

Literature and Politics of Creative Industries to Welcome AEC

Oleh Hat Pujiati¹

FIB Universitas Jember

Jl. Kalimantan 37 Jember- Jawa Timur (081336790076 hatpujiati.sastra@unej.ac.id)

Abstrak

Kurikulum sekolah Menengah Atas menjadikan Sastra Inggris sebagai salah satu matapelajaran penting dalam usaha menyongsong MEA. Akan tetapi, kelas sastra Inggris di Sekolah menengah atas tersebut gagal bicara sastrakarena kurangnya pengetahuan guru akan sastra. Kelas sastra tersebut justru bicara tata bahasa seperti kelas Bahasa Inggris biasa menggantikan sastra yang seharusnya. Kondisi seperti ini dilaporkan oleh beberapa guru sekolah favorit di Jember-Jawa Timur. Berangkat dari peristiwa tersebut maka saya menulis makalah ini untuk mendiskusikan sastra dan peluang-peluangnya di dunia nyata. Karena dunia imjinatif yang dihadirkan dalam karya sastra, sastra kerab dipandang sebagai subjek yang tidak penting oleh kebanyakan orang di Indonesia. Lebih jauh lagi, sastra mendapat porsi yang sedikit dalam kurikulum sekolah, bahkan dalam Bahasa Indonesia, pembelajaran sastra dihentikan dengan menghilangnya porsi sastra dari buku sekolah siswa. Maka itu makalah ini akan fokus pada kegunaan mengenali hubungan sastra dan dunia nyata, sastra dan ruang-ruangnya sebagai ilmu pengetahuan, dan peluang sastra dalam industry kreatif sebagai penggerak dan penghubung diversitas budaya dalam menyambut MEA. Dengan demikian sastra dilihat sebagai politik dalam makalah ini.

Abstract

High school curriculum puts English literature as one of the important subjects in welcoming ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Unfortunately the classes fail to discuss English Literature because of the teachers' lack of knowledge on literature. They study grammar like the usual Bahasa Inggris class instead of literature. This poor condition has been reported by school teachers in a favorite high school in town, Jember-Jawa Timur. I write this paper to discuss literature and its changes in real world. Since the imaginative world presented in literary works, literature is taken as unimportant subject by the common people in Indonesia. Moreover, literature has insufficient portion in the school curriculum, even in Bahasa Indonesia, studying literature is stopped, it vanishes from the school books. Therefore, this paper focuses on the advantages of recognizing the relation of literature and real world, literature and its space as science, and literature and its chance in creative industries as a motor and a link of the cultural diversities in welcoming AEC. Thereby, literature is seen as a politics in this paper.

¹ Hat Pujiati adalah dosen pengajar sastra di sastra Inggris FIB Universitas Jember – Jawa Timur, melakukan penelitian-penelitian kekuatan komunitas sastra dan gerakannya dan menekuni kajian sastra realisme magis serta sastra posmodern

Asean Economic Community (AEC) is an issue spread in the ASEAN society around this 2015-2016. Sectors of social life have been planned to face the AEC, including the school's curriculum in Indonesia. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture Decree No 59 year 2014 about 2013 High School's Curriculum, Subjects in Senior High School must set in three groups: A, B, and C. Each group consist of some subjects and concentration. For language and culture concentration, it has literature as one of the subjects. What I want to discuss in this paper is literature that is hardly recognized and understood by students and also common people in Indonesia. Favorite high school in my town, Jember-East Java, also has problems with the Ministerial Decree to open English Literature class for the students. They have no competence teachers for the class so that they teach grammar in English Literature class. I point the school's lack of competence teacher on literature not as a simple individual problem, it has happened because Literature is commonly seen as a kind of magical or irrational subject. Even in Elementary schools, Indonesian literature vanishes from the elements of Bahasa Indonesia subject. Therefore, I see the main problem in this case is underestimation on cultural science. Literature is a part of culture. Literature records the civilization of people and it also inspiring people to develop their civilization in the future. Narration in literary works is able to hegemonize people, narration embodies power and it can be a tool to conquer people. In other words, literature can be a space of politics.

