Learning English through Literary Works

Mujad Didien Afandi[1*], Tatik Muflihah[2], Novi Rahmania Aquariza[3], Machmudah[4]

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ABSTRACT

Background. The lack of awareness and knowledge possessed by English teachers about the importance of literary works in learning English in elementary schools is a significant factor that makes English learning does not runs optimally. Therefore, this community service program (PKM) needs to be carried out to help students at one of MI (Islamic Elementary School) in Pranti village, Sidoarjo learn English effectively through literary works in the form of fairy tales. **Method.** The implementation of this program was divided into three stages, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation. At the planning stage, location survey and preliminary observation were conducted to get an overview of the partners. The team also discussed the problems experienced by the school and offered solutions. The implementation stage was carried out by conducting dissemination on learning English through literary works and implementation of English language learning through literary works. This program involved 25 third graders of the MI. **Results.** The result of the pretest revealed that all of the students (25 students) had unsatisfying scores. After the implementation, the scores increased. All of the students (100%) achieved satisfying scores. The pretest and posttest scores showed a significantly different result as evidenced by the N-Gain score of 0.72 (72.2%). **Conclusion.** The community service program reveals that literary works in the form of fairy tales involved in classroom English learning through a short movie and flashcards is fairly effective to help the students learn English, especially in mastering the vocabulary.

Keywords: English learning, literary works, fairy tales

Abstrak. Kurangnya kesadaran dan pengetahuan yang dimiliki oleh guru bahasa Inggris akan pentingnya karya sastra dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di sekolah dasar menjadi faktor signifikan yang menyebabkan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris menjadi kurang maksimal.Oleh karena itu, program pengabdian kepada masyarakat (PKM) ini perlu dilakukan untuk membantu siswa di salah satu MI (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) di Desa Pranti, Sidoarjo mempelajari bahasa Inggris secara efektif melaui karya sastra yang berbentuk cerita dongeng. **Metode.** Pelaksanaan program ini dibagi dalam tiga tahapan, yaitu perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Pada tahap perencanaan, survei lokasi dan observasi awal dilakukan untuk mendapatkan gambaran dari mitra. Tim ini juga mendiskusikan masalah yang dialami oleh sekolah tersebut serta menawarkan solusinya. Tahap pelaksanaan berisi kegiatan diseminasi tentang pembelajaran bahasa Inggris melalui karya sastra (berupa cerita dongeng), implementasi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris melalui karya sastra, monitoring dan bimbingan tentang penggunaan karya sastra dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Pada tahap terakhir, evaluasi pelaksanaan program dan keberlanjutan program setelah kegiatan PKM selesai. Program ini melibatkan 25 siswa kelas 3 di MI tersebut **Hasil.** Hasil pretes mengungkapkan bahwa semua siswa (100%) menghasilkan nilai yang tidak memuaskan. Setelah implementasi, nilai mereka meningkat. Semua siswa memperoleh nilai yang memuaskan. Nilai pretes dan posttes menunjukkan perbedaan signifikan yang dibuktikan dengan nilai N-Gain sebesar 0,72 (72,2%). **Kesimpulan.** Program PKM ini mengungkapkan bahwa karya sastra dalam bentuk cerita dongeng yang dilibatkan dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di kelas melalui film pendek dan flashcards cukup efektif membantu siswa dalam mempelajari bahasa Inggris, khususnya dalam penguasaan kosakata

Kata Kunci: pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, karya sastra, cerita dongeng

[1*)2,3,4] Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surabaya
Jl. Raya Jemursari No.57, Jemur Wonosari, Kec.
Wonocolo, Kota Surabaya, Jawa Timur 60237, Indonesia

*) corresponding author

Mujad Didien Afandi

Email: dinosetro74@unusa.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

The results obtained after conducting a preliminary observation at MI "IU", one of Islamic elementary schools in Pranti village, Sidoarjo reveals some problems in English learning which does not run optimally, especially when viewed from the students' activities during class. Many factors cause students to learn passively during English learning. One of them is the selection of the learning materials for the students. Mostly, the teacher uses the same type of materials in the classroom. The learning activities are mostly dominated by the use of student worksheets or LKS. Indeed, the worksheets support the students to improve their English skills because through those worksheets they can learn and practice English expressions that are often used in daily conversation. However, it makes learning activities boring and less interesting. Furthermore, what also often happens in the classroom is that the teacher plays a more active role than the students. This clearly contradicts the student-centered learning approach that focuses on student activity during class. This approach provides an opportunity to be actively involved during English language learning.

