Engaged Reading Strategy
in Literature Appreciation Learning
and Its Implications on Character Education

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Abstract. This current study aims at describing (1) engaged-reading strategy in the
literature appreciation learning, (2) methods of engaged-reading strategy, and (3) the
implementation of engaged-reading strategy to the character education. The employed
method is literary review from some relevant references related to the focus of this study.
There are some revealed findings listed as below. (1) The engaged-reading strategy in
literature appreciation learning is deemed suitable because this strategy elaborates the
mind, heart, and flow in the process of reading and thus it trains students to become skilled
readers. (2) The implementation of engaged-reading strategy provides cognitive, affective,
and psychological skills in the appreciation activities for creative thinking with
visualization, prediction, inference, understanding, and challenges in real life. (3) The
implications of the engaged-reading strategy to the character education are curiosity, hard
work, cooperation, and self-esteem for resolving problems based on the literature
appreciation and for adequately developing social competence.

Keywords: engaged reading strategy, literature appreciation, character education

1 Introduction

In essence, the learning of Indonesian literature appreciation is introducing students to the
values contained in literary works and inviting students to engage themselves in the presented
experiences. Literature appreciation learning aims to develop students' sensitivity to sensory,
logic, affective, religious, and social values in an integrated manner, as reflected in literary
works. The ultimate goals of literature teaching are enriching the experiences of students and
developing them to be more responsive to human events, recognition, and respect to values, in
both individual and social contexts. The strategy to reach those goals are reading, listening,
speaking, and writing skills. Patience and precision are of urgency to be able to conduct
literature teaching properly in addition to the sensitivity and openness of teachers and teaching
subjects ¹.

Language and literature activities can be carried out simultaneously by means of the
activities of feeling, thinking, imagining, and so on. Language and literature activities occur in
a context, in the form of place, time and feel. Through literature, students will gain new and
unique experiences that they may not necessarily face in real life. In addition, there will be

¹ Sugiarti, ‘Pembelajaran Bahasa Dan Sastra Di Sekolah’, in Seminar Regional Kerjasama Kemitraan
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intensive communication for accommodating a logical, systematic and aesthetic framework of thinking.

Language is a means of conveying aesthetic messages related to the literature inventions. In addition to showing the recreational nature, literature is also able to stimulate people to look for values that can help them to meet the nature of humanity with personality. Literatures are equipped with spiritual content covered by ethics. Therefore, after someone reads literature, the reader is able to do self-introspection and improvement because it provides benefits to the reader².

The existence of literature serves a support for the development of cultural values cumulatively and effectively. This means that literature has a power to present various events related to human life. Therefore, it has a coherent and integrated structure regarding the social environment and the natural environment of its era.³ argues that the creation of literary works relates to the worldview of the author formed by various experiences of his life. He divides experience into two basic elements, namely individual (internal) world and external world. Individual (internal) world consists of emotions and reasons or commonly called as heart and brain. Emotion is the means for the development of life. External worlds consist of (1) physical phenomena or facts that can be sensed by everybody, and (2) meaning as a form of power and law that is scientific, economic, political, moral, and spiritual. The internal and external worlds are always related to the development of reader’s view that is explored from various cultural environments and events.

Basically, language and literature learning is to be directed, making students have the ability to sharpen their thoughts and feelings effectively. As stated by ⁴, the relationship between emotions and cognition is quite strong in learning. In this case, the learning of language and literature must be balanced so that it becomes an important subject, especially in the development of students’ characters, namely ethic, logic, and aesthetic. These are in line with the purpose of education that the formations of character are manifested in the essential unity of the subject with the behavior and attitude of life that they have. A person's character is something that qualifies personal being. From this sort of character maturity, a person's quality can be measured ⁵.

Language and literature learning must lead to increase emotional capacity and increase thinking capacity. Accordingly, language and literature learning will contribute to the character building, including (1) strengthening attitudes and developing sensitive feelings toward values and (2) helping advance complex individual skills such as perseverance, intelligence, imagination, creativity, as well as contribute to the education of students' knowledge ⁶.

On the other hand, language and literature learning is able to establish students' critical thinking and emotional development. This will occur if students are able to reap other values related to the nobility of the human mind when they read literary works, considering that literary

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works have a broad possibility to store human values, namely values which in reality are often distorted and even lost. In good literary works, human values are maintained and disseminated (Sayuti in Sujarwanto, 2001: 514). Through literature, the institutions and traditions of a society are forwarded to the readers during its era, and to the community in the future that are concerning on the way of thinking, religious behavior, customs, history, and other cultural values.