Realizing the change of literature as politics, literature must be considered as important subject to build a nation. But how can literature be such important? How can it be a part of politics in facing AEC? This paper discusses relations of literature and real world, literature and its space as science, and literature and its chance in creative industries as a motor and a link of the cultural diversities in welcoming AEC.

Literature and Real World

Literature has many definitions, different perspectives provides different definition. The broadest sense of literature definition relate to any written text. I agree with it in some cases, but in this perspective, literature is not limited on the written text. There are literary works that is not written such as folktale. Then we need to add the definition that literature can be written and spoken. Furthermore, literature is different from history or any report that provides facts. Even though a literary work is inspired from a true story, a literary work is a fiction because the facts in it are not the same facts of the real world. Imagination has been added to the reality in literary work and it betrays the real fact. The consequences of this fact, literature cannot be taken as a document

to proof reality directly, but we need to bring it to the real world through a series of analysis. Imagination that is added to the events in the literary works strengthens the position of literature as an imaginative product. The imaginative product has aesthetic values, this point distinguishes literature from other texts but it also weakens its position in the perspective of people who glorify natural science. The distance between reality (real fact) and imagination in literature blocks those people to recognize its values since the law of certainty as the price of rationality (as a law of science) is not provided directly in the works of art (literature). However, the closest bridge of literature with the reality is the language used as medium. Language as the medium used in literature is the thing that we need to scrutinize in case to find out **real facts** and its **distance** with the real world. Language records the history of the community who speaks it, it explains the culture of the speakers. Then, studying literature cannot be separated from culture.

Studying literature that uses language as the medium does not mean that it is equal with studying grammatical aspects of the language. A text of literary work is not about what is merely stated but also it also deals with what is not mentioned in the text. However, it does not mean that literature is separated from linguistics. Studying literature needs linguistics knowledge, even it needs to be done with the basic linguistics problems. No matter what prize has given to the literary work, if the reader does not speak the language used in the work, the work is unfathomable and it cannot be enjoyed or commented. The literary work will be speechless if we just highlight the grammatical constructions in the text without relate it to the context built in it.

Juri Lotman, in his structural perspective has stated that language used in literary work is a secondary modeling system, which means that the language used in literary work is not a natural language or daily language (Lotman;1977;9-11). He assumes that language has layers; there are systems in the language. **Idea-content** and **artistic features** are not something separated in literature. Literature does not presents the reality, Lotman has said that **idea art** is a model to present “reconstruction of an image reality” (1977;12). Hence, language in the literary work needs a special treatment to understand it, to find out the message hidden in the work of art. That What I mean by studying literature does not mean equal with studying grammatical rules as in daily language. Artistic features embodies in a work of art has contribution in constructing meaning.

Text and context of literary world are like a coin sides. All text is built in certain context, and literature can explain something in detail when it is related to the context. A literary text is only connected to the real world without any barrier at the point of **discourse**. In simple definition, Klerer defines discourse as “a variety of written and oral manifestations which share common

thematic or structural features. The boundaries of these terms are not fixed and vary depending on the context in which they appear" (Klerer:2004; 04). What is presented in a literary work links to the reality in **discourse**. Author is not the one who determines meaning in his/her works, s/he is only an agent between the society and the reader. All the construction in his/her work is a result of his/her interaction within a social system, since a literary works "reflects all the rules, system, procedures which constitute and are constituted by the 'the will to knowledge' "(Young; 1981: 48). Furthermore, Foucault has assumed that all text has authentic voice that can be revealed by assessing the discursive practices (a conceptual terrain in which knowledge is formed and produced). Discursive practices create virtual limitation to think about something outside of the construction, it cages the knowledge or else they will be excluded as abnormal, there the discursive rules link to the exercise power (1981: 48). Foucault (in Young: 1981: 48-49) has stated that "in every society, the production of discourse is controlled, organized, redistributed, by a certain numbers of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and danger to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its materiality". The model that Foucault has used in assessing his genealogy of knowledge theory is literary works. In sort, literary works record human knowledge about the universe: about life in culture, social, economics, even politics.

