

The Sociocultural Literacy Dimensions in A.A. Navis's Short Stories

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Abstract: The present study concerned on the sociocultural literacy dimensions found in A. A. Navis's short stories. It aims at describing the literacy dimensions contained in the stories viewed from various sociocultural aspects covering: social identity, social criticism, multi-literacy aspect, sociocultural process skill, socio-economic development, moral attitude in society, and so forth. The data were obtained from ten manuscripts of A. A. Navis's short stories, a well-known short story writer in Indonesia. Those manuscripts were taken from three anthologies entitled "Robohnya Surau Kami", "Hujan Panas dan Kabut Musim", and "Dari Jodoh Sampai Supiah". The data were analyzed using descriptive-qualitative approach based on the indicators of sociocultural literacy dimensions. The finding showed that the stories contained a fair strong sociocultural literacy dimensions. The dimensions in the story of "Jodoh", "Orang dari Luar Negeri" and "Orang Baik yang Malang" were illustrated by literate theme elevation of the moral attitude in society. In the story of "Politik Warung Kopi" and "Orde Lama", the prominent sociocultural literacy dimension was the social criticism towards the governance. The story of "Baginda Ratu" and "Efendi" tended to give more importance to its sociocultural literacy dimension, socio-economic development, and individual status, and success as well. The story of "Kisah Seorang Amir" emerged its sociocultural dimension by showing that literacy activities became a tradition, in either educational institutions or social environment. The sociocultural dimension found in the story of "Pak Menteri Mau Datang" revealed a common thinking style and intelligence. The sociocultural dimension found in the story of "Pelamar" uncovered the effect of parents' education level towards children literacy.

1 INTRODUCTION

The recent information technology advancement influences national culture change and shifting. Besides its positive effect, it may result negative effect on national culture's value. One of them is the emergence of individualist attitude in social intercourse. The attitude, is slowly but sure, able to weaken the national unity. Many cases happen for the decrease of national unity, for instance, people fight, students fight, both high schools and higher education levels.

The data from Badan Pusat Statistik or Central Bureau of Statistics (2012) show the following facts. The reading portion of Indonesian people at age 10 up shows the highest proportion on reading textbook or school material (20,49%), reading other text (17,03%), and newspaper (15,06%). Reading proportion related to science or knowledge is

14,08%, while reading stories is only 5,01%. The data vividly indicate that people interest on reading short stories is very low. Whereas, if we think deeply, literary works such as short stories, have worthwhile didactic value.

Short stories didactic values related to sociocultural dimensions is very fine to be a model for living in society. A model within short stories might be an example in life skill education for people. In connection with that, the present article intentionally analyze didactic values in form of sociocultural dimensions within AA Navis's short stories. The didactic values of the stories can be then extended to people specifically academicians.

Literacy is a multidimensional phenomenon and research object of social science, humanity, and natural science (Knaflic, 2014). Based on that, it can be inferred that the present research is under the humanity study, portraying the literature works of A.A Navis's.

2 SOCIOCULTURAL LITERACY DIMENSIONS

2.1 Sociocultural Literacy Dimensions

Alwasilah (2012) states that literacy is mastery reflection and cultural appreciation. He argues that reading and writing always exist in a culture system (faith, attitude, ways, and goals of culture). Language education deservedly teach cultural knowledge. Being unconcerned on culture contributes to language de-contextualization of the culture. Using a language is a submission towards conventions agreed by people as language users and language natives as models. The use of symbols or gestures is so cultural and conventional and ought to be integrally taught.

Kucer and Cecilia (2006) clarify that sociocultural dimensions in literacy move our world from texts and minds to literacy phenomena as literacy practice involving the use of printed writing.

Petersson et al. (2009) see that educational context, such as reading and writing skill acquisition and other cognitive skills, is a structural process of cultural transmission prioritizing crucial aspects of cultural socialization.

Sociocultural dimensions in literacy focus on the social identities and various group activities in utilizing literacy to negotiate and comment on their transactions with the world. It would rather focus on multiliteracies, perspectives, and ideology than truth (Kucer, 2014).

