

Bahasa dan sastra dalam bingkai kebudayaan, menurut hemat saya, merupakan bidang yang sangat penting dan strategis dalam pembangunan masyarakat. Masyarakat yang berperadaban tinggi, menghargai nilai-nilai luhur, dan mampu secara sinergis membangun dinamika kemanusiaan dalam perdamaian dan kesetaraan tidak akan terbentuk tanpa bahasa, sastra, dan budaya. Di sinilah kita dapat melihat betapa pentingnya sastra bagi kelangsungan kehidupan di dunia yang kita diami bersama.

(Prof. Dr. Thomas Pentury, M.Si. – Rektor Universitas Pattimura Ambon)

Penerbitan ini bertujuan untuk memenuhi kebutuhan masyarakat terhadap bacaan yang bermutu dan juga untuk memberikan pemahaman kepada masyarakat tentang sastra dan juga kritik sastra.

(Toha Mahsum, M.Ag. – Kepala Kantor Bahasa Provinsi Maluku)



Himpunan Sarjana
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Provinsi Maluku



SASTRA DAN SOLIDARITAS BANGSA

Penyunting:

Stella Rose Que

Falantino Eryk Latupapua

Diterbitkan oleh
Himpunan Sarjana-Kesusatraan Indonesia
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Penerbit **HISKI AMBON**
Jl. Dr. Tamaela Kampus PGSD
Universitas Pattimura Ambon
Telp. 08114711180
e-mail: hiskiambon@yahoo.com

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Salam sastra!

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Menjadi penyelenggara kegiatan ilmiah dengan tema yang sungguh terasa amat luhur ini merupakan suatu kehormatan besar bagi kami. Hal itu disebabkan denyut sastra di sini telah semakin terasa menggetarkan generasi baru kami dalam suatu perarakan nilai dan makna, kembali kepada akar budaya, dan identitas yang Maluku sejati, yang berbalut persaudaraan, persatuan, dan tentu saja solidaritas dalam hidup yang damai dan saling menerima.

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Penerbit

Daftar Isi

Kata Pengantar	iii
Daftar Isi	iv
Sekapur Sirih Rektor Universitas Pattimura	ix
Sambutan Kepala Kantor Bahasa Provinsi Maluku.....	xi
<i>Adi Setijowati</i>	
KEKERASAN SIMBOLIK DALAM <i>NYALI</i> KARYA PUTU WIJAYA PERSPEKTIF HERMENEUTIKA PAUL RICOEUR	1
<i>Agus Nuryatin and Muhamad Burhanudin</i>	
VEHICLE SHIFT OF THE NORTHERN COAST OF CENTRAL JAVANESE LITERATURE IN SONG LYRICS	12
<i>Ahmad Supena</i>	
PUITIKA POSTMODERNISME DALAM NOVEL <i>KITAB OMONG KOSONG</i> KARYA SENO GUMIRA AJIDARMA	20
<i>Akhmad Taufiq</i>	
PRAKTIK DISKURSIF NEGARA TERHADAP ETNIS CINA DALAM TEKS SASTRA MULTIKULTURAL INDONESIA.....	31
<i>Ali Imron Al-Ma'ruf</i>	
EKSISTENSI SASTRA MULTIKULTURAL DALAM PEMBANGUNAN BUDAYA GLOBAL.....	41
<i>Christina Suprihatin</i>	
DARI MARIA DERMOÛT (1955) KE SYLVIA PESSEIRERON (2012) MENCERMATI ZONA KONTAK (PASCA)KOLONIAL DALAM 4 TEKS SASTRA BERLATAR AMBON DARI RANAH SASTRA HINDIA-BELANDA.....	53
<i>Dad Murniah</i>	
PENDIDIKAN MULTIKULTURAL MELALUI SASTRA.....	62
<i>Dafirah</i>	
PEMBELAJARAN SASTRA LISAN BUGIS DI SEKOLAH-SEKOLAH SEBAGAI SALAH SATU MEDIA PEMBENTUKAN KARAKTER	69
<i>Dian Swandayani</i>	
KONFLIK IDENTITAS DALAM NOVEL <i>IKAN TANPA SALAH</i> KARYA ALFRED BIRNEY	74

