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Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

LITERARY TEXT CONVERSION AS A FORM OF WRITING LITERACY ACTIVITIES

Katarina Retno Triwidayati

Musi Charitas Caholic University
retno@ukmc.ac.id

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Abstract

The survey of literacy rate held by the international institution has placed Indonesia in the last position compared to other countries surveyed. This shows how low the country's reading and writing culture. On the other hand, the Indonesian language becomes the subject that is positioned as the medium to communicate diverse concepts of knowledge. Therefore, the Indonesian language is used as the instrument to gain knowledge or, to put it simply, topics discussed in Indonesian language learning involve other subjects. In addition, text-based learning is an important thing in the implementation of Indonesian language learning. One of the texts that can be used in learning Indonesian is literary texts. This article discusses the description of text-based language learning in forms of the text conversion and the example of text-based language learning using literature as the main text. Learning using literary text conversion is one of the writing literacy activities that can be implemented in schools.

Keywords: Indonesian learning, literacy, text conversion, literature text

Introduction

The literacy rate in Indonesia is one of the alarming problems. Evidence shows that Indonesia has in the low rate of literacy. Various surveys support the statement, such as the survey held by Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) in 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2012. In addition to PISA, a literacy survey was also held by Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2006. The survey shows that Indonesia is in the very low position compared to several countries surveyed (Kharizmi, 2015).

The survey result shows a low culture of reading and writing. In fact, according to Goddy et al., literacy originally interpreted as reading and writing activities has changed in terms of its meaning and application. It transforms into the basic of reading and writing for gaining and manipulate knowledge through written texts. Changes in literacy are based from the metalinguistic analysis of grammatical units into the structure of oral and written text and from the impact of human history to the philosophical and social consequences of Western education (Musfiroh, 2016).

Thus, literacy is often associated with skills in language learning. In its development, literacy is not only a part of language learning, but it also involves various subjects. In addition, it is also used as the pattern of high-order thinking skills (HOTS) in assessments of various subjects.

On the other hand, language learning especially Indonesian is considered as the medium to communicate diverse concepts of knowledge. This expects students to gain other knowledge by mastering Indonesian. In this case, Indonesian becomes the medium to adopt, develop, and communicate knowledge (Mahsun, 2014).

The design of text-based Indonesian learning is expected to also provide a space for students to develop their various thinking structures. This is because each text has a thinking structure that is different from one another. The more types of texts being mastered, the more thinking structures are mastered by students. Therefore, there are four approaches used in the Indonesian language learning, namely, thematic approach, genre-based approach, pedagogy-genre approach and context and language integrated learning (CLIL) approach.

The genre-based approach is an approach used in language learning that emphasizes on the creation of meaning at the entire level of the text (Derewianka, 2003). In its implementation, this approach is commonly used in the development of writing skills so that this approach seems to be limited to the development of writing skills only.

The ultimate objective of text-based language learning is that students are able to use texts based on the social purpose of the text. This learning also needs to be accumulated from models provided, the generic structure, the language elements to students' ability to construct a text. Thus, the outcome of genre-based approach and the text-based learning is not only writing but also producing various kind of texts.

The limited portion of literary material to be used as a learning medium in the 2013 Curriculum becomes one of the criticism that arises when discussing materials in the Indonesian language subject. According to Mahsun (2014), literature material is well presented, although the portion is not presented at one level. The material appears on each level or class and it develops the contexts on the modelling learning stages.

Mahsun (2014) states that language and literature materials are integrated in the literary genre and language teaching. Furthermore, in the text conversion activities, the use of literature text is advantageous because students can enrich their knowledge of universal humanitarian values contained in literature texts. Therefore, literature learning is expected to support the learning that emphasizes on the competency of students' attitudes.

According to the previous description, this article discusses the forms of text-based learning that involve literary texts and non-literary texts. Furthermore, this article describes examples of text-based language learning that can be applied.

Findings and Discussion

Language learning especially in literary materials seems to have low priority. It is not in line with the statement in the curriculum that literature becomes the learning material in which the position is equally important as the linguistic

material. It is stated that in the 2013 Curriculum, literary learning and language learning can be applied simultaneously (Mahsun, 2014).

The condition in which literary learning is not considered as the first priority in language learning appears in various language learning. It means that language learning focuses on students' ability in mastering the language. In this case, pragmatic approaches, communicative approaches, and other approaches prioritize the communication skills. The implication is that language learning is dominated by providing materials in the form of grammar, vocabulary, and so on.

At the same time, literature, considered as one of the language products, does not become a priority. This is because of literary learning leads to the form of literary study. Therefore, literature becomes a sequel material of the students' ability in language learning.