Kucer clears up the idea by saying that the Sociocultural dimensions of literacy focused on the social identities and how various groups use literacy to negotiate and critique their transactions with the world. Multiliteracies rather than literacy and perspective and ideologies rather than truth (2014).

2.2 A.A Navis and His Short Stories

Hasanuddin (2013) mention that A.A. Navis is man of letters famous for "the number one insulter". Further Hasanuddin (2013) clear up that the tittle is connected with his writing style and critical attitude towards various life problems and social matters.

Navis' short stories are collected in five antologies, namely "Robohnya Surau Kami", "Hujan Panas dan kabut Musim", "Jodoh", "Kabut Negeri Si Dali", and "Bertanya Kerbau pada Pedati". Sastrosatomo (1994) states that as an heir of Minangkabau culture, all Navis works is full of Minang nuance, but they also have globality or

universality of human life reflection in Indonesia. While Agusta (1994) says that Navis works are commonly based on human daily and recent lives, with limited problem element networks.

Sastrosatomo (1994) mentions that the short story entitled "Robohnya Surau Kami" is one of Navis's most spectacular works causing pros and cons in Indonesia's religious society, that how conservative it is when most of the Moslems interpret worship verbally. "Hujan Panas dan Kabut Musim" contains ten short stories, which based on myths connected to natural phenomena, culture, and social (Adilla, 2003).

Hasanuddin (2013) inform that the short story entitled "Jodoh" won the first prize on golden windmill contest held by Nederland Wereldomroep radio in 1975.

The anthology "Kabut Negeri Si Dali" contains 15 stories which mostly talk about bitter humor, humanity irony from combat brutality, humanity touch pawned for wars, desire, and power, connected to military through wars, colonialization, and politics (Adilla, 2003).

In Adilla's explanation (2003), "Bertanya Kerbau pada Pedati" is Navis's fifth anthology loading ten titles which mostly seem very symbolic in narrating human attitude in the real world by paroding human behavior in another world. To Hasanuddin (2013), the short stories of "Bertanya Kerbau pada Pedati" anthology had early been published by several mass media.

3 RESEARCH METHODS

The present research employed qualitative-descriptive method. The data were analyzed to and fro based on sociocultural literacy dimension indicators from Kucer (2014). The data were taken from Navis's short stories, including: "Jodoh"; "Politik Warung Kopi"; "Orang dari Luar Negeri"; "Baginda Ratu"; "Kisah Seorang Amir"; "Pak Menteri Mau Datang"; "Orde Lama"; "Pelamar"; "Efendi"; "Orang Baik yang Malang".

The indicators taken from Kucer (2014) were listed below:

- As skilled readers and writers in the process of social-culture;
- Less reading resources at home and less reading habit are someone's causes contributing to reading and writing difficulties;
- Literacy practice in educational institutions reflects middle class norms, values and

ideology;

- There is a positive relation between being aware and socio-economic development, individual status and success;
- Literacy competence differences among groups, areas and from time to time;
- Competence differences between literate individuals and those who are not, viewed from moral attitude;
- Competence differences between literate individuals and those who are not viewed from common thinking and intelligence;
- Predictors of reading and writing skills seen from parents' educational level;
- Environment and poverty are the causes of kids' poor interest to learn reading and writing;
- Learning to read and write should not be only organized at educational institutions but also in social environment;
- Important texts and provocations are controlled by government;
- Literacy activities are not influenced by racism or neglecting ethnic differences, races and culture.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in The Short Story entitled "Jodoh" by A.A. Navis

The story "Jodoh" by A.A Navis of 1975 contains sociocultural dimensions as the didactic value. Besides, there are also ability differences among literate people, which are not seen from common thought, and intelligence. The sociocultural indicator is illustrated in the following fragment.

