

How Do Elementary School Teachers Teach Children to Appreciate Stories?

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Abstract

Children's story appreciation is one of the literary material in elementary school. Stories can be selected and delivered in several different ways. This paper aims to describe how teachers teach students to appreciate children stories. Data collection was carried out through interviews with teachers of 12 elementary school teachers. The results of the study showed a variety of how elementary school teachers teach students to appreciate children stories because of the different learning objectives; differences occur in determining aspects of learning resources, determining the selection criteria for teaching materials, as well as in the selection of learning models used. Based on this, goal setting is the most important thing in teaching appreciation of children's stories. In other words, the purpose of appreciation of the story greatly determines the selection of teaching materials and learning models used by elementary school teachers.

Keywords: appreciation, children's stories, elementary school teacher.

Introduction

Appreciating stories is one of the competencies that elementary school students need to master. To achieve the specified competencies, students learn and practice appreciating in order to understand the story well. It is indicated that there are a lot of ways teacher choose to teach appreciation skills to students. However, the exact way a teacher teaches an appreciation of stories, especially in elementary schools has not been much revealed.

Therefore, this study aims to describe how the elementary school teacher actually teaches appreciation of the story to the students. This is important in order to obtain data on how elementary school teachers teach appreciation of literature and what is their concern when teaching story appreciation, along with the underlying considerations. The need for third information appears to portray the quality of processes that have an impact on the quality of the results of teaching appreciation. In addition, a comprehensive picture of process quality will be an important basis for continuous innovation that is in line with the demands and development of today's digital era.

As far as the knowledge of researchers, the research of literature teaching in elementary schools that is oriented towards the teaching process of appreciation is still very limited. Several studies related to the teaching of literature tend to be focused on developing elementary students on certain aspects, including appreciation of stories oriented to strengthening student character education (Apriliya, 2017) (Muktadir, 2018), regarding appreciation of stories oriented to the stability of students' social values (Muhammadi 2018), as well as stories as literary teaching materials oriented to moral education (Wahyuni 2017). In addition, more research is focused on story content, including

the construction of gender in children's stories (Liliani 2015); multicultural issues (Bista 2012); Indonesian identity (Suyatno 2014) or even the theme of parental death (Corr 2007).

Appreciation expresses on the assessment and appreciation of the quality of a work based on experience, observation, understanding, and sensitivity of feelings while maintaining a critical mind (Indonesia, 2009; (Rusyana 1984); Effendi in Aminuddin (1995). One important step of appreciation is accepting the experience of others, internalizing it as self-experience so that it can deal with life better. This is in line with the opinion of Sumardjo and Saini KM (1986, 174-175) that appreciation leads to the discovery of the relationship (relevance) of the experience gained by literary readers with real life experiences that they face. Thus, students are able to give meaning to new experiences gained from their interactions with the text of the story. In practice, an appreciation, can and often is a pure response. Children do not always know why they like something, so the teacher needs to free the children in expressing their appreciation. According to Pooley (2015), this is because appreciation consists of two parts. First, appreciation is not only an emotional response that came from a fundamental recognition, but also influenced by an understanding of the causes that gave a rise to the response. Thus, ideally, reading, writing and talking about a story and playing a role based on a story are not only fun for students, but also help them understand the essence of the story. However, for some students, literature is considered as a pile of information that must be memorized, instead as an experience that must be appreciated (Purves in Dugan & Ann, 2014.) This mindset makes students ignore the literary elements and constructive nature of reading. Students become more focused on words and sequences on the surface level (Rosenblatt in Dugan & Ann, 2014) compared to meaningful and comprehensive understanding (Purcell-Gates in Dugan & Ann, 2014).

In contrast to the ideal view of teaching the appreciation of literature, based on the results of the study, the elementary teacher teaches the appreciation of the story likely only focused on the goals listed in the curriculum so it affects the choice of models, methods, and teaching materials used. Thus, the assumption arises that these conditions can limit the freedom of students in the appreciation process. In other words, students simply obey the authority of the discourse, not trying to find, explore, and learn the meaning contained in the story (Emzir, 2015). Therefore, it is important to do a continuous innovation as a form of revitalization of teaching literary appreciation in elementary school.