The problems appear because of the lack of knowledge possessed by the English teacher, especially about the importance of literary works in English learning. This is also a significant factor that causes English learning to run less effectively. So far, the English teacher do not see the positive role of literary works in creating an interesting and fun learning atmosphere.

Given the strong negative stigma attached to English which shows that many students still assume that this subject is a frightening subject, learning English at any level of education including elementary school (SD/MI) should be varied by using interesting and fun materials. One of them is a fairy tale which is classified into literary works.

At the elementary level, the supporting material that is more suitable for the students is a fairy tale for several reasons: (1) the simplicity of the plot, (2) the difficulty level of vocabulary, (3) the interesting and fun story appropriate with the age of the students. Considering that children's world is close to fantasy and imagination, fairy tales are the right choice of text because they contain fantasy that can support imagination. Those reasons are the basis for considering why learning English at MI "IU" also needs to involve literary works, especially fairy tales.

However, the writer did not find any involvement of literary works in the classroom. Many studies have exposed the involvement of literary works in learning English. The results describe that literary works provide many positive contributions in English learning. Keshavarzi (2012) stated that selecting an appropriate text is the first step to teaching English in ESL/EFL classes. The text chosen by the teacher in teaching English should be in accordance with the age, life experience (world) of students, and the level of ease of vocabulary and ideas contained in it. The text that is chosen must be right so that the goal of improving students' English skills can be achieved successfully.

The purpose of this community service program (PkM) is to provide knowledge about learning English by using literary works, especially fairy tales. This program also applies the use of fairy tales in learning English. Literary works should be used as optional materials to achieve success in English learning. This is in line with the statement from Koushky (2019) that the use of literature in English classes can deepen or strengthen students' involvement in the material they are learning. The students' involvement or attachment is expected to increase the students' motivation to play an active role during English class.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The implementation of this community service program was carried out using a face to face (offline) method for 3 months from June to August 2022. The implementation of this program was divided into three stages, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Planning

At the planning stage, the team conducted a site survey and initial observations to obtain an overview of the partner (MI "IU"). The team found and discussed problems in English learning, as well as offered solutions. In addition, this team also discussed all the requirements, including the equipment needed to carry out this program, including the preparation of a series of activities and the schedule.

Implementation

The implementation stage is the core of this community service program which is structured in the following details:

a. Dissemination of using literary works in English learning

This team disseminated the program face-to-face directly by involving the English teacher and the students. In this activity, an explanation about the background of the problem and the purpose of implementing this program was shared along with the benefits of using literary works (fairy tales) in learning English. In addition, a pretest was given to the students to assess the level of vocabulary mastery of the students.

b. Implementation of learning English through a literary work ("Jack and the Beanstalk")

To follow up the dissemination, this team implemented English language learning through literary works in the form of a fairy tale with the following details of activities:

- Explaining learning objectives to students
- Distributing the script for the fairy tale Jack and the Beanstalk and worksheets
- Brainstorming to produce ideas related to the fairy tale
- Playing the movie adapted from the fairy tale twice
- Using flashcards to support the students' learning activities
- Conducting assessment on students to check their understanding about the fairy tale through oral questions and exercises
- Giving posttest to assess the level of vocabulary mastery used in the fairy tale.

c. Monitor and provide guidance on the use of literary works in learning English

This program was continued by monitoring the development of the use of fairy tales in learning English at the school. In addition, this program also provided opportunities for teachers to receive online or offline guidance, tips, and strategies on the use of fairy tales in learning English.

d. Partner participation in program implementation

Partners actively participate in the implementation of this program. Mi "IU" as the partner provides a classroom and facilities, such as computer, LCD projector, and so on. English teachers and students of MI "IU" got involved in the English learning program through fairy tales.