"Menurut kalkulasinya, setelah membayar uang makan dan sewa kamar serta hutang-hutang rokoknya, maka sehabis tanggal limabelas, habis pulalah seluruh isi kantongnya. Tentu saja logikanya, kalau ia sudah hidup berdua dengan isterinya, maka mulai tanggal satu tentulah kantongnya sudah akan bolong" (Navis, 1975).

The fragment illustrates Badri who is careful about what he does. His full of consideration attitude and critical thinking in living his life is an attitude of a good literati, but certainly those are not the excessive attitude.

Another fragment illustrating Badri literate attitude is as follows.

"Menurut penelitiannya, ongkos sekali periksa wanita hamil sama dengan dua hari gajinya. Biaya bersalin akan menelan gajinya sebulan. Belum lagi kalau dihitung pengeluaran untuk membeli peragat bayi sejak popok, gurita dan tempat tidur yang mungil. Kesimpulan Badri, ia tidak bisa nikah untuk selama-lamanya" (Navis, 1975).

Badri literate attitude above is the illustration of Badri's ability and intelligence in his common thinking. Badri is good at seeing his surroundings either people or friends' lives.

The dominant didactic values of the story are Badri's carefulness and intelligence in thinking. Those are good attitude which can be a model for people. One thing to be adapted is that we need to be very careful and full of consideration when doing something in order not to be trapped in misfortune.

4.2 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled "Politik Warung Kopi" by A.A. Navis

The story "Politik Warung Kopi" talks about some villagers' critical attitude towards the government cabinet. They frequently buy coffee at the shop while talking about politics in Indonesia, even about government cabinet performance. The indicator that suits Kucer's (2014) is that learning to read and write does not only happen at educational institutions but also in social environment. The following is the story part telling the villagers' conversation.

"Maka ahli-ahli politik yang mengangkat dirinya jadi pemimpin partai-partai di seluruh Indonesia itu, mulailah mengemukakan pendapatnya masing-masing. Dengan segala gaya dan keahliannya menguraikan segala keyakinan politiknya untuk mencapai kemakmuran itu. Sudah dapat diduga hanya kelima gembong itu saja yang punya suara-lantang. Dan kelimanya pun sama berpendapat, bahwa Indonesia adalah negara yang maha kaya raya dan mempunyai penduduk yang cukup banyak. Dan mereka pun sama sependapat, jika negara Republik Indonesia itu tak bisa memakmurkan rakyatnya, hal itu karena kesalahan kabinet-kabinet yang lalu" (Navis, 1990).

The fragment indicates villagers' intelligence that often discuss politics in Indonesia. They argue as if they represent political parties in Indonesia and try to give solutions for the country prosperity.

The dominant didactic value of the above story is that intelligent people will always be giving opinions and arguments towards the problems faced. The intelligence attitude in common thought is properly emulated and trained; both in educational and social environment.

4.3 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled "Orang dari Luar Negeri" by A.A. Navis

The indicator of sociocultural literacy dimensions based on Kucer (2014) which suits the story content of "Orang dari Luar Negeri" is the difference between literate and illiterate individual capability seen from the morality. The following is the fragment.

"Kalau ia bicara dengan kami selamanya dengan tenang. Tidak tergepoh-gepoh. Tapi satu kata demi satu kata. Dan selamanya ia tak mau bicara berebutan" (Navis, 1990).

The fragment shows an educated figure who went to school abroad. He has good civility particularly that he speaks in calm and polite manner.

The didactic value of the story is the civility, which supposed to be emulated in communicating with people in either social environment or educational institutions.

4.4 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled "Baginda Ratu" by A.A. Navis

The Baginda Ratu character of the story is not the real queen, but the character's nickname got from people around her for she has very important acquaintances or government officials. The indicator from Kucer (2014) which is in line with the story content is the existence of positive relationship between being aware with socio-economic and individual status development with success. The fragment is narrated below.

"Tentu saudara akan bertanya sekarang, yang manakah Baginda Ratu itu? Ia akan mudah ditemui pada setiap resepsi orang-orang

terkemuka (ia menyebutnya elite) di kota kami. Tertawanya paling banyak. Dan dengan gerakannya yang lincah. Ia sudah terbang kian kemari menemui setiap orang" (Navis, 1990).