<i>Djoko Marihandono</i>	
MEMANFAATKAN KARYA SASTRA SEBAGAI SUMBER SEJARAH	81
<i>Dwi Rahariyoso</i>	
KONSTRUKSI TUBUH DALAM ANTOLOGI PUISI <i>DI BAWAH KIBARAN SARUNG KARYA JOKO PINURBO</i>	92
<i>Endang Nurhayati, Rahmi D Andayani, Suharti</i>	
MAKNA SIMBOLIS MOTIF BATIK YOGYAKARTA	105
<i>Erlis Nurmujiningsih</i>	
WALI SONGO DAN BANGUNAN KEINDONESIAAN	113
<i>Falantino Eryk Latupapua</i>	
INFERIORITAS DAN MIMIKRI: KAJIAN POSKOLONIAL TERHADAP LIRIK LAGU-LAGU POPULER MALUKU PERIODE TAHUN 2000-2010	120
<i>Farida Nugrahani</i>	
PEMBELAJARAN SASTRA BERBASIS MEDIA FILM YANG BERKONTRIBUSI TERHADAP PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER DI SEKOLAH MENENGAH ATAS	132
<i>Faruk</i>	
YANG REKAT DAN YANG RETAK: SASTRA DAN SOLIDARITAS BANGSA	141
<i>Gabriel Fajar SA</i>	
MEMBUKA PARADIGMA “KEBANGSAAN”: KAJIAN TERHADAP <i>OMEROS</i> , KARYA DEREK WALCOTT	148
<i>Gunoto Saparie</i>	
SASTRA EKSIL, MATA RANTAI YANG HILANG	156
<i>Haji Brahim bin Ampuan Haji Tengah</i>	
SASTRA DAN FALSAFAH MELAYU ISLAM BERAJA: MEMPERTEGUH SOLIDARITAS BANGSA	163
<i>Harris Hermansyah Setiajid</i>	
MENEGOSIASI KESENJANGAN: PENDEKATAN FUNGSIONALISME DALAM TERJEMAHAN	176
<i>Helena M. A. Rijoly</i>	
LITERARILY IN LITERARY: NURTURING PEACE BY ADDRESSING CONFLICT TABOO TOPICS THROUGH LITERATURE	182
<i>Herning Puspitarini & Sri Wahyuningtyas</i>	187
KRITIK SOSIAL DALAM NOVEL <i>SANG NYAI</i> KARYA BUDI SARDJONO	187
<i>Hesti Mulyani, Sri Harti Widyastuti, Venny Indria Ekowati</i>	194
PENGOBATAN TRADISIONAL JAWA UNTUK PENYAKIT ANAK-ANAK DALAM MANUSKRIP-MANUSKRIP JAWA DI SURAKARTA	194

<i>I G.A.A. Mas Triadnyani, I Ketut Sudewa, dan I Ketut Nama</i>	
ASPEK KEPATUHAN DALAM KARYA SASTRA INDONESIA MODERN	205
<i>Indira Ismail</i>	
ANTARA SENSOR, SOLIDARITAS DAN KUALITAS: RESEPSI BARAT TERHADAP TETRALOGI-BURU KARYA PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER	212
<i>Isti Haryati</i>	
MENGGUGAH SOLIDARITAS MELALUI ROMAN <i>DSCHUNGELKIND</i> (<i>RINDUKU PADA RIMBA PAPUA</i>) KARYA SABINE KUEGLER	222
<i>Jacquelin Pattiasina</i>	
THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ORAL LITERATURE <i>SIKSIKLAR</i> AS LOCAL STRENGTH IN FACING AND SUPPORTING GLOBAL CULTURE	232
<i>Lilawati Kurnia</i>	
JAKARTA DALAM KOMIK ZALDY: MEMORI KOLEKTIF SEBUAH KOTA URBAN	238
<i>Maimunah</i>	
“MENOLAK MENJADI <i>NJAI</i> : KISAH PARA <i>NJAI</i> MELAWAN DOMINASI KOLONIAL DALAM KUMPULAN CERITA <i>TEMPO DOELOE</i>	258
<i>Manneke Budiman</i>	
SASTRA, DAYA KRITIS, DAN MORAL BANGSA: MENDAYAGUNAKAN SASTRA SEBAGAI SENI DAN PELAJARAN	267
<i>Mansye Sekewael</i>	
MENGENAL IDENTITAS ORANG MALUKU YANG SEMAKIN MALUKU LEWAT LAGU DAERAH “MALUKU TANAH PUSAKA”	278
<i>Meske Gaspersz</i>	
RANAH KOMUNITAS SASTRA SEBAGAI WAHANA PENGEMBANGANKARYASASTRA	284
<i>Muliadi</i>	
PEMBELAJARAN NILAI SOLIDARITAS DALAM KARYA IMAJINATIF	293
<i>Ni Wayan Sumitri dan Fransiskus Bustan</i>	
DIMENSI PUITIS WACANA TRADISI LISAN <i>DHEKE SA'O</i> ETNIK RONGGA DI MANGGARAI TIMUR PROVINSI NUSA TENGGARA TIMUR	302
<i>Ninawati Syahrul</i>	
PEMBELAJARAN SASTRA MENUMBUHKAN SIKAP SOLIDARITAS SEBUAH KAJIAN TERHADAP SAJAK “SEMENTARA AKU” KARYA ISBEDY STIAWAN Z.S.	310
<i>Nining Nur Alaini</i>	
POTRET ANAK SAMAWA DALAM LAWAS TAO ODE	320