Evaluation

At the end, the team evaluated this program by assessing the results of the students' pretest and posttest to determine the level of understanding of the material after learning English through literary works (fairy tales).

Experimental design using pretest-posttest design was used to investigate the effectiveness of the use of literary works in English learning by calculating N-Gain score (Normalized Gain Score). According to Hake (1999, as cited in Sundayana, 2016), N-Gain Test is a test that can provide an overview of improving learning outcomes scores before and after the application of the learning method or technique. As stated in the previous section, pretest and posttest were given to the students. Pre-test aims at finding out the vocabulary mastery of the students before using literary works in

learning, whereas post-test is given to determine the extent to which the students master the vocabulary and understand the material presented after using literary works. To determine N-Gain score, the following formula was used:

$$\text{N-Gain Sore} = \frac{\text{Posttest Score} - \text{Pretest Score}}{\text{Max. Score} - \text{Pretest Score}}$$

Table 1.
Effectiveness Category of N-Gain Score

N-Gain Score	Category
g > 0,7	High
0,3 ≤ g ≤ 0,7	Fair
g < 0,3	Low

Source: (Hake, 1999, in Sundayana, 2016)

Table 2.
Effectiveness Category of N-Gain Score (%)

N-Gain Score (%)	Category
< 40	Ineffective
41-55	Less effective
56-75	Fairly effective
> 76	Effective

Source: (Hake, 1999, in Sundayana, 2016)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before the implementation of the community service program, the students had a pretest to have a description about their vocabulary mastery of words used in a fairy tale, entitled "Jack and The Beanstalk". The result of the pretest revealed that all of the students (25 students) had unsatisfying scores. After the implementation, the scores increased. All of the students (25 students) achieved satisfying scores. The pretest and posttest scores showed a significantly different result as evidenced by the N-Gain score of 0.72 and the N-Gain score in percentage of 72.2%. It reveals that using literary works in the form of fairy tales was fairly effective to help the students learn English, especially in mastering the vocabulary. The results were presented in table 3.

The use of literature which appears in many kinds of forms, such as novels, poems, and plays or dramas can be an alternative solution to problems in English learning. One of the optional literary works which is suitable for elementary school students is a fairy tale. Fairy tales appear in many different forms. Hathaway (2012, as cited in Koushky, 2019) stated that versions suitable for all ages and audiences emerged through oral, written, film, and even cartoons versions. In this community service program, a well-known fairy tale entitled "Jack and The Beanstalk" was used as the additional learning media in the classroom. The story was presented through film (movie) and written narration in the implementation stage. To support the story presentation, the learning activity also involved the use of flashcards containing vocabulary with pictures.

The central part of linguistic elements which must receive full attention to develop the four English skills (listening, speaking, writing, and reading) is vocabulary. Therefore, it is essential to reach vocabulary mastery, which leads to language development. Cain and Oakhill (2014) claimed that vocabulary is believed as the most elemental facet of language. Moreover, vocabulary teaching and learning has been widely known as a crucial part of language proficiency as it allows learners to use the language and communicate with others (Adams & Newton, 2009, as cited in Nguyen & Nguyen, 2019). The claims stated above produce the key idea that vocabulary must be achieved when learning

a language. Webb (2013) also asserted that the students experience vocabulary development when they can obtain the meaning of words or find the similar words in another language and can correctly use the words.

