theme is the soul of the whole story and has a common generalization. Therefore, to find a theme of a literary work we have to conclude from the whole story, not only the certain parts of it. Theme as one of the elements of literary work closely relates with other elements.

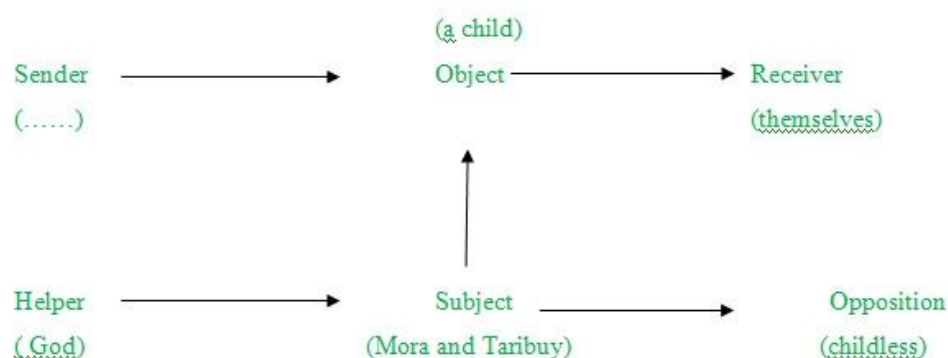
Message is what the writer wants to convey to the readers through his story. Message can be hope, advice, critic, etc.

5. FINDINGS

5.1. Analysis of ‘The Legend of Coconut Tree’

The story comes from Papua. It tells about a couple who lives in a remote island called Moor island. The man named Mora and the woman named Taribuy. They are happy because the land is fertile and provides food for them. But they are sad because they do not have a child. They pray to God and God answers their prayer. A baby boy was born. They call him Reio. They live happily for a short time because suddenly Mora was ill and died. Before Mora died, he asks his wife and his son to bury him in the front yard. And when there is a tree on his graveyard, he asks them to nurture the tree. Taribuy and Reio do what Mora asked them to do. Surprisingly they find a tree really grows on top of the graveyard. They nurture the tree and the tree gives them a strange fruit. They peel the fruit and they find a hard part. They peel again and they find sweet water and delicious meat. They call the tree Nera, it means the head of Mora. Now it is known as coconut tree.

If we analyze using Greimas’ actan, the story will be like this:



From the scheme we understand that at first Mora and Taribuy (subject) live happily because their environment provide everything to fullfill their daily needs. But the happiness does not last long. After they live for quite some times, they do not have a child (opposition). They pray to god (helper) to give them a child. Finally Taribuy got pregnant. And after nine months, a baby boy was born (object). They name him Reio. The three of them live happily (receiver). When Reio gets a little older, Mora gets sick and dies. Before he died, he asked Taribuy and Reio to bury him in the front yard. And if a tree grew on top of his grave, he asked them to nurture it. Taribuy and Reio did what they are told to do. In the end they do find a tree grows on top of Mora’s grave. They nurture it and they name it Nera. Now this tree is known as coconut tree.

From focus group discussion the students decide that the good characters are all of the three persons appear in the story (Mora, Taribuy, and Reio). Mora is a good father who is a wise leader for his family. Tribuy is a kind person. She is an obedient wife and a caring mother. Reio is a good son who always helps his parents. Generally the three of them are hard workers, patient, steadfast, and love each other. The students agree that there is no bad character in the story.