Literature as Science and Creative Products

As Explained in previous concept of discourse by Foucault, the relation of Literature and reality (world) is revealed. The way literary works recording world's phenomena in aesthetics way shows the role of literature in understanding the culture, social, economics, and politics to tackle recent phenomena and also to plan future phenomena. In broad sense, the **universe of literature** is divided into two groups, they are **creative products** and **scientific study**. Both of the groups are connected each other, the theories develop in the scientific group relate to what develop in the creative group and vice versa. Literary works as creative works are material objects of the literary studies and the result of the researches in literary studies are also responded in the creative work. Relation of the two groups is mutual; the following diagram shows this relation:

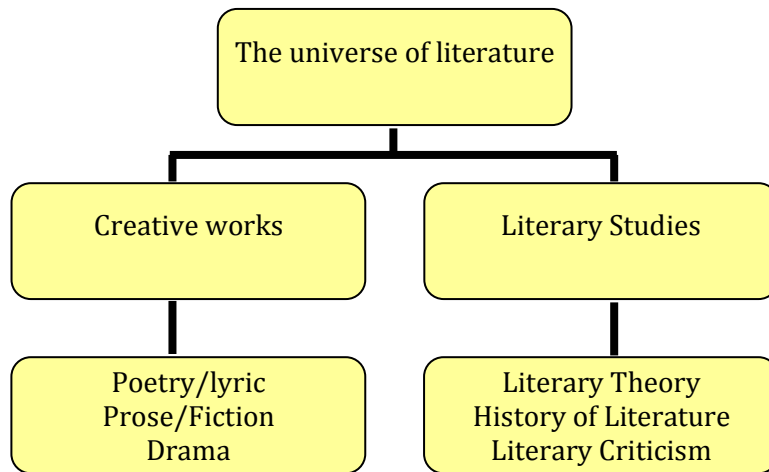
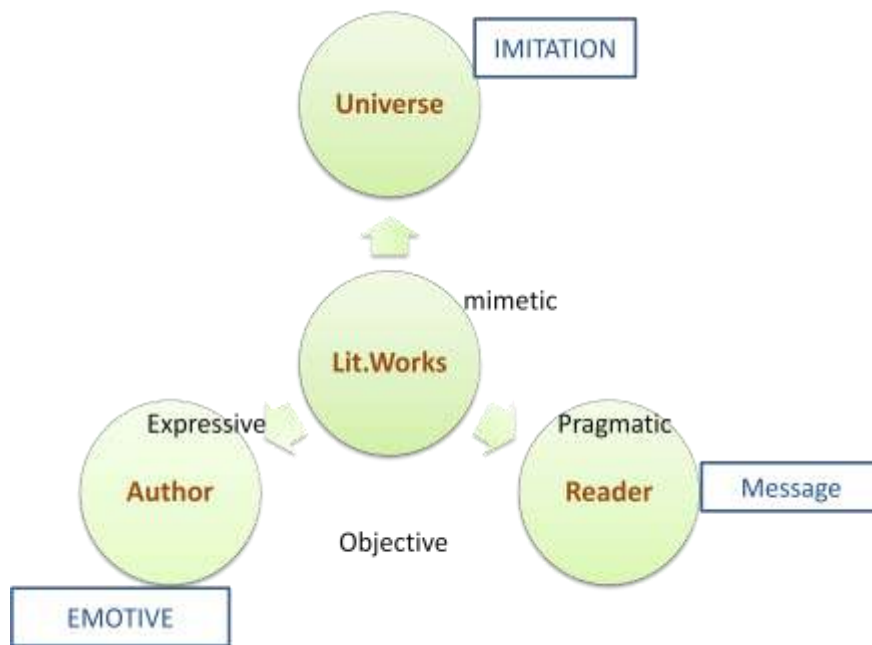


Diagram 1. Relation of the universe of literature, the development of literature as science (Literary studies) and literature as creative works supports each other (the diagram is taken from Prof.Dr. Chamamah’s slide in a literature class).

Abrams has postulated four perspectives in recognizing literary works related to the real world (Abrams:1971:06). He has introduced mimetic, pragmatic, expressive, and objective perspectives. The following diagram depicts the perspectives in literature and its relation with the world.



