

Teaching Good Character in a Narrative Text through Storytelling

A Descriptive Qualitative Research in a Junior High School in Bandung

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Abstract: This research aimed at describing the teaching of good character of respect in a narrative text through storytelling and the students' responses to the teaching of good character of respect in a narrative text through storytelling. The story used in this research entitled "*Gilbert the Goat Learns Respect*" was produced by MyYoungChild.org in 2012. The eighth grade students were the participants of this research and to collect and identify the data, a qualitative method was applied equipped with a descriptive analysis with observations, questionnaires and documents analysis as the instruments of the research. The results of the study showed that this teaching was relatively faithful to the framework of Ellis and Brewster (1991) and Wright (2004). From this teaching, the students showed their behavior of being respectful through a reflection. For the responses, almost all of the students showed positive responses to the help of storytelling in teaching good character of respect in a narrative text through storytelling. This model of teaching is handy for teachers to teach good character of respect in a narrative text through storytelling in a more well-prepared method.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the Indonesian education system, the implementation of character education has become a significant issue since the demand of *Kemdikbud* (*Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia*). Effendy—the minister of education and culture (on *Kemdikbud*'s website, www.kemdikbud.go.id, 2017) mentions that one of *Kemdikbud*'s programs called "Reinforcement of Character Education" (*Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter—PPK*) is the main axis for the improvement of the national education system, related to some government's priority programs. In relation to this, *Kemdikbud* asserts that the learning process which is based on character reinforcement and integrated inside the school and outside the school through *PPK* will be able to create a more competitive young generation that also have the quality of good characters. Hence, teaching good character to the students becomes one of the attempts in implementing and integrating character education (the *PPK* program) in Indonesian schools by the teachers.

Relating the importance of the implementation of character education to the task of English as a foreign language in the field of education in Indonesia,

Pinkley (2012) argues that character education has a position in EFL classroom because aside from language learning, the students will also have the chance to build their critical thinking skill because character education includes values. In the syllabus, for example, it is mentioned that the topic of narrative text as one of EFL teaching materials, should be a story that gives the students behavior exemplary of trustworthiness, respect, and diligent that are also included to the eighteen characters from the *Kemdikbud*.

The use of storytelling in teaching language, especially in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), according to Rahim and Rahiem (2012), has been applied by schools as a pedagogic tool. Apart from being used as a teaching language tool, Samantaray (2014) argues that storytelling also has the ability in nurturing the students' emotional intelligence and storytelling is able to help the students in obtaining the perception of human behavior. This is also in line with Rahim and Rahiem who state that storytelling has the ability to be functioned as a medium of moral education to the students.

What makes this study different from various previous studies that becomes the gap in this study is that the previous studies were focus on teaching

traditional values rather than character education (Adeyemi, 2012) and character education through storytelling in the family situation, not in the school (Sukmaningrum and Hawa, 2011).

After looking at the problems occurred above and finding the gap from similar previous studies, therefore, this study was aimed to describe the teaching of good character of respect in a narrative text through storytelling and to find out the students' responses to this teaching

2 METHODS

This study used a qualitative investigation research design that has substance of explanations about the central phenomenon investigated in the study, the respondents in the study, and the research site (Creswell, 2009). The researcher took one class in the junior high school that has been selected based on the data from the teacher in the school and 34 students of that class were involved in this study and to collect and identify the data, qualitative method was applied equipped with descriptive analysis with observation, questionnaire and document analysis as the instruments of the research. The data were analyzed by using the framework of Ellis and Brewster (1991) and Wright (2004) that have three steps namely pre-storytelling step, during storytelling step, and after storytelling step—and also the framework of Kriete and Bechtel (2002) and Carter (2015) regarding the activities of teaching and learning respect.

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings were taken from the result of the observation, document analysis (students' work), and questionnaire.

3.1 The Process of Teaching Good Character of Respect in a Narrative Text through Storytelling

There are three steps done in the teaching process namely pre-storytelling step, during storytelling step, and after storytelling step. The activities done in the pre-storytelling step involved getting the students' attention, focusing the students' mind on the content of the story, introducing new vocabularies and getting predictive skills (Ellis and Brewster, 1991). The first thing done to get the students' attention was showing the letters of R-E-S-P-E-C-T on the whiteboard and

the students were guided to have an oral practice to get their attention by discussing what respect was and some examples of respect. This view is in line with Dolakova (2008) who asserts that oral practice will help the teacher make the most of the story by getting the students' attention, when the students here discussed what the story was about with the teacher orally through the letters of R-E-S-P-E-C-T. The students were paying attention as they gave their opinion about respect after they showed the letters on the whiteboard.

The second activity in the pre-storytelling step was focusing the students' mind on the content of the story where the students were asked to work in group, discussed the meaning of respect and gave more examples and elaboration of respect. This is in line with Ioannou-Georgiou and Verdugo (2009) who proposes that making the students discuss the content of the story helps the students arranging the atmosphere and making the context of the story to help them comprehend the content of the story easier since they are able to apply their knowledge and experiences from the activities.

In the third activity, the students were introduced to some new vocabularies related to the story by being shown some pictures and by playing games. Ioannou-Georgiou and Verdugo (2009) elaborate that teacher can introduce the students new vocabularies related to the story can encourage the students' curiosity and interest. In line with this matter, Cameron (2001) points out that this activity is directed to provide the words required to comprehend the story.