The study in literature can be done in various ways. The ways that can be used to analyze literary works are by using the theories of structuralism, stylistics, semiotics, feminism, and many more (Triwidiyati, 2011).

One of the theories mentioned earlier is structuralism. As the name implies, this theory believes that the structure of a literary work can be broken down. It means that the study of a literary work is done by observing the literary work itself as an independent output.

According to the theory of structuralism, a literary work is an autonomous work in which the analysis is done by only observing elements in the literary work. The elements are characters, characterizations, backgrounds, plots, language styles, point of views, themes and messages.

In its development, the theory of structuralism reflects the Marxist's view. Marxism is a view that does not believe that a text is an autonomous thing. Marxism believes that a text (including literary works) is an ideological system that cannot be separated from the struggle of social forces in the community in fighting for their control over the economic resources contained in their surroundings (Hudayat, 2007).

The combination of the theory of structuralism and marxism produces the theory of genetic structuralism. Therefore, the theory of genetic structuralism is a literary study that analyzes structures in its literary works (the literary work as the autonomous work), the author's sociocultural studies and the sociocultural studies occurring when the literary work is published. Thus, the theory is recognized by studying the literary work based on its intrinsic and extrinsic structure.

This approach was coined by Lucien Goldmann, a French literature expert (Iswanto as cited in Jabrohim, 2003). The genetic structuralism is developed by Goldmann based on the thinking of another Marxist, Georg Lukacs.

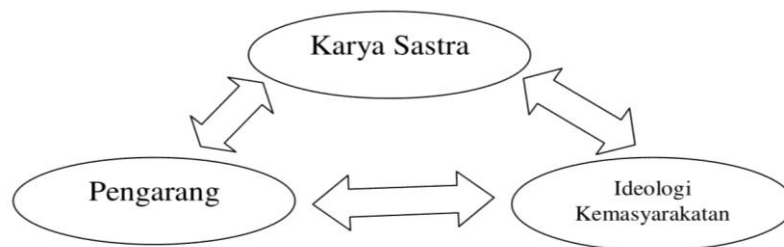
Goldmann states that there is no conflict between literary sociology and structuralist school of thought (Teeuw, 1988). This approach not only agrees with the structuralism approach that considers literature as an autonomous work, but also agrees with Marxism approach that tends to be positivistic and ignores the sense of literature of literary works.

The genetic structuralism approach revises the weakness of the structuralism approach and the Marxism view. The weakness of the structuralism approach is the consideration of a literary work as an autonomous work. Besides, the study of its literary work ignores the role of author as an inseparable part of a literary

work. Meanwhile, Marxism considers a literary work as a product or reaction to a social event. The weakness is that as a literary work is close to social realities, it still contains imaginative elements.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the genetic structuralism approach recognizes the connection in literary work elements. Those elements are authorships, social ideologies, and the literary works. Thus, the analysis of literary works by using this approach involves those elements. The genetic structuralism approach can be simply described in the following figures:

Gambar 1. Keterkaitan Elemen dalam Strukturalisme Genetik



However, in the implementation of literature learning in the classroom, teachers sometimes only give the analysis of intrinsic elements. Based on the researcher's analysis, this is because of the long duration the teachers have in analyzing the elements, so that they don't have more time in teaching other literary materials. On the other hand, genre-based approach is applied in language learning especially in literary learning to be in line with language learning.

Mahsun (2014) states that in the 2013 Curriculum, linguistic material and literary material are put together. In addition, text conversion activities can be done by using literary texts. The literary texts are converted either in the same type of text or different type of text. On the other hand, learning with the 2013 Curriculum also uses a scientific approach. Mahsun (2014) states that this scientific approach in the language learning requires the same process as other learning processes. Students do not have to collect the data, analyze the data and then present the data.

The data gathering process can be conducted by firstly analyzing the literary text. Students can do this activity individually or in groups, based on the teachers' instructions. In this activity, students analyze intrinsic and extrinsic elements. The analysis can be conducted by using all the intrinsic elements in the literary texts or taking the basic analysis such as characters and characterization.

The next stage is analyzing the data (Mahsun, 2014). The analysis is conducted by:

- 1) Grouping the data based on the support in the development of particular structures.
- 2) Processing the data, information and facts into sentences
- 3) Connecting sentences into coherent and cohesive paragraphs
- 4) Determining the transitional signals that connect paragraphs in order to form a linguistically correct text.
- 5) Writing a text containing the appropriate generic structure

Literary works analysis using the generic structuralism approach is used as the basic process of students' language learning with the text conversion. One of the examples of the analysis using the genetic structuralism approach is a novel titled "a Woman Named Arjuna" by Remy Syaldo.