Method

This research is focused on knowing how the teaching process of story appreciation is done by elementary school teachers. Therefore, the research carried out was a qualitative study with survey methods (Leedy and Ormrod 2015) to obtain information about the characteristics, opinions, attitudes, and experiences of elementary school teachers in carrying out teaching appreciation stories by asking questions and tabulating their answers. The stages that were adapted and used were the stages of the survey process from Cohen et al. (2007). It starts from setting goals, namely obtaining data about teaching appreciation of stories performed by elementary school teachers. Then decide on the type of survey that will be conducted, namely through structured interview activities. Determine the issue that is the focus of the interview, which is about teaching appreciation of stories. Determine what information is needed in accordance with the issues that are the focus of research, namely objectives, teaching materials, criteria for selecting teaching materials, and teaching methods. Determine the informants as many as 12 elementary school teachers in the city of Tasikmalaya who come from Elementary Schools that are associated with Primary School Teacher Education Study Program of UPI Tasikmalaya Campus. Determine the instruments needed. Arrange and produce data collection instruments, namely interview guidelines and a number of questions. Determine how the data collection process is carried out by students at the partner elementary school. Few days before the interview, a discussion process was conducted and the perception was shared with the data takers about the purpose and purpose of the interview along with what data would be collected.

Results and Discussion

Before describing and discussing the implementation of story appreciation teaching, the following outlines the objectives and sources and criteria for selecting appreciation story teaching materials carried out in elementary school.

The purpose of the story appreciation teaching presented by teachers is generally based on the basic competencies listed in the curriculum. As stated by the teachers when answering questions about what is the purpose of teaching appreciation of stories, they respond that it was in accordance with the curriculum, namely goals based on basic competencies that must be achieved in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. However, some teachers mention the impact of the participation of teaching as a teaching goal, namely so that students are confident and brave to show themselves in public; as a media to attitudes change; a facility for character education, to mentally train students to be skilled in speaking; foster student moral awareness, and recognize and develop knowledge and experience. Taking into account the basic competencies of SD / MI in the curriculum listed in the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 24 of 2016, the purpose of teaching appreciation of stories is inherent in language skills, namely receptive ability to listen and / or read stories so that knowledge of the structure and content of the story is obtained; and productive ability in writing and speaking so that the ability to respond to stories and stories is obtained, both verbally and in writing. Thus, the purpose of teaching appreciation of the stories presented by teachers is in line with the curriculum, although there are tendencies for orientation to the impact of participation to be far more dominant than the instructional impact. This is evidenced by the number of teachers who mention the appreciation of stories as a means of character education and the development of moral values.

Textbooks, in this case the Integrated Thematic Book is the main source that most teachers choose as a source of teaching material (stories). In addition, according to the teachers, there are other sources of teaching materials used, namely school library collection story books; stories written by the teacher, certain story books that are owned by the teacher; print mass media, and the internet. In other words, even though the Integrated Thematic Book is the main reference in daily teaching, the learning resources that become the teacher's reference are not only fixed on the book, because the teachers also use various possible and adequate sources as reference material to appreciate the stories.

The teachers expressed the existence of specific criteria in choosing teaching appreciation material for stories. If categorized, the criteria are divided into four aspects, namely suitable with the curriculum, suitable with the expected result, suitable with the characteristics of students, and accessibility. Suitable with the curriculum means that the selected story is compatible with the teaching material and the purpose of teaching. Suitable with the expected results means that the chosen story is compatible with the reality in everyday life and contains a moral message. Suitable with the characteristics of students means that the selected story has a simple storyline, the character of the story is easily recognizable (not strange), compatible with the stage of student development; compatible with student needs, and attract students' interest. The accessibility to stories in principle, stories must be practical and easy to obtain. In general, the existence of criteria in the selection of instructional materials serves to keep the stories selected and taught to students right according to the teaching objectives and in harmony with the needs of students.

The research findings show that there are various ways teachers do teach story appreciation, e.g role playing methods, storytelling, jigsaw type cooperative teaching models, cooperative teaching models make a match, scientific approaches, guided teaching models, demonstration methods, and story telling. The teacher's exposure to teaching appreciation of the story is not a teaching model specifically designed for story appreciation. However, the teachers have reasons for choosing this method.