This is in line with text-based language learning which can be presented in both oral and written forms. A text is an expression of a complete human mind that has a situation and context. In other words, Indonesian language learning does not only use Indonesian as a communication tool, but also need to know the meaning or how to choose the right words that fit the cultural order and the user community 7.

Literature learning is desiring the occurrence of literary activities, namely language activities and aesthetic activities (Rusyana in 8. There are various literature elements, such as characters, characterizations, storylines, settings in prose; elements of form and meaning in poetry; as well as dialogues and complementary texts in the drama. They are not taught separately but in a coherent arrangement as a beautiful work of creation in listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities are used in the appreciation activities dealing with literatures 9.

In accordance with the nature of literature in the curriculum, literature learning can be raised by several criteria for the selection of literary works that lead to the students’ character development. First, the language is beautiful, rich in authentic expressions, and forming sensitivity and empathy for humanitarian issues of the readers. Second, literature can stimulate readers to reflect on the containing messages, and gain wisdom and enlightenment within national identity, creativity, courage to compete, human solidarity, faith, and devotion. Third, literature is able to bring noble values of humanity, which will develop readers’ empathy towards human problems. These noble values include noble morality, gentleness, forgiveness, antiviolence, self-discipline, work ethic, respect to parents and educators, and listening to the opinions of others. Fourth, literature can encourage readers to be good to human beings in treating others, in a ranging variety of personal and community activities 10.

Literature learning in schools has several objectives; namely (1) students can enjoy and use literary works to broaden their horizons, refine their characters, and improve their knowledge and language skills; (2) students can appreciate Indonesian literature as a treasure of Indonesian human culture and intellectuals, or that students gain knowledge that includes literature seen from various theories, the analysis of literary works, titles, authors, and eras; (3) students can appreciate literature, in receptive, productive, or receptive productive activities; (4) literature teaching can shape the attitude of students who are appreciative and creative towards literary works as well as fostering language in general; and (5) literary works can also develop characters 11. Therefore, literature learning in terms of literature appreciation can raise a sense of readers that is related to character education.

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8 Suryaman, op. cit.
9 Suryaman ibid.
10 Suryaman ibid.
11 Kinayati Djojosuroto, Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Karya Sastra (Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni: Universitas Negeri Jakarta, 2010).
Literature appreciation could implement engaged reading strategy that is held through three stages, namely (a) before reading, (b) during reading, (c) after reading. These three stages are carried out continuously to get comprehensive information that has an impact on student’s character. This is in line with the idea that literature is able to contribute to human intelligence that can be described in three dimensions, namely cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills. Through cognitive development, human thinking capacity has to develop. Through psychomotor development, human life skills should grow. Through affective development, the capacity of human attitude should be noble. These are in line with the basis of Indonesian education, namely the education of faithful and noble characters.

Engaged reading strategy is used in literature appreciation learning because this strategy is directing students to become skilled readers. Therefore, students understand the foundation, objectives, and aspects that need to be considered while reading literatures. Explains that reading works of fiction (literature) by means of engaged reading strategy can make readers develop their character values and empathy, predict events chronologically, appreciate textual aesthetics, understand themes and symbols, and renew understanding during the reading process.

Departing from the points above, the role of a teacher is required to create learning that is able to trigger students to create individually or in groups. In addition, students are able to build good communication and show an independent attitude so that the potential of each individual can be explored and fully developed. This can be reached if teachers carry out various strategies and techniques to build appealing and fun learning atmosphere for students.

2 Method

The method used in this current study is a literary review carried out by tracing a number of relevant literatures on engaged reading and methods that can be utilized, as well as their implications for character education. Literary review is explored by utilizing journals, books, and proceedings that contain the results of research and theoretical studies. The process of information is carried out by means of a descriptive qualitative design.

To understand engaged reading strategy comprehensively, this current study elaborates (1) engaged reading strategies in literature appreciation learning, (2) methods that can be used in engaged reading, and (3) the implications of engaged reading on character formation of students.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Engaged-Reading Strategy on Literature Appreciation Learning

Engaged reading strategy is an effort to learn reading that integrates various aspects needed by students to become competent readers. Therefore, students are not only required to understand the contents of the reading, but they are also guided to know the direction and purpose of reading so that the reading process can be more effective and efficient. argues that

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12 Van de Weghe, op.cit, pp. 92
13 Suryaman, op.cit.
14 E. Keene, To Understand (Portsmouth: Heineman, 2008)
16 Van de Weghe, op.cit, pp. 90
engaged reading is a learning strategy that synergizes between the intellectual and emotional aspects needed by readers to be competent in reading comprehension process.