When Russian Formalism developed, objective perspective becomes the dominant rule in seeing literature and reality to against James Stalin’s policy. However, far before the Russian Formalism, Plato had proposed mimetic perspective to recognize literature and universe, he

believed that a art is a copy of the universe. Literature is also perceived as the expression of the author in responding the world. While reader-oriented theories is in the sphere of pragmatic perspective since it deals with message from the writer to the readers.

Realizing the relation of the imaginative world in literature with simplified reality in the concept above, I would like to give some examples of literary researches have been done in my institution by students of literature. American Literature lately tends to play Neo-liberalism in the works. Ivanda Noviani in her research entitled *The Representation of Beauty in Three Fairy Tales, Little Snow White, Cinderella, and Rapunzel Presented in Enchanted* using Stuart Hall's theory of Representation, has found that the plural worlds constructed in *Enchanted* is not a new redefinition of world construction but innovations. The old fairytales emerge in a new fairy-tale-like-novel (*Enchanted*) and present the same old ideologies of beauty: patriarchy ideology, woman stereotypes as a weak and an emotional creature who are saved by a marriage. Completely she states as the following:

All the fairy tales portrays marriage as the best way to solve problems in women's life. This condition proves that it is not a kind of deconstruction but it is just an innovation. Both the previous fairy tales and modern ones, beauty is constructed to entertain and attract men. This depiction is the heritage of the journey of beauty construction from the previous fairy tales. This case indicates that beauty concept in late modernism is quite difficult to be removed. (2015;43)

In short, Ivanda Noviani's research shows that *Enchanted* brings the same beauty myth like *Little Snow White*, *Cinderella* and *Rapunzel*. In other words, *Enchanted* as a modern fairytale (-like novel) is only a display box of plural worlds brought by the characters but it does not renewing the construction of beauty: but the same content (as the old ones) with a new casing. Siti Hanifa strengthens this assumption with her research entitled *The Representation of Beauty Discourse in Scott Westerfeld's Uglies Series*. She states that:

"...*Uglies Series* applies the neo-liberalism ideology in which the society is offered the proposal of freedom with the hidden aim to control it unconsciously. The Smokies as the rebels create the beauty construction that frees people to look what they want them to be. They own their freedom to decide what they want to look whether they want to stay as they are or to fix their appearance. This freedom is kind of deceitful as what lies behind it is the controlling intention over the society. It shows that every construction even the beauty construction has nothing to do with freedom as there is still unconsciously controlled." (2016: 48).

Hanifa has found that neo-liberalism is the dominant ideology is constructed in the novel. The freedom that is offered in the beauty discourse (represented by Smokies and Special communities in the novel) is only a surface display while actually both of them intend to control power behind the choices. The ideologies beyond the discourse that are presented in the *Uglies Series* is match with neo-liberalism as the recent American Economics ideology. Furthermore, Mas'Ula in her research entitled *Postmodern Strategies in Alex Flin's A Kiss in Time* also has found similar tendency in the work. All the diversity worlds that are presented in intertextuality with already exist stories, like film and literary works before; *A Kiss in Time* is only extending **casings-display-game** in neo-lib ideology. The **casings-display-game** indicate the postmodern condition as what Lyotard called it as "Anything Goes" realism; realism of money that money can buy anything, including buying power (Malpas: 2005: 2). Flinn's *A Kiss in Time* shows postmodern society who lives hyperreality where fact and fiction collision in the worlds' construction. Rahina Wanodya's also has discussed Hyperreality in American's world through her *Hyperealities in Cyberpunk novel Free to Fall* by Lauren Miller. She has found that there are four Levels of hyperrealities in *Free to Fall* which indicate the society's anxiety in the universe of technology and the society's loss of consciousness in the simulations.