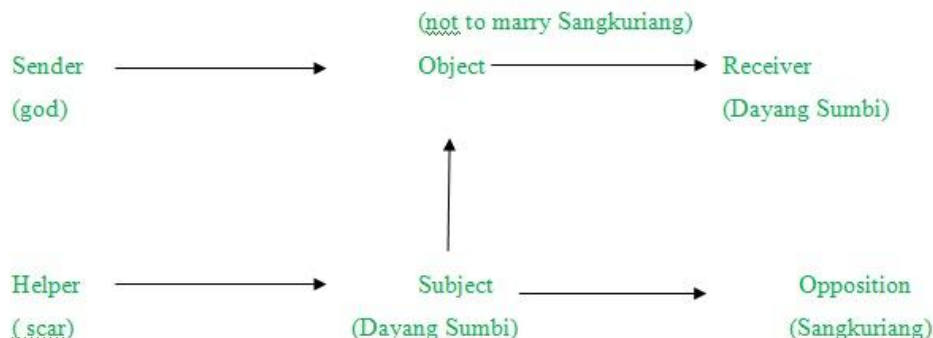
The students argues that the story contains some moral values, such as: help, cherish and care your family; get along with your family; do not easily give up and be hopeless; be useful person for others. The

students find the message in the story is that there is happiness after sadness, there is a wisdom behind every calamities, and you will reap benefits from all the goodness you have created.

5.2. Analysis of “The Legend of Tangkuban Perahu”

The story comes from west java. It tells about a beautiful lady named Dayang Sumbi who married a dog named Tumang. They have a son named Sangkuriang. But Sangkuring does not know that Tumang is actually his father. Dayang Sumbi acknowledges Tumang as family pet to Sangkuriang. One day, Dayang Sumbi wants to eat deer’s liver. She asks Sangkuring to hunt. Tumang goes with him to the wood. After a while, Sangkuriang desperates because he does not find a deer. Finally he kills Tumang and takes his liver. He comes home and give Dayang Sumbi the liver. He says that it is a deer’s liver. When Dayang Sumbi knows the truth, she hits Sangkuring’s head and asks him to leave for good. Sangkuring goes for a long time, he travels to many places. Unknowingly, he goes back to his home and finds a very beautiful girl. Sangkuring does not recognize that the girl is actually his own mother Dayang Sumbi, and she does neither. Dayang Sumbi does not recognize Sangkuring who is actually her own son. They involve in love affair. One day, Dayang Sumbi tries to find lice in Sangkuring’s head. Instead she finds a wound that makes her realize who Sangkuriang actually is. She asks him to leave. But Sangkuriang does not want to leave because he does not believe that Dayang Sumbi is his own mother. He wants to continue their love affair. Dayang Sumbi wants to end it. She tries to find a subtle way to do so. Dayang Sumbi asks a couple of requirements if Sangkuriang wants to continue their love affair. Dayang Sumbi thinks is she gives him tasks that are impossible to be completed, he will go away. Dayang Sumbi asks him to build a lake and a boat in a night. Sangkuring agrees to do so. With his supernatural power, Sangkuriang tries to finish the tasks. When the morning is approaching, Dayang Sumbi worries that Sangkuring can finish the tasks. She prays to god to help her. The god answers. The morning comes quickly. Sangkuring gets angry when he knows that he is failing. He kicks the boat and it flies up so high and lands upside down. The boat becomes a mountain that now is known as Tangkuban Perahu.

If we analyze using Greimas’ actan, the story will be like this:



From the scheme we know that Dayang Sumbi (subject) tries to find a way for not marrying Sangkuriang (object) after knowing that he is her own son. This is because she finds a scar (helper) on his head. But Sangkuriang (opposition) tries so hard to marry her. Dayang Sumbi gives Sangkuring difficult tasks in order to make him fail and not to marry her (receiver). She worries when Sangkuring almost completes the tasks. She prays to god (sender). The god makes the morning comes quickly that makes Sangkuriang fails to complete his tasks.