The novel consists of five series namely *a Woman Named Arjuna: Philosophy in Fiction*, *a Woman Named Arjuna: Synology in Fiction*, *a Woman Named Arjuna: Javanology in Fiction*, *a Woman Named Arjuna: **Batakologi (knowledge of Batak)** in Fiction*, *a Woman Named Arjuna: **Minasanologi (knowledge of Minahasa)** in Fiction*.

The main character of the five novels is a female character named Arjuna. She is an Indonesian citizen of Chinese and Javanese descent. She decided to continue her study in Amsterdam. She met her lecturer named Jean-Claudie van Damme, a Jesuit priest who later became her husband.

On the first novel series, the main discussion between the main character and other characters is about philosophy. On the second novel series, the discussion is dominated by the topic of Chinese science that has entered Indonesia and a historical series of Chinese relation in Indonesia. On the next series, the topics discussed are Javanese thoughts, history and civilization reviews. On the fourth series, the story is dominated by the adventure story in Tanah Batak (Batak Land), which is Arjuna's father's homeland and all social cultural information of Batak ethnicities. While on the last series, the journey to the Arjuna's mother's homeland leads to a series of messages of peace, diversity and tolerance in the religious and social life among Minahasa societies.

After discovering the character of Arjuna and its relationship with the authorship, students eliminate the data that is not needed. For example, the data related to the character, Jean-Claudie van Damme (JCD), Arjuna's husband. In this case, students do not only focus on the character, Arjuna.

Furthermore, students connect the data that has relationship with Remy Syaldo and the character of Arjuna. The characteristic of Arjuna that is not relevant to the authorship's data is ignored. Besides, in the classical discussion, the groups can choose which character will be the focus of their group discussion so that it will not overlap with other group discussion results.

The example is an analysis with the genetic structuralism approach in the novel *a Woman named Arjuna* conducted by the author. The author's critique to the Christian religion is a form of his thoughts on the religion he professes. The author who is a Christian and also a son of a priest states that Christians have Hafiz tradition (reading the Scripture) and it is even stated that very few Christians are devoted to the Scripture (Khatam) (Triwidiyati, 2018). This is different from the tradition of Muslims (represented by Arjuna) as shown in the following citation.

...Although he is a professor of Theology who used to study the Christian Scripture, it does not mean that he knows exactly all the contents from Genesis to Revelation. It is actually because Christians do not have hafiz tradition or even khatam tradition. As for the khatam tradition, even only 1 in 10,000 people may not be able to memorise the contents of Scripture with a praise. In contrast, the Muslims, as shown by mother's tradition, she was khatam (finished reading) Al Quran since she was 14 years old.

(Syaldo, 2014)

In Islam, being Khatam of Al-Quran is interpreted as reading the whole verses in the Al-quran. There is another term mentioned in the citation above, hafiz. Hafiz is the person who can memorise the Al-Quran correctly and precisely. In the Islamic culture, hafiz Al-Quran is certainly considered better than khatam Al-Quran. However, implementing the teachings in the Al-Quran is certainly far better than just memorizing and reading the whole verses in the Al-Quran (Triwidiyati, 2018).

In addition to criticizing the Chistian religion (the author's religion), he also criticizes the Islam believers (Triwidiyati, 2018). This is shown in the following citations.

...

In Semarang, my grandmother asked, "Tomorrow, will you go to Yogya and then Magelang?"

"Yes Grandma," I said.

Then Grandma said. "Don't forget, before meeting Ki Murgiyanto at dawn, you should pray first."

"OK Grandma," I said.

And Grandma was talking right to me. "You never forget to pray, don't you?"

(Syaldo, 2015)

The Grandma's questions to Arjuna shows the author's perspective about Muslims' commitment to doing their worship. The author through Grandma asks whether a Muslim has properly performed the prayer on time or not. By that question, the character of Grandma reminds the character of Arjuna to her obligation as a Muslim (Triwidiyati, 2018).

On the other hand, the author also gives explanation about shalat (Islamic worship). The character of Grandma is told to convey the teachings of the king of Solo, Pakubuwono IV, Wulangreh and then Grandma sings a traditional song entitled Asmarandhana, which is translated as in the following citation:

... is: "People living in the world should carry out the commandments in religion, the Islamic five daily prayers should not be abandoned, those who leave them will get misfortune. This is important for those who still want to serve the country" (Syaldo, 2015).