Nurhadi

LIRIK LAGU TENTANG PERNIKAHAN, SITUS BUDAYA YANG TERPINGGIRKAN330

Paulus Sarwoto

TEORI PSIKOANALISIS: KRITIK POSKOLONIAL, FEMINIS, DAN MARXIS...339

Pipit Mugi Handayani

NOVEL *KATAK HENDAK JADI LEMBU* DALAM PANDANGAN INTERKULTURALISME346

Rosida Tiurma Manurung

STIMULUS KARYA SASTRA NUSANTARA DALAM PEMEROLEHAN BAHASA ANAK UNTUK PEMERTAHANAN IDENTITAS LOKAL DALAM ERA MODERN: KAJIAN PSIKOLINGUISTIK352

Rusli Abdul Ghani & Norhasmanalinda Mustapha

SASTRA LAMA, SASTRA RAKYAT, SUMBER IDENTITAS DAN SOLIDARITAS BANGSA364

Rusma Noortyani

EKSISTENSI BUDAYA BETANG DALAM UPACARA ADAT PERKAWINAN DAYAK MAANYAN372

S.E. Peni Adji

IDENTITAS TIONGHOA DALAM SASTRA DIASPORA INDONESIA *ONLY A GIRL* KARYA LIAN GOUW379

Sainul Hermawan

REPRESENTASI PEREMPUAN DALAM SASTRA LISAN LAMUT391

Sastri Sunarti

SUMBANGAN SASTRA PERANAKAN TIONGHOA DALAM KHAZANAH SASTRA INDONESIA MODERN398

Sri Harti Widyastuti, Anik Ghufron, Siti Mulyani, dan Sukarno

MENGUAK SASTRA JAWA LAMA SEBAGAI SUMBER KEARIFAN LOKAL MELALUI KAJIAN MANUSKRIP-MANUSKRIP BUSANA TRADISIONAL JAWA411

Sudarmoko

TOKO BUKU, PAMERAN BUKU, DAN PERPUSTAKAAN DALAM SIRKULASI SASTRA DI SUMATERA BARAT423

Sumiman Udu

EKSISTENSI SASTRA LISAN *BHANTI-BHANTI* SEBAGAI RUANG NEGOSIASI LOKAL DALAM KEBUDAYAAN GLOBAL431

ENHANCING STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF *LISTENING TO OTHERS* THROUGH TEACHING THEM ON THE FIVE WAYS OF READING LITERATURE

WEDHOWERTI

(Universitas Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta – Indonesia)

Abstract: Reading is a bridge to cross to arrive at the field of practice of understanding literature. Reading as the initial process must be addressed carefully. Reading literature is not as easy as reading other types of texts with “everyday language”. There are five ways of reading literature namely reading for realism, reading as experience, reading for structure, reading suspiciously, and reading for culture. The five ways of reading see literature as telling about human condition or human nature, as the form of experience the students have while reading, as something carefully structured, as hiding things, and as something playing an important role in culture. Teaching the five ways of reading means realizing the *know-how* in the level of students. Through different ways of reading, the search for meaning including the awareness of *listening to others* as the objective of reading can be achieved.