Competent readers can also be called as skilled readers, namely readers who have the ability to think actively and are able to process reading more comprehensively. In this regard, Van de Weghe explains that engaged reading is held in three stages, starting from before, during, and after reading so that the process is called the Trinal Approach to Reading. In this regard, M Pressley and K. Harris state that skilled readers read more actively than unskilled readers. Before reading, readers need to preview the text and determine which part is most relevant to read. During the reading process, the speed of reading is arranged based on several factors, such as the relevance of the text, density, and level of interest in the text. After reading, skilled readers reflect on the text, determine which parts of the text are important to remember, and think about how to use ideas in the text for the next.

Based on these three stages, in the process before reading, readers need to understand their initial knowledge so that they can determine the purpose of reading clearly, namely what new knowledge they need to obtain through the text. Van de Weghe explains that a connection between new knowledge and prior knowledge is needed in readers' brain so that the core knowledge of the reader needs to be activated first. The more prior knowledge readers have before reading, the easier they understand the text they are going to read. J. D. Bransford, A. L. Brown, and R. R. Cocking state that connecting lessons with contexts that are familiar to students can strengthen the transfer of information to students. The familiar context to students is the embodiment of prior knowledge so that students are more easily accepting new knowledge if a context has been connected to them.

In the process of reading, readers need to master the information relations that exist in the text. Readers also need to control the development of their knowledge during reading so that if there are parts that have not been understood, they can repeat or reduce the speed of reading. It is expected that readers do not miss important information in the construction of their understanding of the text.

In the process of reading, skilled readers need to check their understanding of the text. This can be held by rereading and reflecting on the results of reading. The process can be designed by teachers by conducting question and answer session, stimulating problem solving, and other activities that are able to check students' understanding of information in the text.

In the process of literature appreciation, engaged reading strategy is deemed suitable. This is caused by the involvement of mind, heart, and flow. Accordingly, students not only use their intellectual aspects, but also use their emotional aspects to deepen the meaning in stories that are interwoven in literature, especially prose. This is in accordance with the essence of appreciation of literature, which not only requires thinking, but also requires appreciation so that the emotions that an author wants to convey can reach target readers. In addition, engaged reading strategy is able to guide students so that they are not only dissolved in the emotions of

17 Van de Weghe, loc. cit
19 Van de Weghe (2009: 94)
21 (Van de Weghe, op. cit, pp. 97)
22 (Van de Weghe, ibid.; pp 99
23 (Van de Weghe, ibid.; pp 104-105)
stories in prose, but it also trains them to become intelligent readers because they are able to determine the purpose of reading clearly and are able to process new knowledge by incorporating their prior knowledge.

In addition to mind and heart, flow involvement in engaged reading has an important role in motivating students to read literature. According to 24, flow is the highest level of intrinsic motivation in students. This intrinsic motivation needs to be instilled in students. Reading process is to be carried out with personal awareness and motivation so that reading does not become a burden on students, but a necessity or even a hobby.

3.2 The Methods of Engaged Reading Strategy

Engaged reading strategy consists of learning methods that can be applied more operationally at each stage of Trinal approach of reading. These methods are anticipation guide, starter sentence, KWLT, visual tool, and summary frames, which are explained as follows.

**Anticipation Guide.** An anticipation guide is a method that can help students to connect their understanding of the information they read. Students respond to statements that anticipate the reading process by linking them together with things they have already known about the topic they are reading at hands. In addition, the anticipation guide can also be a true-false statement that needs to be determined by students 25. The following is an example of an anticipation guide. Students can give a checkmark to state that they agree, disagree, or cannot decide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Cannot Decide</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Women have the same right to education as men.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Women have duties in the domestic sphere only.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Smart women are women who have extensive knowledge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sentence Starter.** Sentence starter is a method that is held by presenting the opening sentence and students can continue the sentence based on their prior knowledge or based on new knowledge after reading prose. 26 explains that sentence starter stimulates students to follow the flow of thought that anticipates the substance or theme of the text they read. At the same time, sentence starter can also activate students’ prior knowledge to be better prepared to receive new knowledge from the text at hands. The followings are some examples of sentence starters which in general are used to activate prior knowledge of students in regulating reading goals as stated by 27.

| Table 2. Sentence Starter in the Process of before Reading |

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25 Van de Weghe, *op.cit.*, pp 94-95)
26 Van de Weghe *ibid.*
Goals

Activating prior knowledge
• I have already known that ….
• This reminds me about ….
• This relates to ….

