



STRENGTHENING PLURALISM IN LITERATURE LEARNING FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION OF SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to describe the aspects of pluralism in literature as a portrait of socio-cultural society and to describe the aspects of pluralism as a literary material for character education, in particular, the affirmation of student nationalism.

Methodology: This research uses the descriptive qualitative method. Data source are literary works containing pluralism dimensions in poetry, fiction, and drama genres. Data collection through library study techniques and in-depth interviewing and Focus Group Discussion. Data analysis is done by reading the method of the semiotic model including heuristic reading (language level) and hermeneutic reading (interpretation level of meaning).

Results: Result of research and discussion are the aspect of pluralism in literature is a portrait of socio-cultural condition of diversity at society and the aspects of pluralism can be stressing as a literary material for character education, especially the affirmation of nationalism of school students.

Implications: Thus, pluralism literature is a literature that expresses the notions of diversity that reflect the real portrait of the Indonesian nation.

Keywords: *strengthening pluralism, literary materials, character education, school students, socio-cultural society.*

INTRODUCTION

The diversity of the Indonesian nation is an inevitability. Diversity actually makes life always dynamic if Indonesia can be realized as a gift. Therefore, we need to discuss, how to empower the diversity of the nation as a potential resource for nations building. The diversity can be a source of inspiration for the process of literary creation.

The development of pluralism in society is inseparable from the era of globalization which caused the flood of information from developed countries to developing countries including Indonesia. The world has become a kind of global village so communication between citizens is easier. The transformation of socio-cultural in the life of society and the shift of life values drastically. That condition is called culture shock 1, which resulted from a shock to some people who are not ready for the fast-paced change.

The Indonesian nation has recently been hit by fears of horizontal conflict. Concerns arise because the unity of the Indonesian nation has been torn apart by the country's chaotic political situation. In that condition strengthening of pluralism to reaffirm Indonesian nationalism is needed. One solution to bring back the unity of the nation is through literary learning.

Education has always been perceived not only as an agent of social change but the basis of creating a dynamic, liberal and growth-oriented society. (Kar and Isik, 2014; Raoul, 2014) However, if education has to play a significant role in the creation of new values and attitudes in the place of the old so that the obstacles in the path of modernization may be removed. According to, the learning context has the potential to facilitate or even encourage academic achievement for most students.

Literary learning in Indonesia is still far from we expected. Literary learning at schools has not been able to achieve its main objective of an appreciative and productive realm. This is due to many factors, namely the lack of literary books in schools, the limited media of information and communication technology (ICT), limited hours of instruction, and the dominant majority of unprofessional literary teachers.

Based on the dialogue with teachers of junior/senior high schools in Solo city who also have a master degree in Indonesian Language Education and participated in the National Seminar on "Revitalization of Children's Literature in Literature

Learning" organized by HISKI (Association of Indonesian Literary Scholars) Commissariat Muhammadiyah Surakarta University on 16-17 December 2016, revealed an interesting fact. One of the obstacles that led to the lesson of literary learning to attract the students is the literary works that become the material of literature study is not in accordance with the psychological development of students and the dynamics of the times. For example, novel *Sitti Noerbaja* by Marah Rusli Balai Pustaka period is still a favorite literary work for teachers in literature learning.

Recent literary works that expose the dynamics of the times including pluralism are seldom touched by literary learning at schools. Instead of the works of writers in the 2000s, literary works of the 1980-1990's also not yet presented in literature learning favorite for teachers.

Of the many problems of literary learning, the selection of literary teaching materials that are in harmony with the nation's problems of pluralism should get the focus of the attention of literature teachers. Literary teachers must be creative and smart to develop literacy teaching materials to be attractive. The literary learning indicator is interesting when students are passionate about "making love with literature", with much reading and literature review. In that context creative and professional teachers need it. The teacher is called a professional, if he can carry out literary learning by applying the principles of MUKIDI (menyenangkan, unik kreatif, inovatif, dinamis, inspiratif: fun, unique, creative, innovative, dynamic, and inspiring) (Al-Ma'ruf, 2007a)

According to the above reality, the author wants to discuss the urgency of strengthening pluralism in the study of literature in the effort of character education, especially the affirmation of nationalism. The purpose of this study is to:

(1) describe aspects of pluralism in literature as a portrait of socio-cultural conditions of society; (2) to describe aspects of pluralism as literary teaching materials for character education, especially the affirmation of nationalism for school students.