Keywords: *ways of reading, reading, reading literature, and search for meaning*

Introduction

Why teaching, studying, and caring for literature after all? This question needs thorough answers. We shall begin answering the question by remembering an interesting statement given by Freeman (as cited in Barry, 1995: 14) as follows

We are told that the study of literature cultivates the taste, educates the sympathies and enlarges the mind. These are all excellent things, only we cannot examine tastes and sympathies. Examiners must have technical and positive information to examine.

Freeman mentions about the technical and positive information to examine. This shows us that there should be awareness about teaching and studying literature. It also reveals that the teaching and studying of literature is essential in nature.

Literature is able to give its readers deep impact. Readers are significantly enriched by great books they read. Reading literature brings readers into a broader life. The significance of literature is also stated by Hudson saying that

Literature is a vital record of what human beings have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally and expression of life through the medium of language (1958: 10).

Considering the two previous statements, we then can conclude how important it is to care for literature.

Where and how it starts? We shall start it by combining the *know-what* (the theory, what we know about literature) and *know-how* or the field of practice. According to Pope, we shall engage in activities of theorizing practice and practicing theory as continuing process where theory informs practice (2002: 76). In addition, he suggests that the continuing and reciprocal practice makes teachers, students, and practitioners

reflective, creative, and critical (2002: 76). Practice in the classroom is manifested on how students or readers perceive and understand works of literature through some means e.g. approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques.

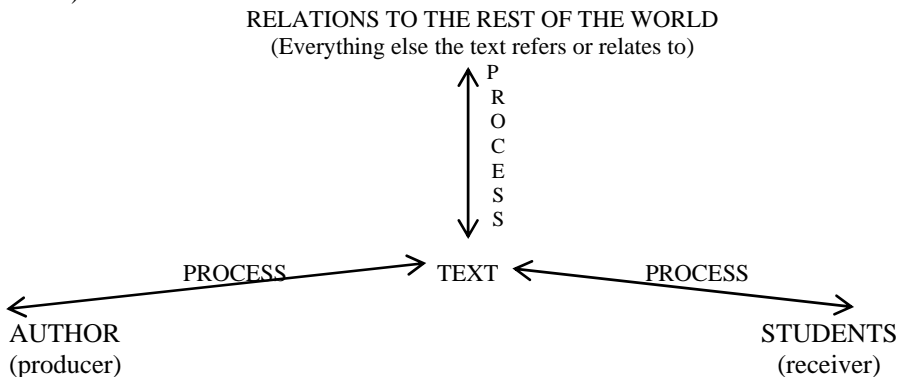
The initial step of manifestation in the student’s level is reading. There are matters to note down, however. As an initial step, reading must be carefully addressed. Reading literature is different from reading texts written with “everyday language”. How could it be? Robert Frost (as cited in Barnett *et al*, 2005: 1) mentions that literature is a performance in words. People have to think deeper in order to understand the performance. They might watch it again and again in order to understand what messages it is to give. Seeing the analogy, now it’s obvious that it is not easy then to understand literature.

Understanding literature entails a long process. There is an “intimacy” between readers, in this case, students and literature. Reading, according to Montgomery *et al*, consists not just of passive assimilation but of active engagement in inference and problem-solving (2007: 8). Moreover, Bartholomae and Petrosky describe the activity of reading as follows

Reading is not simply a matter of hanging back and waiting for a piece, or its author, to tell us what the writing has to say. In fact, one of the difficult things about reading is that the pages before you will begin to speak only when the authors are silent and you begin to speak in their place, sometimes for them, doing their work, continuing their projects, and sometimes for yourself, following your own agenda (1987: 1).

Students, as mentioned by Montgomery *et al*, ascribe meanings to text on the basis of interaction between textual meaning (language structures) and contextual meaning (various kinds of background, social knowledge, belief, and attitude students bring to the text) (2007: 8). The background mentioned before truly reflects who the students are. In addition, Montgomery *et al* state that factors such as the place and period in which students are reading, their gender, ethnicity, age, and social class will encourage them towards certain interpretation of the text (2007: 8). There is strong relationship between the text and the students where students are not there in vacuum. They are to respond to the text. In responding to the text, they are bringing with them the factors mentioned before.