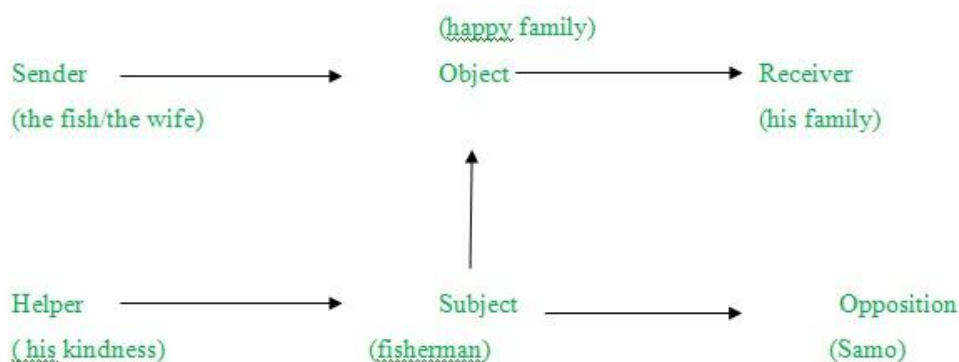
From focus group discussion, the students propose that the good chatacter is Dayang Sumbi and Tumang. Tumang is loyal to his family. Dayang sumbi is a nice woman who is kind, wise, smart, and loves her family. The students argues that the bad character is Sangkuriang who is grumpy, disobedient, sly, disloyal, liar and bad tempered.

The students find some moral values in the story, such as obey your parents; keep your promise; do not be rebellious; do not lie, be honest; believe to god; educate your children well; do not give up, do not be reckless, be patient. The message that the story wants to deliver is that you should not force your own will to others.

1. Analysis of “The Legend of Toba Lake”

The story comes from north sumatra. It tells about a fisherman who finds a big fish in a river. He pities the fish and let it go. When he comes home he finds a beautiful girl. She says that she is the big fish. She is grateful that the fisherman let her go and she wants to be his wife. After quite some time, they have a son, they name him Samo. The girl asks the fisherman to promise not to tell that she is actually a fish to their son. When Samo is a little older, he becomes very naughty. He always plays with his friends. He never helps his parents. One day, his mother asks him to take the lunch to his father. On the way, he meets his friends and plays with them, he forgets his father's lunch. The father becomes hungry and very angry to Soma. Recklessly he mentions that his mother is actually a fish. The sky becomes dark and heavy rain falls. The water gets higher and higher. The mother turns into fish again. Samo runs to the hill. The village is drown. The place becomes a lake which is now known as Toba Lake. The hill in the middle of the village becomes an island which is now known as Samosir island.

If we analyze using Greimas' actan, the story will be like this:



From the scheme, we can see that the fisherman (subject) wants his family (receiver) to be happy (object). One day, he fishes in the river and finds a very big fish. Because he is kind (helper), he lets go the fish. When he gets home, he finds a very beautiful girl who introduces herself as the fish (sender). She is grateful that he lets her go. She wants to marry him. After a while they have a son and name him Samo (opposition). Samo is a very naughty boy.

From the focus group discussion, the students decide that the good character is the fish or the wife because she is a kind woman who reciprocates the fisherman's kindness with kindness also. The students argues that the bad characters are the fisherman and Samo. The fisherman is grumpy who breaks his promise and recklessly mentions the origin of his wife to their son. Samo is a naughty boy who never helps his parents and always plays with his friends.

The students find some moral values in the story such as respect the nature; do not break your promise, keep your promise; be good, do not be grumpy, do not easily get angry; obey your parents, do not be lazy. The message that the story wants to convey is that we should spread kindness to others thus we will reap kindness from all over.

6. CONCLUSION

After analysing the three folklores above, the writer concludes that generally folklores contains moral values as these are the media to teach younger generation of that time.

In those three folklores, there are some moral values which can be taught to our students. Besides those moral values, there are also some dangerous aspects which need to be acknowledged to our students thus they can avoid them in their daily activities.

Teachers should be careful in choosing and using folklores from Indonesia. All folklores should contain teaching because of its origin that folklores is oral tradition which are passed from generation to generation. Older generation uses these folklores to teach various goodnesses to younger generation.

Teaching method is not only giving good values to the students. We need also to acknowledge the dangerous aspects to them for their acknowledgement thus in their daily activities they will not have bad characteristics like the ones in the folklores.

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