Deciding plan and goal
• My goals are….
• My priority is ….
• For reaching my goal, I plan to ….

In table 2, the sentence starter used tends to lead to the process before reading. Olson and Land (2007) also formulate a sentence starter during the reading process as follows.

Table 3. Sentence Starter in the Process of during Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Sentence Starter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking questions</td>
<td>• I wonder why ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How if ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicting</td>
<td>• I hope that ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I think….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If…, so ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualizing</td>
<td>• I can imagine that ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In my mind, I see ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If this is a movie, …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting</td>
<td>• This reminds me about ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• This happens to me when ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreting</td>
<td>• For me, the meaning of it is ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I think this is representing ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I understand that ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>• I need to read again about ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I understand that I am in the right track because …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying</td>
<td>• I need to understand more about …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There are some unclear topics; they are …</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, Olson and Land (2007) also formulate a sentence starter for the after reading process that includes several objectives, namely (1) concluding, (2) adopting an alignment, (3) revising meaning, (4) analyzing the author’s views, (5) reflecting and finding relationships, and (6) evaluating. Based on the purpose of reflecting and finding relationships, the sentence starter that can be proposed is that ‘this is relevant to my life because …’. The sentence starter fits the process of literature appreciation, particularly prose, because prose reflects real life that can also be related to the experience of students. Therefore, the appreciation made by students can reach the stage of the real-life meaning by utilizing the sentence starter.

KWLT (Know, Want, Learn, Think). KWLT (Know, Want, Learn, Think) starts from the anticipation guide that students need to continue in the process of during reading. KWLT is used to map what has been already known, what is to know further, what has been learned, and what students think after reading a text 28. This KWLT strategy is appropriate for facilitating students during the process of appreciation of prose as they can assemble their prior knowledge with new knowledge before, during, and after reading. The following is an illustration of KWLT chart.

28 Van de Weghe, op.cit., pp 97
Table 3. KWLT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>what I have already known</th>
<th>what I want to know</th>
<th>what I have learned from the text</th>
<th>what I think after reading the text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Visual Tools (Timeline, Color Coding). Visual tools are useful in organizing thinking more concretely. Visual tools are quite varied. Teachers can use a timeline to describe the flow of events. In addition, color-coding can also be used to sharpen the concentration of students, for example, teachers prepare three cards with different colors when giving instructions to students. A yellow card means students need to submit a summary of the reading. A blue card means students need to convey the message of the text after reading. A green card means students need to submit interesting quotes from the text.

Summary Frames. Summary frames contain a series of questions that need to be answered by students relating to the activities concluded from the text. 30 cite some examples of summary frames as follows.

- What information does the author convey that directs him to submit a claim?
- What claims does the author make about a particular problem or situation?
- What examples or explanations does the author provide to support his claim?
- Does the author use restrictions on his claims?

The examples of summary frames can be used to draw conclusions that students have from the prose they read. The intended claim can be in the form of an author's view of the topic being raised, for example about gender equity.

3.3 The Implication of Engaged Reading Strategy on Character Education

Engaged reading strategy is able to form the character of cooperation and hard work in students. By means of this strategy, the learning process can be designed in groups by utilizing the methods as explained earlier. 31 suggest that linking reading activities to social interaction can help students increase motivation to read and can also improve reading comprehension. In addition, the methods in engaged reading strategy can create active and fun learning that can increase students’ motivation. This motivation can foster students’ positive characters, such as curiosity and hard work that have a positive impact on their academic performance. According to 32 and 33, students who have more motivation in learning can produce some positive impacts, such as, their academic activities will be more optimal, improvisation occurs in classroom learning behavior, and there will be an increase in students’ self-esteem.

29 Van de Weghe, op. cit.; pp 104
4 Conclusion

(1) Engaged reading strategy in literature appreciation learning is deemed appropriate because this strategy elaborates mind, heart, and flow in reading so that it trains students to become skilled readers. This will impact on the process of understanding the problem more comprehensively.

(2) Methods in engaged reading contribute cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills in the literature appreciation activities for creative thinking with visualization, prediction, inference, understanding, and relationship to the real life. In this context, students will be able to think critically and creatively in the reception of the literary works.

(3) The implication of engaged reading strategy on character education raises the responsibility of students to solve problems on the basis of appreciation which is carried out with full responsibility. It also adequately develops social competence. Readers will comprehend literature well, broadening their insights.

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5 References


