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World Literature in English Language Learning: Cultivating Learners' Global Attitudes and Local Pride

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Abstract

The changing status of English worldwide as it takes on the role of an international language has evoked a new way of seeing English language learning in Indonesia. Along with the phenomenon of Asian Globalization, English is needed as a means for interacting with other Asians and with people in other parts of the world. English, now, should also be deemed as a means of voicing our own culture and locality and understanding other indigenous cultures in the world.

Of the various kinds of sources in language learning, literary works have long been used by teachers for a number of reasons, among others are for their authenticity and for the life values they reveal. Many teachers believe in the use of mainstream English literature on the grounds that it deals with the 'standard' English and that it reflects the cultures of English native speakers. However, the persistence in adhering to mainstream English works only to learn English language is no longer relevant as now English is spoken by more nonnative than native speakers. Moreover, the emergence of englishes has shown that the use of English has become "embedded in the culture of the country in which it is used" (McKay 12). English works written by nonnative English speakers offer interesting values in relation to English language learning. This paper, hence, intends to share ideas on the values of using world literature to cultivate learners' attitude as a part of a global community, as well as fostering their local pride.

Keywords: world literature, englishes, global attitude

Introduction

Harmer states "By the end of the twentieth century English was already well on its way to becoming genuine *lingua franca*, that is a language used widely for communication between people who do not share the same first (or even second) language" (2007:13). He also points out that its nonnative speakers increasingly outnumber its native speakers. The emergence of englishes used around the world has shifted the status of English.

This ever-changing status of English worldwide as it takes on the role of a global language has evoked a new way of seeing English language learning in Indonesia. To what extent does this phenomenon affect the learning of English language in Indonesia?

First, learners should be (made) aware of the existence of the growing English varieties. Second, learners (and teachers) should realize that they will use English in a global context for international communication. Along with the phenomenon of Asian Globalization, English is needed as a means for interacting with other Asians and with people in other parts of the world. That means, referring to Harmer's term, Indonesian learners later will become a part of "a global target-language community", in which the language used is not British or American English but the World English (2007:13). Third, the mastery of English language should not necessarily entail the 'mastery' of the culture of its native speakers. Instead, English should now be deemed as a means of communicating our