Table 3. Recapitulation of Pretest and Posttest Scores

No	Students' Name	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Score Difference	Max Score (-) Pretest	N-Gain Score	N-Gain Score (%)
1	Anonym 1	50	90	40	50	0,80	80,0
2	Anonym 2	35	80	45	65	0,69	69,2
3	Anonym 3	40	85	45	60	0,75	75,0
4	Anonym 4	50	90	40	50	0,80	80,0
5	Anonym 5	40	85	45	60	0,75	75,0
6	Anonym 6	45	80	35	55	0,64	63,6
7	Anonym 7	55	90	35	45	0,78	77,8
8	Anonym 8	50	80	30	50	0,60	60,0
9	Anonym 9	45	90	45	55	0,82	81,8
10	Anonym 10	35	85	50	65	0,77	76,9
11	Anonym 11	45	90	45	55	0,82	81,8
12	Anonym 12	35	85	50	65	0,77	76,9
13	Anonym 13	40	80	40	60	0,67	66,7
14	Anonym 14	45	85	40	55	0,73	72,7
15	Anonym 15	45	85	40	55	0,73	72,7
16	Anonym 16	50	80	30	50	0,60	60,0
17	Anonym 17	45	80	35	55	0,64	63,6
18	Anonym 18	40	85	45	60	0,75	75,0
19	Anonym 19	55	90	35	45	0,78	77,8
20	Anonym 20	50	80	30	50	0,60	60,0
21	Anonym 21	50	85	35	50	0,70	70,0
22	Anonym 22	50	90	40	50	0,80	80,0
23	Anonym 23	50	85	35	50	0,70	70,0
24	Anonym 24	45	80	35	55	0,64	63,6
25	Anonym 25	40	85	45	60	0,75	75,0
	MEAN	**45,2**	**84,8**	**39,6**	**54,8**	**0,72**	**72,2**

Vocabulary is a significant factor for effective language learning. Nation (2019, as cited in Khan, 2022) asserted that vocabulary is helpful for the students when reading and understanding a text effectively. Furthermore, vocabulary supports them to express their ideas clearly in both spoken and written communication. In contrast, the students with the lack of vocabulary usually have problems understanding the content and expressing their thoughts in spoken and in written form (Olinghouse & Wilson, 2013, as cited in Khan, 2022).

Consequently, teachers need strategies for helping their students to improve their vocabulary. Many techniques can be used to improve the students' vocabulary knowledge (Khan, Mustafa, & Awan, 2020). They can use storytelling, role-playing, simulation, and so forth. When learning vocabulary, they can also use different learning media, such as flashcards, fairy tales, movies, and so on. In this community service program, the team used both printed and digital or electronic flashcards. Besides, a short movie adapted from a fairy tale entitled Jack and The Beanstalk was also used during classroom learning. It is in line with a statement made by Huang (2015) asserting that technology indeed supports vocabulary instruction effectively to a great extent. Watching the short movie adapted from the literary work and the presentation of flashcards containing vocabulary and the pictures taken from the story by using a projector are the manifestations of involving the technology in English learning.

Learning English through literary works from a movie and flashcards supports visual learning. A fairy tale visualized through movies and flashcards deals with the students' ability to memorize. Among the five senses, sight is the most helpful sense which effectively supports learning activities.

This fact is supported by a research conducted in the United states in 1982 by Rinanto (1982, as cited in Lisa, 2019) under Education Projection about the human being's ability to memorize through the five senses. The data on the ability are as follows: (1) Taste: 2%; (2) Smell: 3%; (3) Touch: 5%; (4) Hearing: 30%; and (5) Sight: 60%. Those data obviously illustrate that visual media bring more benefits than any other media because they involve sight when learning. Similarly, the students are believed to be more effective in learning English, especially in learning vocabulary when involving their sight because they can see and observe the visualized materials by themselves,

The use of literary texts when learning English gives more enthusiasm to the students. Tevdovska (2016) asserted that literary texts are highly motivating and intellectually stimulating. They enable students to create worlds with which they may not be familiar. Moreover, English learning activities through literary works provide an interesting and fun learning. It means that literary works used in the classroom creates the students' imagination. They need to depend on the language they are learning. This gives them higher motivation to learn English. Therefore, learning English becomes more interesting and fun. Those are the reasons why learning English through literary works are more effective.

CONCLUSION

The community service program reveals that literary works in the form of fairy tales involved in classroom English learning through a short movie and flashcards is fairly effective to help the students learn English, especially in mastering the vocabulary. The unsatisfying pretest scores obtained by the students before using literary works in learning English experience an improvement in the posttest. Those results prove that all of the students in that elementary school learn English more effectively through literary works.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declared that no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship and publication of this article.

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