The following is a description of the reasons teachers in choosing approaches, methods, and models of teaching appreciation of stories. The role playing method is used because it is seen to be suitable with the material, so that students could understand the contents of the story better through many activities portraying the characters. Storytelling techniques are used in order to attract the attention and enthusiasm of students and is compatible with the development of elementary school students. The jigsaw cooperative teaching model and make a match are chosen so students can appreciate the story not only individually, but also in groups to practice their ability to work together. Guided activities are selected by the teacher so students could be able to understand the story better in a directed manner, the teacher guides students in understanding the content and message of the story in order to build positive traits in students. The demonstration method was chosen so students know the summary of the story so they are able to retell the story. The teacher considers that the ability to speak, especially telling stories is a weakness even though it helped with text. The scientific teaching approach is chosen by the teacher in carrying out teaching appreciation stories. However, how technical teaching appreciation of the story is carried out is less explored. The description illustrates the implementation of appreciation teaching chosen by the teacher harmonized with the teaching objectives to be achieved. Teaching is packed with certain parameters to attract students' interest and enthusiasm for the story to be learned.

However, the description also shows the fact that there are no teachers who apply the story appreciation method specifically. For example, adapting a story appreciation procedure refers to the literary presentation of Moody's ideas adapted by Rahmanto (1988). These stages consist of preliminary assessment, determination of practical decisions; introduction of the work; presentation of the work (presentation of the work); discussion (discussion); and reinforcement.

In general, the appreciation story model or teaching method implemented by teachers places more emphasis on reading or listening to stories, then discusses the structure of the story (intrinsic elements), story content (the value of character education or moral values), or retells the story. In fact, as stated by the Indonesian Literature Encyclopedia Editorial Board (2009), Effendi (in Aminuddin 1995), Rusyana (1984) appreciation of stories is an activity of appreciating or judging so that it requires the occurrence of interagency dialogue which can occur through discussion activities. Unfortunately, the discussion actually did not become a choice of activities in the teaching of appreciation did by the elementary school teachers. Whereas it should be, the discussion becomes the most important stage of teaching to understand the structure of the story and internalize the values contained in the story. Because through that discussion students express two parts of appreciation as stated (Pooley 2015), namely appreciation in the form of emotional responses arising from fundamental recognition, as well as an understanding of the causes that give rise to that response.

In other words, appreciation of the story will be meaningful if the discussion stage is carried out proportionally so that each student is facilitated to brainstorm, exchange ideas, and dialogue between ideas. In the discussion the teacher can observe and connect wrong ideas or logical fallacy so students are trained to submit ideas with adequate arguments.

This discussion is also important to teach story appreciation that aim to enable students to retell. By conducting discussions in advance, students will be able to understand stories from various perspectives of their peers so that their personal appreciation becomes more holistic. However, intensive discussion alone is not enough, because so that students are skilled at telling stories there are two things that are not less important, namely (1) it is important for teachers to teach effective storytelling techniques; and (2) it is important for the teacher to develop relevant assessment instruments and inform the aspects that are the assessment criteria for the storytelling. Based on the answers of the teachers at the interview, these two things were not revealed so much that they needed to be intensified again more intensively. The storytelling technique, besides needing to be explained, also needs to be well exemplified so it could be more concrete and students could imitate easier. This is in accordance with the opinion of Morson (2016) which states that three skills can help students

appreciate literature, namely translation, identification, and impersonate. Thus, when the teacher gives a good example, teaches the correct storytelling techniques, and clearly conveys the assessment aspects, the purpose of teaching appreciation with retelling competencies can be achieved optimally.

Conclusions

Teaching appreciation of stories performed by elementary school teachers varies. The difference in the selection of teaching materials, determining the criteria for selecting teaching materials, choosing the teaching model used is adjusted to the teaching objectives. The purpose of teaching story appreciation in elementary school, in accordance with the curriculum, the objectives include understanding the intrinsic elements of the story, retelling the contents of the story, and responding to the story. However, there is a strong tendency that teaching appreciation of stories is more oriented to certain content, so students are not facilitated enough to enjoy or appreciate the beauty of the story itself, e.g aspects of language style. In addition, in the process many teachers have not been using the model of appreciation teaching specifically which focuses on the occurrence of discussion and brainstorming sufficient to optimize students' freedom in appreciating so that students can have a comprehensive meaning of the work. The implication is that it is necessary to disseminate the teaching methods of literary appreciation that ensure the acquisition of meaningful and comprehensive understanding, including by conducting guided discussions. In addition, elementary school teachers need to be strengthened in terms of delivering material and appreciation teaching techniques to be more adequate.

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