

# The Development of Literary Appreciation Instrument in Building Students' Character\*

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Reading literary works does not only function at entertaining, but also gives moral values to influence students' behavior and to strengthen the establishment of character and personality. Literature is an important subject in learning and becomes a compulsory subject in several faculties. The problem posed in this inquiry is how to develop literary appreciation instrument to establish students' character. Employing development research, this investigation implemented at the Teachers' Training and Education Faculty of Sriwijaya University with 89 students as the respondents is aimed at producing a literary appreciation instrument arranged by collaborating reader response strategy, the theory of psycho-literature, Pavlov conditioning theory, and character building theory. The findings of this study are: A valid and effective instrument to build students' character by reading and responding literary works in Personality Development course, the developed literary appreciation instrument is significantly effective to increase students' literary appreciation which achieves very good category by the emerge of two up to three very good indicators through a test and the result from questionnaire indicates that 95.3% of the students can identify the values in the appreciation instrument when they replied the questions concerning with the story read, and the students' perception toward the importance of appreciating literary works to establish their character is positively perceived (97%). If it is viewed from the strength of the instrument, it is recommended that literary appreciation be important to teach and to disseminate the appreciation instrument either at the level of language faculty or non-language students and all the levels of education.

*Keywords:* instrument development, literary appreciation, literature for all, literature across curriculum, character building

## Introduction

The concept of literature for all in appreciating literary works is important to be presented after the information orally and in writing obtained dealing with the foreign community in any position in social life still reads literary works to cultivate the attitude of the character and personality. Reading literary works has been acquired since in elementary school through college. Megawangi (2004) mentioned nine pillars of character which contain the noble universal values that can be achieved by learners to develop the intellectual thoughts, feelings, and actions. Those values can be developed through literary appreciation. They will portray the

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characters and their attitudes to explore the possibility to discover the nine pillars of the nation's character that are hidden behind the actions and behavior of the characters.

Based on the writer's observation, the literary appreciation is only given to the students at all levels of education and the students of language and literature education by using structural approach. Upheavals and the various phenomena that occur among students worsen the failure of education to make them become human beings with good characters. Currently, the seeking of learning model that is able to develop a personality and sharpen students' affection is being promoted by all elements of the nation to find an effective way of generating human-minded and morally good resources. Thus, this study traces on the conditioning theory from Pavlov that habituation (conditioning) can give positive and negative effects from behavior that becomes a rehearsal to react to certain stimulus they experience in life. According to Pavlov, such learning process consists of the formation of the association between stimulus and reflective responses (Syah, 2006).

The promotion of character learning motivates the researcher to conceive the concept of literature for all in the literature across curriculum. The idea was inspired by the concept of the term education for all that has been echoed in a decade by the Ministry of National Education and followed by science for all echoed by the Ministry for Research and Technology in the last four years. Specifically, the concept of literature for all has never been put forward in order to develop a character education (Rudy, 2010b). During the past times, national education has been designed only to create smart learners without considering their characterization. Relevant to this fact, Noor (2010) stated that today's education ignores the study of literature. In fact, literature influences the formation of students' character. Furthermore, he (2010) expected that the national education system should be redesigned, because the reality has risen the gap of the access to education that increases significantly and leaves the nation's character".

Many people want a character education through the study of literature. For example, Indonesia's famous authors, represented by Putu Wijaya hope that the study of literature must be given to all majors because without mastering of literature, grammar will only be a tool to connect the mind not feelings (Wijaya, 2007). Meanwhile, Broto (2010) revealed that the civilization that continues to require the placement of literature is the primary socialization material in an environment of educational institutions in the globalization era as a literary work contributes positively to the formation of character and individual personality. In line with that expression, Kuncoro (2007) argued that the sophistication of technology led to a rapidly changing communication patterns that cause people reluctant to come face to face. According to Sayuti (2005, p. 5), that situation has to be fixed by the selection of appropriate cultural strategies that include the activities of appreciating literary works. Those various opinions ultimately facilitate the writer to empower the reader response strategy and the visual symbols that have been proven through several studies conducted in these 12 years to develop the character of this nation, and so that the nine pillars of the nation's character can be realized. Especially with the idea of literature across curriculum, although it is newly known in the world of education in Indonesia, in fact this concept has been widely implemented in abroad. Literature as part of the humanity has been penetrated and integrated in the non-literary learning (Pantaleo, 2002; Porter, 2009; Grose, 2010).

This study tried to find the right way to promote literature on non-language students without changing the curriculum in each faculty by adapting the literary learning models that have been done and developed by writer and integrated into the Personality Development course with the guideline of literary appreciation instrument. In

the other words, this study raised the role of literature in the language and non-language classes to develop the cognitive and affective aspects that contribute positively to the development of learners' character (Vandergrift, 2006; Rudy, 2008; Van, 2009).