Baginda Ratu is a supple person; therefore her acquaintances comes from government officials and elites. The didactic value of the story is that with her social skill, Baginda Ratu does not find difficulties in facing economic or life problems. Behavior and attitude narrated in this story teach us to be a supple person, and to be careful when socializing with people. Socialization might lift up our life dignity once we choose to make friends with the right persons, but it can destroy our lives when we are side by side with the wrong persons.

4.5 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled "Kisah Seorang Amir" by A.A. Navis

The indicator from Kucer (2014) found in the story "Kisah Seorang Amir" is that learning to read and write is not only in educational institutions but also in social environment. It is illustrated as follows.

"Amir memang memilih ayat yang pendek-pendek saja. Akan tetapi rakaat ketujuh, ia memilih ayat yang meski pun cukup pendek, tapi jarang dibaca orang, sehingga ia salah mengucapkannya. Kesalahannya segera dibetulkan oleh salah seorang ulama dengan mengulanginya dengan suara yang keras" (Navis, 1990).

The character emerged in the story is not Amir literally, but one of the religious figures in the society who masters religious knowledge, particularly Qur'anic recitation. The figure in many times is able to correct imam's recitation in *shalat*.

The didactic value to emulate from the story is that, be clever, master much knowledge both religious knowledge and general knowledge. By reciting Qur'anic surah, it contributes to correcting the inappropriate recitation.

4.6 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled "Pak Menteri Mau Datang" by A.A. Navis

Kucer's indicator of sociocultural literacy dimension (2014, p. 11) which suits the story is the ones that connected to ability difference between literate

individuals and those who are not, seen from common thought and intelligence. It is illustrated in the fragment below.

“Tiga puluh sen sebotol kalau beli banyak. Tiga ribu murid, masing-masingnya tiga botol, itu berarti duaribu tujuh ratus rupiah,” kata Kepala Bagian Keuangan itu seraya mencoret-coret pada sehelai kertas.” (Navis, 1990).

The fragment describes the literacy of a head of financial division in calculating cost to use at a minister welcome event.

The didactic value within the story is his ability to calculate budgeting. The skill of budgeting calculation certainly will assist us from an extravagant life and being trapped by debts. Literacy is not only about being able to read and write, but also being skilful at reading situation and condition as well as making plans.

4.7 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled “Orde Lama” by A.A. Navis

The indicator from Kucer (2014) which matched the story content is reading to read and write should not only be conducted at schools but also in social environment. The fragment below describes it.

“Presiden telah memerintahkan, pada Hari Proklamsasi yang akan datang ini, Negara Republik Indonesia harus dinyatakan sebagai negara yang bebas buta huruf. Karena itu perlu diadakan razia guna, mengetahui apakah bangsa Indonesia telah betul-betul bebas buta huruf setelah sekian lama dilakukan kampanye pemberantasannya” (Navis, 1990).

The illustration above tells the readers that one time at Republic of Indonesia independence day celebration, the president has planned Indonesia as a literate country, but in a raid it was found that illiterate people still exist in the country.

The didactic value found in the story suggested that the government should concern on its people education level, as people who less educated tend to be in poverty. Illiterates indicate the low level of people education. To be free from poverty, we should commit ourselves to learn various knowledge, starting from training our reading skill to analytical thinking ability.

4.8 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled “Pelamar” by A.A. Navis

Kucer’s indicator (2014) found in the story “Pelamar” is reading and writing skill prediction, viewed from parents’ education level. The following lines describe the statement.

“Bidin datang ke kantor Pak Kantor minta kerja. Bidin anak desa. Otaknya encer. Tapi dengan susah payah barulah ia menamatkan SMA. Ini disebabkan ia anak tunggal seorang janda miskin, yang hidupnya menjual kue. Dan Bidin anak tahu diri. Maka sepulang dari sekolah, waktunya habis menolong ibunya” (Navis, 1990).