The term pluralism includes three perspectives: (1) Cultural Assimilation Perspective; (2) Cultural Pluralism Perspective; (3) Cultural Synthesis Perspective. From three perspectives of pluralism, the perspective of 'cultural synthesis' has the most fundamental rationale in plural nature (Ekstrand, 1997). Mentioned the phenomenon of global ethnoscape, cultures which contain differences; however, the differences are no longer taxonomic, but interactive (Appadurai, 1991). There is a change of way of view in anthropology, for example, ethnic into ethnicity, from Java to Javanese, and so on.

The birth of various literary works of pluralism in the last few decades cannot be separated from the author's ideology which is the result of reflection on the phenomenon that developed since the end of XX century (Al-Ma'ruf, 2007b). Along with the dynamics of the life of the Indonesian nation which recently threatened by interreligious conflicts, pluralism-based literature worthy of appointment to be a literary teaching material in order to strengthen the nationalism of our nation.

That material terms or teaching materials include at schools and outside schools containing information and messages. That is, the meaning of teaching materials here does not only include those implemented in schools but also the educational materials in the community (Yanpar, 2005). Similarly, the importance of developing teaching materials in the learning process is emphasized (Demiralp, 2007), which talks about the development of teaching materials for the Geography Course.

Teachers are the determinants of the high quality of educational outcomes (Ibrahim, 2004). In fact, the success of education depends on the skills of teachers in conducting teaching and learning activities. Teachers are the dominant factor in determining success or failure of education (Mulyasa, 2005; Muyambiri and Chabaefe, 2018).

That teacher is the main actors in the education process and one of the most important factors in teaching and learning: (Fasli and Dedi, 2001) The view is not excessive considering that quality learning, can only be implemented by teachers of high quality (Piet, 1994). Quality learning will have implications on the quality of students' understanding of teaching materials.

The character of the nation is a mental attitude that is scientifically called a cultural value system and attitude. The cultural value system is a series and abstract concept that lives in the minds of most citizens about what is considered important and valuable in life (Kuntjoroningrat, 1989) This cultural value system is commonly part of a culture that serves as a guide and a driver of human action.

Ministry of National Education of the Indonesian Republic (2011) suggests the existence of 18 values of character that is (1) religious; (2) honest, (3) tolerance, (4) discipline, (5) hard work, (6) creative, (7) independent, (8) democratic, (9) curiosity, (10) homeland spirit 11) love of Homeland, (12) appreciate achievement, (13) friendly/communicative, (14) love peace, (15) love reading, (16) responsibility care. (17) social care, and (18) responsibility.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. The data source is a variety of texts of Indonesian literature based on pluralism, the informant consists of literary and literary literature reviewers. Data collection is done through library study techniques, in-depth interviewing, and Focus Group Discussion. The data were analyzed by semiotic reading method reading of heuristic reading and hermeneutic/retroactive reading (interpretation level of meaning). In this case, semiotic theory refers to Charles Sander Peirce Semiotic theory which divides the sign into three icons, indexes, and symbols (Chamamah-Soeratno, 1990), combined with Roland Barthes's Semiotic theory that classifies Sign to be the signifier and signified. Interview data were analyzed by an interactive model (Miles and Huberman, 1984) involving data presentation, data reduction, and data verification/conclusion. Data analysis is performed simultaneously with data collection which is done by the cycle process.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pluralism Literature as a Portrait of Diversity Society

The analysis of pluralism dimension in Indonesian literary work is done by the Semiotic model approach Roland Barthes model (Hawkes, 1978; Kemendiknas, 2011; Mendes and daSilva, 2018) In Semiotic view, literary work is a sign communication system. Semiotics has two interrelated principles, the namely signifier (significant: Pr.) Meaning that is signified, and signified (signifies: Pr.), Meaning that is marked. According to Barthes, the "sign" in the first system, the total association between concepts and imagination, occupies only the position of "signifier" in the second system, depicted in the following Roland Barthes diagram.