The idea to put forward the concept of literature for all and literature across curriculum begins with some research of literary appreciation that have been done by writer and developed by utilizing the theory of reader response (reader response strategy) which was introduced by Beach and Marshall (1991) and the theory of visual response symbols (a visual symbol response) that was suggested by Purves, Roger, and Soter (1990). Here are presented some of the research produced by the author on the introduction of the concept of literature for all in appreciating literary works as a medium for students to identify and preserve local culture, as well as to obtain benefits to refine the character and shape the character and personality development. First, background research experiments on elementary school students to produce a model of nonverbal and verbal responses in the learning literature as a whole can improve students' writing skills and develop the three domains of taxonomy; cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The test form used to evaluate literatur learning is a subjective test (essay or description) so that students can freely express their feelings, thoughts, and imaginations through writing (Rudy, 2005). This study falsifies the finding of Mulyana (2000) that the literary appreciation of students are evaluated by using objective tests (multiple choice).

Second, research and development in English language study program of Sriwijaya University results learning model that adopts the perspective of literary aesthetic designed for three main elements of model: model orientation, learning model, and the application of model with the collaboration of reader responses and visual symbols to contribute positively to the development of important learning aspects namely cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Students really need this model because they are prospective teachers who will go into the field of education (Rudy, Sitingjak, & Zuraida, 2007). When applied at the level of education below university level, the model is to facilitate students in processing the brain, senses, and action. This model will continue to evolve in line with the knowledge and theories that form the basis for creating a learning model when test model can still be further developed based on the indicators in the reader response theory. Then, the effectiveness test of learning model of reader response and visual symbols in developing writing and speaking skills of students done by way of responding to a literary work is a continuation of previous studies (Rudy, 2008). Fourth, research and development of local literature performance arts learning model as an effort to develop the education of thought, feeling, and intention as well as to support the creative industry in South Sumatera (Rudy, Alwi, & Hayati, 2009).

Researched and developed reader response strategy during this decade can be traced from some of the research findings that are very relevant to the syntactic or series of learning activities applying the model of reader response. Barr (1991) put forward a lot of researchers' focusing on their research on reader response that begins with responding to the story, understanding the behavior of the characters, interpreting the story, linking the story to life, culture, and beliefs including thoughts, feelings, and imagination, and assessing the story.

In accordance with the formation of character, Armstrong (2002, p. 118) put forward a number of components that must be possessed, namely, (1) the ability to experience feelings in depth, (2) ability to be assertive, (3) recognition of self-esteem, (4) ability to relieve pain, (5) tenacious, (6) ability to be creative and connected to others, and (7) the ability to be alone. Meanwhile, Schwartz (2007) described with interesting

illustrations related to the formation of character that contains the values by integrating the cognitive aspect, positive thinking, creative thinking, developing initiation, acting to gain confidence, avoiding despair, and learning to lead. In addition, Lewis (2004) specified 10 types of characters: caring, realized in community, working together, fair, willing to forgive, honest, maintain good relations, respect with others, responsible, and giving priority to the safety along with the descriptions and illustrations of the 10th character traits. Formation of character was also suggested by Santoso (2007) on how to build mentality and character through the empowerment of emotional and spiritual intelligences in changing lives.

This study is expected to provide benefits in education by including literary appreciation learning to the local content in college not only in the faculty of education but also non-education faculty as a preparation for prospective educators at all levels of education and all the students in public life.

Furthermore, to build student character through literary appreciation, seven readers' responses that can sharpen cognition (describing, explaining, conceiving, and interpreting) and affection (engaging, connecting, and judging) are entailed. For the formation of student character, reader response strategy is collaborated with the responses of visual symbols, psycho-literature theory, and pillars of national character (Rudy, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). Visual symbol response consists of graphs dimensions (sociogram, story maps, graphs, diagrams, and cartoons), illustration dimensions (posters, drawings, photographs, collation), dimensions of film/video (the story script, animation, special effects, and film), and dimensions of art performances (tableau, dance, mime, and music) presented by Purves, Roger, and Soter (1990); psycho-literature theory as a base operation stated by Strickland in Tarigan (1995, p. 39) consists of observing, comparing, classifying, hypothesizing, organizing, summarizing, applying, and criticizing, as well as the nine pillars of the nation's character quoted from Megawangi (2004). According to Wards (2009, pp. 11, 77), the collaboration of theories and various integrative literary activities provides opportunities for learners to predict, estimate, solve problems, and give reasons.