The above lines depict the poor economic condition of Bidin family. Bidin is an orphan lived with his old mother. To graduate from his senior high school, Bidin should work hard helping his mother make and sell cakes. This story also represents most poor people has low level of education. They are potentially intelligent, but they have no money to continue to a higher education. Bidin’s life, which illustrated not to have time for his self-development as a youth, is an example that children’s literacy is influenced by the parents’ economic and education level. The didactic value seen in the story is that not to give up in fighting for our education though we need to struggle with economic problems. Children are expected to help parents’ job with what they can. Besides, be a good kid and devoted ourselves for our parents.

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4.10 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled "Efendi" by A.A. Navis

The sociocultural dimension of Kucer's (2014) which fits the story is that the different ability between those who are literate and not analyzed from common thought and intelligence. The lines below represents the statement.

"Partai-partai tengah berebut massa. Setiap partai punya koran. Koran partai itu berebut menokohkan aku, supaya aku memboyong massaku ke pihaknya. Isyu dimunculkan. Tanggapanku bergelegar membakar emosi pejuang yang dikecewakan, terhadap isyu yang kubuat sendiri. Itu taktik politik murahan yang pernah kubaca teorinya" (Navis, 1990)

The story entitled Efendi narrates the life story of a person named Effendi who is always lucky. His good luck is definitely achieved by his hard work and intelligence in reading environment situation and condition. Besides, Effendi is also good at utilizing opportunities.

A number of didactic values are found: a) we need to be good at finding and using opportunities; b) general intelligence attitude and life skill should be trained and developed; c) political skill and science would be worthwhile in daily lives.

4.11 The Sociocultural Literacy Dimension in the Short Story entitled "Orang Baik yang Malang" by A.A. Navis

Kucer's sociocultural dimension (2014) found in the story is that the different ability between

literate and illiterate people identified from moral attitude. The fragment is as follows.

"Konon dalam setiap rapat itu, jarang sekali dia ikut berbicara. Kalau pun sampai dia berbicara, bahasanya rapi dan kalimatnya sangat terpelihara, sehingga tidak akan ada orang yang tersinggung" (Navis, 1990).

The quotation above shows Tantawi character moral attitude as an educated and literate person, who is always polite when attend a meeting, or have a conversation. The didactic value discovered is that we ought to keep our politeness in socializing with people in our surroundings.

5 CONCLUSIONS

A.A. Navis's short stories contain a variety of sociocultural literacy dimensions which can be a model in lives.

Sociocultural Literacy Dimensions in the story "Jodoh", "Orang dari Luar Negeri" and "Orang Baik yang Malang" by A. A. Navis are illustrated through the literate theme emergence in society moral attitude. From those three stories, literate attitude to emulate into our lives are: a) being full of consideration and thinking critically in living the life; b) keeping calm and polite in communicating; c) keeping moral attitude and civility in socializing with people.

In the story "Politik Warung Kopi" and "Orde Lama" by A. A. Navis, the dominant sociocultural dimension is the social critique towards the government. In this case, the story suggests that as a literate government, they should give opinions and provide solutions towards the problems faced.

The story "Baginda Ratu" and "Efendi" more concern on the socio-economic development, individual status and success of the sociocultural literacy dimensions. The models to emulate from those stories are: a) a literati ability in socialization might assist her to get easiness to face economic and other life problems; b) a literati is supposed to be good at finding and using opportunities.

The story "Kisah Seorang Amir" emerges the dimension that literacy activities is not only tradition at educational institutions but also in social environment. A model to emulate is that to be a literate person, be intelligent, master much knowledge, both religion and other sciences.

The sociocultural dimension within the story "Pak Menteri Mau Datang" reveals the way of common thought and intelligence. A literati is

skilled at calculating budget, not living extravagantly and free from debts. Literacy is not only about writing and reading but also the ability to read situation and condition as well as to make plans.

The sociocultural dimensions within the story “Pelamar” discovers the effect of parents’ education level towards children literacy. A literate person does not give up to fight for his education, although he should work hard struggling his poor economic condition.

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