Based on the one part of the research result above, the focus of discussions for each group can be distinguished. For example, group 1 focuses on Remy Syaldo's criticism of the hafiz tradition. While another group focuses on the discussion of sholat. Both groups can use the authorship's data in a form of Remy Syaldo's religion, knowledge and habit in writing fiction with a strong database.

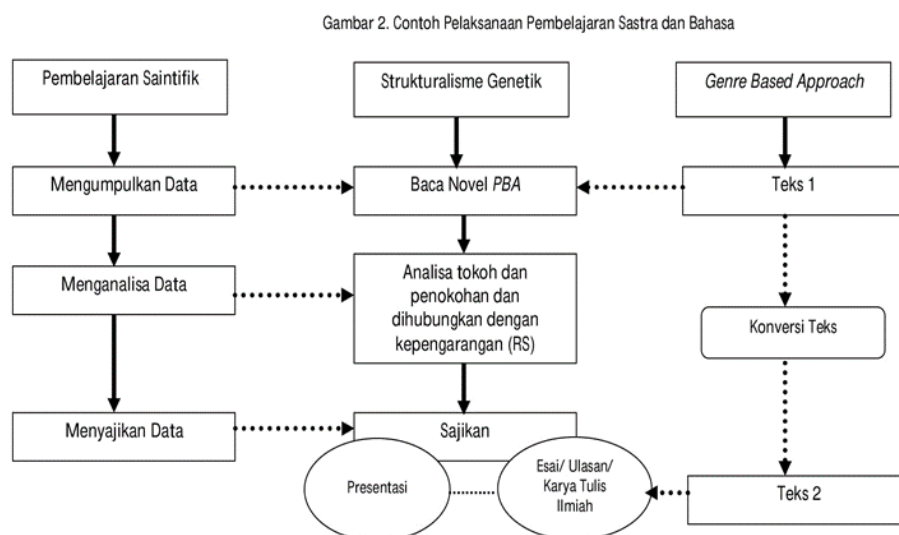
The analysis conducted by students can also involve materials from other subjects. For example, students can associate literary studies with Religion subject. Therefore, students can further deepen their knowledge in other subjects. In this case, language learning activities, especially Indonesian is the media of gaining knowledge.

From the character of Arjuna whose hobby is reading and delivering data-based idea like the author, students will indirectly find out the data to support the arguments. Thus, students will read and strengthen their references. This will be a concrete effort to increase literacy.

The final result of this group discussion is a new article containing group opinions about the relationship between the character of Arjuna and Remy Syaldo as the author. This writing is called the text conversion.

By producing a new form of text, students have done learning activity with the genetic based approach. At the same time, this data-based learning also shows scientific learning as well as meaningful literacy activities.

The explanation above is described into a figure as follows:



With the implementation of literary language learning above, the language and literary learning are expected to be conducted simultaneously. Therefore, literary text is used as one of the ways to conduct the language learning activity. In addition, students' ability in literacy can be trained and improved by a demand to read various references to produce new texts. This learning can be conducted by involving other subjects. Thus, the assignment of one or more subjects can be realized in a main task. This makes it easier for students to do their tasks.

Another benefit that can be obtained is that teachers do not have to give excessive tasks. By this conversion text, teachers can assess the aspect of attitudes such as students' active participation in their discussion. This aspect can also measure their responsibility in submitting the task on time and there is no plagiarism because the learning process is conducted continuously and related to other aspects.

The assessment can also be conducted to the measure the aspects of knowledge and skill. In the aspect of knowledge, students can assess the accuracy of the second text which is the result of text conversion, such as the pattern of grammar (for the language) and how deep the analysis is.

The aspect of skill can be done by assessing students to communicate their ideas. This can be done by assessing their presentation in communicating the results of the discussion.

Conclusion

The low literacy rate in Indonesia can be caused by various things. One of them is the literacy activity that does not accommodate students' improvement in literacy. On the other hand, literary learning seems to be separated from language learning. Literary learning involving text conversion activities is expected to bring several benefits. Students can get a chance to broaden their knowledge by reading various literatures, performing discussion and producing new texts involving language skill or language learning.

The learning examples explained above also accommodates the assessment of attitudes, knowledge, and skill. The attitude of active participation and responsibility becomes the aspect of assessment. The knowledge score can be obtained from the accuracy of the text conversion result and the analysis. Meanwhile, the skill score can be obtained from students' ability in communicating their discussion result. The example of this learning activity is still in the form of a design that can be followed up with the implementation of field research activities. Thus, the strengths and weaknesses of these learning activities example can be further corroborated by the field data.

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