Reading literary works is not only entertaining, but also provides moral values that can soften manners and supports the formation of character and personality based on faith (Rudy, 2009). In line with this fact, Husniah and Yudhi (2008) suggested that the nation's moral crisis experienced by Indonesia that many people go into anarchy and intolerant with differences is caused by the educational system. Literature teaches manners. By reading the literature, the students know the characters and understand the motives done by the characters so that they comprehend the reasons for the behavior of the characters.

In Indonesia, the study of literature is just taught to high schools in the language and literature course only. When proceeding to higher education, there is no opportunity for students to appreciate literary works except on their own initiative as part of the craze reading (Rudy, 2010c). Maybe not a lot of students take the time to it so that it is not surprising if the appreciation of literary works becomes exclusive to the students who are struggling in the field of pure literature or language and arts education.

In America, literature becomes an important part in the study of literature itself and non-literature. It becomes one of the compulsory subjects for undergraduate students from various majors. Besides as a subject, literature roles as a medium for learning the concept of field of study. Silvhiany's (2007) research regarding the literacy experiences of non-American student who was educated at The University of Arizona, USA, revealed that they learned the language from reading literature. One of the respondents from Indonesia who was studying at the School of Business said that novel is one of the required reading in the courses that are being taken. It tells

business activities with all the strategy and intrigue. Although it is not academic material such as textbooks and journal articles, but it is very useful for studying the cases related to business and relevant to be the material for students discussion.

The importance of the literaturra presence in learning process is described by Rosenblatt (1983) as follows: (1) Literature endorses the need for imagination in democracy; (2) Literature diverts imagination, behavior, attitudes, emotions, social values, and personality; (3) Literature presents the possibility of differences in outlook on life, the pattern of relationships, and philosophy; (4) Literature helps in the selection of different imaginations through literature review experience; (5) The experience of literature allows the readers to view his own personality and his problems objectively and solve it better; and (6) Literature gives reality to the adults of different value systems so that they are free from fear, guilt, and uncertainty.

Based on the above description, it can be pointed out that the problem in this research is how to develop a literary appreciation test instrument based on the literature for all and literature across the curriculum to build student character. This research aims to: (1) produce a literary appreciation instrument that is composed of the collaboration among reader response strategies, visual symbol response, psycho-literature theory, conditioning theory from Pavlov, and pillars of national character, (2) examine the effectiveness of its use in developing students' character, and (3) describe the perception of students towards learning literature in college.

### **Methodology**

The subjects of the study are 89 first-semester students who are taking personality development course (MPK (*Matakuliah Pengembangan Kepribadian*)) at the Faculty of Teacher's Training of Sriwijaya University. This study used R & D (research and development) method. According to Sugiyono (2008), R & D method is a method of research used to produce a specific product and examine the effectiveness of the product. Instrument development process of literary appreciation includes: the drafting stages, the stages of script writing of the guideline questions, stages of production, small-group testing stages, stages of revision, and field testing phase of applying the use of the guideline questions in appreciating literary works.

Research and development aim to produce a literature-based instrument of literature for all and literature across curriculum, examine the effectiveness of its use in developing student character, and describe the perceptions of students about the importance of teaching literature in college to obtain data by using data collection instruments such as appreciation tests, questionnaires, documentation, and interviews.

The data dealing with the response or the validity of appreciation test obtained from comments, suggestions, and conclusions of the questionnaire were described and analyzed qualitatively, while the data obtained from test were analyzed by presenting all the answers and calculated the sum. Moreover, the students appreciated the short story entitled *Sekar and Her Daughter (Sekar dan Gadisnya)* written by L. Rieke and it was analyzed by using guideline of literary appreciation.

### **Results**

From the discussion about students' character with some lecturers in Faculty of Teachers' Training and Education and lecturers of the various faculties at Sriwijaya University, it can be concluded that during lectures, they are provided with the adequate education regarding to the social and moral development. Ironically, after

getting involved into the social community, they forget the education provided by the lecturers. Students of the Faculty of Law, for example, become lawyers, prosecutors, and judges who are not trustworthy and immoral. Besides, some students from different disciplines break the rules of the nation in social life. College was not liable for the character formation of students, because it is assumed that the existence of students for studying at university is not as long as at high school. Therefore, previous studies based-literature learning that the writer has done to develop the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects for a decade became the basis of the development of test instrument for developing students' character (Rudy, Sitinjak, & Zuraida, 2007; Rudy, 2008, 2009). Guiding questions that serve as instruments in literary appreciation offered through this research is the development of test instruments based on the reader response and nation's character by the concept of literature for all and literature across the curriculum (Rudy, 2010d). The instruments and literary appreciation activities are carried out in the development of personality courses offered in the first semester.