In reading where there is engagement between students and text, there are two more important matters to note down namely the relations to the rest of the world and the author of the text. Pope (2002: 77) draws a working model to show the relation among the four mentioned before (students, text, author, and relations to the rest of the world) as follows.



Text is produced by the author. In producing a text, there is a process. This process is represented by the double-headed arrow. It is understood as something that is exchangeable. It means that it is not something fixed. In the future, it may be reproduced.

The text is then responded by the students. They respond it by actively searching for meaning out of it. The process of searching for meaning will result in a new text. In other words, the text produced by the author will be reproduced by the students.

Text, in a way or another, has relations to the world. It represents or refers to people, places, events, ideas, beliefs, in the worlds behind or beyond it (Pope, 2002: 77). This is worth noting down. In addition, the working model proposed by Pope is also a summary of the two previously mentioned matters. First, the intimacy or engagement between the text and students, and second, the searching for meaning by the students based on the interaction between textual meaning (language structures) and contextual meaning (various kinds of background, social knowledge, belief, and attitude students bring to the text).

Ways Of Reading

Reading involving an active engagement has been mentioned in the Introduction. There are ways of reading. Montgomery *et al* point out that ways of reading are kinds of comprehension where comprehension consists of an active engagement (2007: 8). In the Introduction, again, there has been mentioned about the searching for meaning. Now, a question might come across waiting for an answer. How do students search for meaning of out a text? The answer is provided by Montgomery *et al* by stating that

Looking for meaning or meanings of a text involves exploring many different sorts of question – or alternatively blocking off those different sorts of question in order to settle on a possibly more comfortable but significantly reduced, single interpretation (2007: 9).

In interpreting the text, each reader has different process and track. There are factors influencing interpretation. The background of each student (age, gender, ethnicity, religion, social class, place of origin, local tradition, and family belief) enriches the process and result of interpretation. Montgomery *et al* believe that it does not make interpretation relative or pointless, but rather results in debates which later play an important role in social discussion of beliefs and values, especially for texts that engage with fundamental human concerns (2007: 9).

The purpose and interest in reading a certain text determine how students read it. Students have different and hidden agenda in reading. Reading literature, however, is not an easy task to do. Wedhowerti says that students probably need more time to read the same literary work again and again because it demands a lot from its readers (2015: 40). Therefore, different ways of reading with different sets of question are assigned to address the different situation.

Five Ways Of Reading And Process Of *Listening To Others*

Not only do students bring with them different and hidden agenda, but also their own values, beliefs, attitudes, and purposes. Every student is unique in a way that the same text might mean different for him or her. According to Montgomery *et al*, texts are suggestive and they connect with individual experiences, memories, and personal associations for words (2007: 11).

Readerships are different. In the classroom, we, as lecturers, invite the students to give a response or responses to the text. They are encouraged to dig out the text in order to search for and understand meaning. As stated in the previous section, students

approach and engage with the text actively. The forms of response to give to the text are listening to the voice of the author and understanding the purpose of literature. We explain to the students about the nature of reading. Reading is an activity of listening to the author saying something to the readers as proposed by Bartholomae and Petrosky as follows

Reading is not simply a matter of hanging back and waiting for a piece, or its author, to tell us what the writing has to say. In fact, one of the difficult things about reading is that the pages before you will begin to speak only when the authors are silent and you begin to speak in their place, sometimes for them, doing their work, continuing their projects, and sometimes for yourself, following your own agenda (1987: 1).

When reading, students are listening to the author saying something (some things) to them. Then, they are in the position to speak back, to say something of their own in turn. In other words, as they read, they hear the author's voice.

We also introduce them to the purpose of literature. Barry suggests that the purpose of literature is essentially the enhancement of life and the propagation of humane values (1995: 19). The introduction to the nature of reading and purpose of literature is closely related to the five ways of reading. The five ways of reading as proposed by Campbell (retrieved on July 22nd 2015 from <http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/>) truly reflect the reading activity as listening to the author as suggested by Bartholomae and Petrosky and the purpose of literature as suggested by Barry.