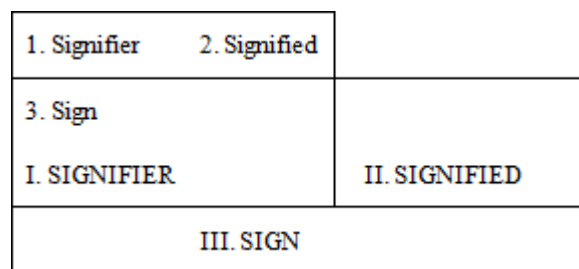


Figure 1: Roland Barthes diagram of "Sign"

Based on the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on pluralism literature, it is understood that pluralism literature is the answer to changing community life towards diversity as well as a reflection on the socio-cultural reality of global-universal tendencies. Authors who are sensitive to community problems are called to respond and interpret in the literary form. It is in accordance with the essence of literature which is a social-cultural document that reflects the dynamics and romance of society in his day.

As an illustration, Oka Rusmini through the novel *Tarian Bumi* (Rusmini, 2000) presents the spirit of pluralism as a medium of cultural resistance to the strict tradition in Balinese society. The existence of the castes of the Balinese society makes a person imprisoned freedom and rights as citizens. Luh Sekar, a village girl who feels humiliated because her father is considered to be involved in PKI - is trying hard to become the. By becoming *pragina* (dancer) *Joget* (dancer of dance) *Bungbung*, she is sure to be able to improve her status from low (low) women to honor, in addition to raising the popularity of her Joget art and earning income for her family life.

Very interestingly, Oka Rusmini reveals the struggle of women against the hegemony of ancestral tradition power only because Luh Sekaris Sudra caste, as can be listened in the following quotation.

"... Since when did people in this village ban beautiful girls like me from dancing?" "Is it wrong if I want to be an adorable dancer? Dancers who can turn on this whole village to dance *sekeha* (show)! So many *sekeha* dancing that appears. I heard they all have *incredible* *pragina*. On the stage, the *pragina-pragina* bodies really become a fire that burns every man's breath. Extraordinary. I want to exceed those *praginas*. I'm sure Kenten, I can do it. " (*Tarian Bumi*, 2000:20-21.)

Y.B. Mangunwijaya in the novel *Burung-Burung Manyar* (1981) and *Burung-Burung Rantau*(1993), also raised the issue of pluralism. *Burung-Burung Rantau* display characters of stories that can live in various cultural centers, such as Java,

the Netherlands, India, Greece, and Switzerland. They live in a very dynamic cultural pluralism awareness without losing their identity. Burung-Burung Rantau (BBR) reveal pluralism very beautifully in the life of modern society with a Javanese cultural background.

As an illustration, the units of Eastern culture and Western culture is the idea of pluralism expressed in *BBR*. Pluralism holds that there are no more cultural centers that are considered dominant locally-regional, national, and universal-global, as well as Western and Eastern. All citizens in heterogeneous human life can co-exist without undermining one another. Therefore all must be respected and mutual respect. This view was made by the author through the dialogue between Gandhi, Neti, and Candra.

"This is a joint of Western culture that has evolved in the other direction of my nation that later, besides China and Japan, is called the East." Gandhi's murmuring reflects as if reciting the genealogies as if there is something he regretted (*BBR*, 1993:237).

The progress that Westerners make, they also have weaknesses. They often become greedy, greedy, so often damage nature. Therefore, for us, the people of Indonesia should be searched for a middle ground that can melt between the West and East which both have advantages and weaknesses. The following quotation describes it.

"But, unfortunately, ultimately raping and destroying his own nature, the result of his greed. With a thirsty, never satisfied, never-balanced temperament of their; adventurous spirit,"

Gandhi said.

"I think," Candra continued, "our people must find the golden middle way. Then I may be retired. But I've got Ikarus disease and those Western adventurers, I have to be honest. I can no longer calmly and peacefully sit at home if I can not enter one of that aircraft war and wade through the aerospace. (*BBR*, 1993:238-239).