Thus, the literary appreciation instrument comes as an effort to meet the learning needs in order to fix the students' character at Sriwijaya University in Palembang. Meanwhile, the selected learning topics of literary appreciation based on needs analysis and students analysis are the study of developing students' character through varied literary works media that are read and analyzed by using the instrument test of this development. According to Syah (2006), the learning and habituation in this study refer to:

... All human behavior is the result of conditioning that comes from the exercises or habits to react to the certain stimulants in life. Based on Pavlov, the learning process described like that consists of the formation of the association between stimulus and reflexive response. (p. 23)

Furthermore, documentation used in the drafting stage is useful to obtain information about the vision, mission, and goals of Sriwijaya University as they are also found in each faculty with a diverse curriculum of personality development course from the credits to the course objectives. The purpose of this documentation is to obtain a match between a test instrument and the aim of education in the university and each faculty. When associated with the collaboration between the theory of reader response strategies, visual symbol response, psycho-literature, and nation's character that is used to design the appreciation instrument, the purpose of education held at Sriwijaya University and each faculty has not been described clearly as the reflection to the educational objectives despite the fact that the education goals have been implemented in each faculty.

The standard competence to be achieved through the development of literary appreciation instrument after assigning students to read the literary work is to understand the functional meaning of texts in the daily life context from all genres of literature in the forms of modern short stories, legends, folklore, novels, plays, and poetry. While the basic competence is that the students can respond and reveal the functional meaning of texts in the daily life context to build their characters through literary appreciation activities.

Referring to the opinions, suggestions, feedback, comments, and critics from students who were involved in trials of small group or validators with the first prototype, the revision and editing of the first prototype instrument tests were performed. Four validators conclude these following aspects: (1) revising and editing a few questions based on the suggestions and too many questions can be reduced by combining some questions with the same meaning; (2) concurring with the study of literature throughout the faculty because students can study the behavior of characters and agree to all essay questions towards the formation of character; (3) editing some

questions that can be incorporated but agreed only if the student was not asked to dig deep into the answer. The important thing is that there is conditioning activity for students to read literature in order to understand and learn the behavior of the characters; and (4) concurring with the learning of literature across curriculum as many universities in abroad require students to read literary works and the test instruments are sufficient even though there are so many.

Based on the input and validation from the experts, the questions for guiding the students to appreciate literary works consist of 26 questions and were constructed based on the theory of reader response strategy, conditioning theory, psycho-literature, and character building framework were simplified into 10 questions. The other reason was that some questions were alike in terms of idea; therefore, simplification occurred. To determine the effectiveness of the instrument in the cognitive aspect, the measurement towards the results of the appreciation was given to three students involved in the trial of small group and 30 students involved in the field trials. The test results were given after they read the literary works entitled *Sekar dan Gadisnya*.

From the test results conducted on the three students involved in small-group trials, it shows that there were two items for very good frequent indicators on the average result of their appreciation. Furthermore, the test result conducted on 30 students involved in field trials showed that there were 2-3 very good indicators on the average results of their appreciation. Thus, the appreciation instruments were categorized very well. The very good result on those two trials made the test instruments of appreciation become very effective in developing the cognitive and affective aspects that shape the character of Sriwijaya University students. Quantitative measurement of the quality of the student's appreciation was very difficult to do, but qualitatively the efforts in developing students character were in line with conditioning theory. The effectiveness of the test instrument has also been shown by the data from the students' appreciation in Faculty of Teachers' Training and Education of Sriwijaya University and supported by the positive attitude that was obtained from the questionnaires they answered after appreciating the literary works.

The development of students' character refers to the rubric of literary appreciation analysis. Based on the analysis of students appreciation, it can be concluded that 95.3% of the students trace the values contained in the guidelines of appreciation when answering questions relating to the story. The questionnaire of 25 questions with yes (agree) or no (disagree) option concerning with the study of appreciation were distributed to be answered by students after they read and answered the questions set in the instrument of appreciation.

### **Conclusions**

The recent study produces a valid, effective, and reliable instrument for appreciating literary works to develop the first semester students' character at Sriwijaya University by reading and appreciating certain kinds of literary works on the Personality Development course. The literary appreciation's instrument is able to increase the effectiveness of students' appreciation result by achieving very good category with the emerging of two or more such indicator. Besides, by distributing questionnaire, 95.3% students indicates positive attitude toward literary appreciation. The appreciation conducted by the students makes them realize the importance of responding literary works to develop character and it was positively perceived by 97% of the students.

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