Giving the students a chance to get predictive skill became the last activity where each group in the classroom was given some pictures taken from the storybook to make the students familiar with the story. From the pictures given, the students were required to predict the story that the teacher was going to tell. The students in group observed the pictures together and then arranged them in order to make a prediction of the story. This activity is in line with Dolakova (2008) who refers that predicting the story is important to be done in the pre-storytelling step to help the teacher make the most of the story, where students can work with pictures to describe what happened there, match or re-order the pictures, and guess the setting to help them know the story later.

The second step which is during storytelling step, were conveyed into two main activities which were telling the story itself and interacting with the students during the storytelling time. When the story entitled "Gilbert the Goat Learns Respect" was being told to the students, there were some things needed to be applied namely gestures, mimes, variation of

voice, different facial expressions and the use of repetition. To support this, Ioannou-Georgiou and Verdugo (2009) mention that during storytelling step particularly implicates activities aimed to encourage the students, preserve the students' attention and support the students' comprehending the story.

The second activity was interacting with the students. The students were asked, "what did Gilbert do in this picture?" by pointing Gilbert and showing the picture to the students. The students gave positive reaction by answering the questions given related to the story appropriately and it meant that the students have interacted with the teacher during the storytelling. This view is in line with Ellis and Brewster (1991) who refer that the teacher can read the story slowly and clearly in order to provide the students time to think, ask questions, examine the pictures and make comments. Ellis and Brewster add that the teacher can let in the students to the story by making comments about the pictures provided in the story and pointing to them when teacher said the word. Ioannou-Georgiou and Verdugo (2009) also mention that this activity makes the students becomes the active listeners as the participants in the storytelling activity, where the students could guess the continuation of the story and identify the pictures of characters shown.

In the last step, providing some kind of products is necessary to be given last to let the students realize that their great effort has been leading to a particular thing (Ellis and Brewster, 1991). In line with this, the activities given by the teacher to the students in the after storytelling step were teacher and students reviewed the storytelling given; teacher and students did a follow-up activity regarding the story of respect; and teacher made sure that students understand what respect is. After the story has been told to the students, the students were asked to review the story by asking them to conclude the story together orally. This finding as supported by Wright (2004) and Cameron (2001) that before giving the follow-up activity to check the students' understanding, teacher can review the story, so that the students can remember the story they have heard.

The second activity was teacher and students did a follow up activity where the students did a worksheet given in a group to check their comprehension regarding the story that was formed in a narrative text. This activity is parallel to TeachingValues.com (2000) who recommends answering questions as one of the follow up activities after hearing the story. Wright (2004) and Cameron (2001) also recommend answering questions to be

done as one of activity in after storytelling step to check students' understanding.

The last activity was teacher made sure that students understood what respect was. Teacher often emphasized the action that Gilbert did as disrespectful action in the story to make the students realize what should the students do to be respect and the students were given some questions to reflect what respect was.

Students were asked to make a reflection related to the story and the students were required to answer the guiding questions to help them make the reflection. This activity is in line with TeachingValues.com (2000) who recommends reflection as one of the follow up activities after hearing the story, especially the story about respect. Furthermore, Ioannou-Georgiou and Verdugo (2009) explain that follow-up activity in the after storytelling step is an opportunity to examine the students' comprehension and also to participate more with the problem presented in the story that also depend on the aims of the teaching materials which is to learn about respect.

3.2 Students' Response to the Teaching of Good Character of Respect in a Narrative Text through Storytelling

There were eight questions in total given to the students and the questions were divided into three categories which were students' response to the help of storytelling in understanding a narrative text; students' response to the help of storytelling in learning good character of respect in a narrative text; and students' response to the material of good character of respect.

The result for first category showed that every student in the class (100%) enjoy the storytelling activity done by the teacher. This very high percentage is in line with Herlina (2012) who states that narrative text is considered as a complicated text for junior high school students since narrative text is long and having sequence, so that sometimes the students lose the idea of the text part and not understand the context of the whole text, whereas narrative text can be containing good characters in its moral value that can be learned by the students.

Regarding the second category, the result showed that good character of respect in a narrative text liked to be learned through storytelling by almost all of students in the class. This result is in line with Shapiro (1998) who argues that psychologists have acknowledged that storytelling has good influence in

gaining the knowledge of good characters for the students.

For the last category, almost all the students in the class agree that learning good character of respect is important for students. This is supported by Skaggs and Bodenhorn (2006) who profess that the main aim of character education is to indicate the traits of good characters to the students. Parallel to that, Herlina (2012) states that in the rule of National Education Ministry Numbers 22, 23 and 24, students are expected to not only generate high intellectual, but also good character.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The results assert that storytelling was useful in teaching good character of respect in a narrative text to the students since there were three steps in doing the storytelling activity namely pre-storytelling step, during storytelling step and after storytelling step. Some activities in each step also help the students in learning good character of respect.

For the students' responses to this teaching, the result showed that almost all of the students agree that storytelling help them in understanding narrative text. It also showed that the students showed positive reaction that storytelling is able to help the students learning good character of respect in a narrative text. Almost all the students also agree that learning good character of respect is important for students.

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