The trilogy of *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk (RDP)*, 1981-1987; 2003) by Ahmad Tohari²² also shows the tendency of pluralism. *RDP* shows Javanese locality as part of Indonesian diversity. His disclosure of the typical way of life and worldview of the 'remote' rural community of Central Java (Banyumas) is fascinating. Their perspective on free sex in the world of *ronggeng* is a local genius that can raise this novel amid the global cultural pluralism.

For Srintil, men do have physical strength, but men have many weaknesses, especially in the form of a need for recognition of their "maleness". Srintil knows that a man as much as anything can be very frail or weak when he is drunk. Evidently, hundreds of men can only gape at the thought of the fog only by the glances of the eyes, its *pacak gulu*, or *geyol* (neck movement, erotic hip shake) when Srintil was dancing (doing *ronggeng*).

Thereby the literary analysis of pluralism. It shows how the literature pluralism implies the existence of a spirit to be able to understand each other's differences of ethnic, racial, cultural, or religious background. The difference in the background does not create conflicts but even is realized as a necessity that must be accepted and grateful. Pluralism becomes the source of inspiration and motivation to develop.

Aspects of Pluralism as a Literary Material for Character Education

The text of a literature-based work on strengthening pluralism as a teaching material should not be uploaded to the software through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Imaginative work is better in its original form. In this case that the transformation of literary texts into audio-visual media has an important function in the delivery of messages (Eneste, 1991; Tohari, 2009). Importantly, teachers must creatively create material that allows for good interaction between students and teachers, students with students, students with literary texts, so that the process of literary learning comes alive.

In this context, professional creative teachers are required. Teachers must be responsive to the actual problems that are developing in the life of the nation. Professional teachers always try to proceed continuously from not knowing anything to know, from being directed by others to be self-directed, have the ability and high motivation and sincerity to do the job (Saeidi and Prasad, 2014).

Professional teachers are required to fulfill five conditions, namely (1) having a commitment to their profession; (2) mastering learning materials and learning methods; (3) responsible for monitoring students' learning abilities through various assessment methods; (4) can think-systematic about what is done and willing to learn from experience; (5) become a member of the learning community in his professional environment. Strictly speaking, the teacher (literature)

is called a professional, if he can carry out literary learning by applying the MUKIDI principle (Menyenangkan, Unik, Kreatif, Inovatif, Dinamis, dan Inspiratif: fun, unique, creative, innovative, dynamic, and inspiring): (Jenaabadi and Khosropour, 2014; Toffler, 1997) that the literary functions are: (1) as a media to stimulate students in describing their experiences, feelings, and opinions; (2) as a media to assist students in developing their intellectual and emotional abilities in learning the language; and (3) as a media to stimulate the acquisition of language skills. In simpler language, literary learning has psychological, ideological, educational, moral, and cultural functions.

The function of literary learning according are: (1) motivate students in absorbing the expression of language; (2) a simulative tool in language acquisition; (3) media in understanding the culture of the community; (4) interpretative ability development tools; and (5) media to educate the educating the whole person. For example, through reading romance, students can recognize a particular theme, how the theme is reflected in the plot, how the character is present in attitudes or values, and how the separation becomes part of a particular view (Hasyim, 2001; Ismail, 2002) told that the appreciative literary learning will undoubtedly provide a meaningful contribution to the education process comprehensively (Dedi, 1998; Lazar, 1993). In positivism language, there is a positive correlation between literature learning and learning of other fields of study. That literalizing can help us in the preparation of an imaginative framework for our actions: (Sayuti, 2002) that through appreciative literary learning, literary learning can make the development of the students' imagination (Moglen, 1984) It can be understood because literature provides opportunities of infinite meaning. For example, through reading a novel, students can recognize a particular theme, how the theme is reflected in the plot, how the character is present in attitudes or values, and how the separation becomes part of a particular view.

The recent acts of violence and anarchism are prevalent in society, one of which is because they have no sense of mind, reason, and social solidarity that can all be nurtured through literary learning by "literary literature" often. Given, over 45 years of Indonesian society is far from literature.