The five ways of reading see literature as telling about human condition or human nature, as the form of experience the students have while reading, as something carefully structured, as hiding things, and as something playing an important role in culture. Each way of reading is equipped with guided questions to ask. Each of them is discussed in turn.

1. Reading for Realism

Here the students focus on the plot, character, setting, point of view, and theme. They believe what the writer/author tells them about human condition or human nature. Some guided questions might be asked as follows.

- a. What is happening here? Why? How do we know about it?
- b. What motivates the characters?
- c. What is the reading about? Is it about feeling, family, loneliness, loss, or gain?

2. Reading as Experience

Literature is seen as the form of the experience the students have while reading. The experience might change as they are reading. The guided questions to ask are as follows.

- a. What does this piece of literature do?
- b. How does this text manipulate you?
- c. Does your experience parallel the characters'?
- d. Do you feel that you learn at the same time as the characters do?
- e. How does the experience of different kinds of readers differ?

3. Reading for Structure

As Campbell suggests, literary works are carefully structured objects whose formal details are significant; which details matter and how varies from type to type (<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/>). Students focus on language, imagery, the unity of the text, and the structural skeleton of the text. The guided questions are:

- a. What are the image patterns?

- b. What other special uses of language are here, and what do they contribute to the effect and meaning of the piece?
- c. Is there paradox? Ambiguity?
- d. Are there any myths? Myths about what? Are they about gender, heroes, family relations, cultures, class values, history or nature?

4. Reading Suspiciously

Literature is able to reveal much more than what is shown on the surface. There are "hidden" things. Students read for gaps and textual self-contradictions. The questions to ask are:

- a. Are there any apparent or hidden contradictions in the text?
- b. Is the text self-critical?
- c. What are the ideologies of the text?

5. Reading for Culture

Literature plays an important role in culture. It talks about cultural issues. It takes part in the negotiation between cultures and individuals. Students focus on how a text represents things. The guided questions are as follows.

- a. How are notions like "femininity", "masculinity", "whiteness", "blackness", "civilization", and/or "nature" represented?
- b. What are the historical and cultural circumstances of these representations?
- c. How does the text participate in the cultural construction of categories or meanings? d. Does the text talk about major economic systems like capitalism or monopoly?

The five ways of reading mentioned above place literature as reflecting the human nature and matters related to it. Those are very rich since they encompass more domains in life. Barry claims that literature speaks to what is constant in human nature (1995: 17). This statement is also supported by Pope suggesting that text has relations to the world, or it represents or refers to people, places, events, ideas, beliefs, in the worlds behind or beyond it as stated in the previous section. When the students are listening to what is said by the author, they are also at the same time listening to the voice of others. They are listening to what is going with other people out there by answering the guided questions. They are also searching for meaning by answering the questions. The guided questions are given and placed in detailed arrangement that students can experience the sense of listening in more aspects, angles, and domains of human lives.

The students then produce new text (s). The responses produced by them (in the form of answers to the guided questions) are the reproduction of the text they have read. The process of reading, listening to the author, responding to the text, and reproducing the text does not stop here. It does not stop within a single text. This is conducted many times. We encourage students to experience more that their awareness of *listening to others* grows bigger.

Conclusion

Teaching and studying literature enable students to cultivate the taste, educates the sympathies, and enlarges their mind (Freeman, cited in Barry). Students feel the deep impact and are enriched by the text. They are enriched by the text in the field of practice (*know-how*). In the field of practice (in the classroom), students are given time, means, and encouragement to actively engage with the text and then give responses or to search for meaning out of it. By bringing with them their own values, beliefs, attitudes, and purposes, students give responses to the text. They give responses or search for meaning by answering the guided questions. While reading, they are listening

to the author saying about the nature of human lives, the lives of others, the voices of others. Reasonable time is given since literature is different from any other texts with everyday language. Five ways of reading are approaches to conduct and the guided questions are the techniques to apply in the classroom. The five ways of reading and the guided questions are very rich that they encompass more aspect and domains in human lives. Those are taught in order to enhance the students' awareness of *listening to others*. The process of reading, responding, and reproducing the "new text" is continual. It does not stop in a certain text only.

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