In particular, discovering the values and meaning of life in novel literary works are listed in the core competencies of Class XII Semester 1: Understanding, applying, analyzing factual and conceptual knowledge based on curiosity about science, art, culture, and humanities with humanitarian, nationalistic insights, and state and civilization in accordance with his talents and interests. It is in line with basic competencies 3.1 Understand the structure and rules of the novel texts; 4.1 Interpret the meaning of the text of the novel story both oral and written (Ribera and Jimenez-Jimenez, 2018)

Based on the writer's observation and experience in teaching literature, there are at least five criteria that should be considered in providing literature at school: (1) Student's Background, (2) Psychological Aspects, (3) Aspects of Language, (4) Value of Literature, and (5) Diversity of Literary Work: (Core Competence and Basic Competence of Senior High School Class XII, 2017)

Based on the results of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) found the understanding: First, the learning of literature perspective pluralism can be interpreted as a literary learning that meets three criteria: (1) based on pluralism dimension, (2) done with spirit of pluralism, and (3) In the form of literary works of pluralism. These three criteria are simultaneously and comprehensively applied in literary learning; Second, pluralism literature has great potential as literary teaching material in the effort to develop the character of the nation, especially the strengthening of nationalism.

Philosophically, the study of literature must be based on the paradigm and the perspective of pluralism. Literary masters must understand the true meaning and depth of multiculturalism. Spirit, ethos, or the spirit of pluralistic and diversity must be visible in the implementation of literature learning by displaying various diversities/ethnics, traditions, languages, and religions that exist equally to exist and develop without being marginalized. Included in treating the students, there is no dichotomy in terms of ethnicity, religion, and tradition, for example. The pluralism literature as an assessment material in learning is quite clear (see above description).

From the analysis of literary pluralism in semiotics, the works of writers in the last two decades show the dimensions of pluralism. In terms of expression seen in the stylists and ideas offered with full openness, freedom of expression, courage, and honesty. The issues raised are: infidelity, polygamy, gender justice, ethnic culture, other people cultures, and resistance to ancestral traditions, even sexuality discussed openly and enthusiastically, by female authors again. The problem is seen in the novel *Burung-Burung Rantau* (1993) by Y.B. Mangunwijaya, *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* by Ahmad Tohari, and *Nayla* novel (2009) by Djenar Mahesa Ayu, the young writer. The dimensions of pluralism are expressed explicitly with openness and honesty. Similarly, *Namaku Taweraut* novel (2000) by Ani Sekarningsih is full of ethnic, religious, and gender equality issues.

The literature of pluralism reflects the diversity of the nation that actually raises the dynamics of the life of a beautiful



nation. Therefore, we need to examine together how to empower diversity/pluralism as a potential resource for nation-building. From the FGD results, the conclusion that pluralism-based literary work has the opportunity to make readers become wiser, open-minded, democratic, and sensitive to nationalism, and able to have not only sympathy but also empathy to others.

CONCLUSION

Ending this conversation can be raised in conclusions. First, pluralism is a view that considers the diversity of the nation in terms of ethnicity, race, religion, and social class as a fundamental reality in people's life. The attitude of opening up to live life together by the understanding plurality as an inevitability of life. A plurality of cultures in the dynamics of life is a necessity that actually brings blessings if realized as a gift.

The pluralism literature is a literature that expresses the notions of diversity that reflect the real portrait of the Indonesian nation. Literature pluralism conveyed the importance of understanding each other differences in the ethnic, racial, religious, or social class of Indonesia as a gift from God. Differences in the background do not need to make the Indonesian nation experiencing conflicts are a more threatened disintegration of the nation. Thus pluralism literature can penetrate ethnic, racial, religious, class, language, and cultural boundaries in line with the era of global pluralism which is a necessity.

Secondly, pluralism literature learning is the time to put forward in the study of literature at schools along with the globalization era with socio-cultural transformation and changes in the value of life that has a global tendency. Of course, it takes the preparation for literary teachers to have a better understanding of the paradigm of pluralism.

Multicultural literature has great potential as one of the literary materials in the development of national character, especially for the strengthening of people's nationalism.

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