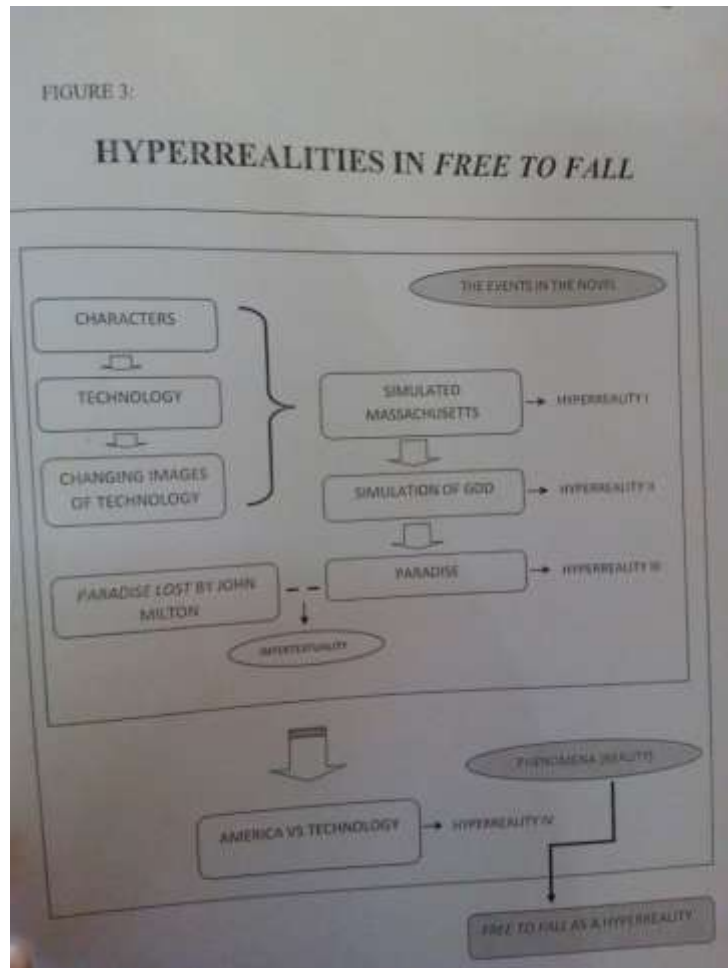


Diagram 3. Rahina Manik Wanodya's finding on Hyperrealities in *Free to Fall* (2015:48)

The diagram shows that Cyberpunk novel entitled *Free to Fall* is a kind of hyperreality since it disrupts the distance of fact and fiction in the reader's consciousness. The setting that is used in the novel is Massachusetts, a city that linear to the American geographical map. The city is identical with the sophisticated technology because of the existence of a world best IT university. Massachusetts in the novel is also as a center of governmental since the society is a high tech society. One who has dominant program becomes the leader and controls every individual through the technology. The leader simulates God and Massachusetts as the paradise. The novel convinces the reader that America is a leading country in technology that can create happiness as paradise does (Wanodya:2015:49).

Americanization in every aspect of life is strengthening American identity construction, including in fashion discourse. R.A.J Safina Adam has analyzed Genealogy of Fashion in *Devil's Wears Prada* and found the ruin of European centrism in fashion through this work which is

extended into film. Casual style is presented as the counter discourse of the elegance and classy style in the novel. The casual style that is presented as the most comfortable and healthy style is set as the dominant discourse. American perspective formulates science in the fashion style discourse countering artistic beauty that is embodied in the European style. Casual Style that is chosen by Andrea is based on medical healthy standard rather than zero size that is chosen by Miranda who glorify artistic beauty in fashion. Through the examples, we find that American literary works tells the world about its level of civilization and they transform it into many other forms of cultural product; film, fashion, and merchandise products. Americanization (and even Disneyzation) (Setawati (2005:18) in Pujiati: 2009:10) are cultural American politics to construct a great state-nation identity in the world. Ideological messages that are internalized through the work of arts are taken as a change to rule the world in economical perspective. Creative industries are ways to built nation from the inside; to doctrine the American people with the American Dream, and from the outside: it is assessed by the international community through their global creative works.

American literary works tends to present magical things and enchantments through technology while English Literature tends to be philosophical in perceiving life. The monarch system of the Great Britain makes the expression of the artistic ideas in philosophical modes through myths. Let's say Romeo and Juliet; Juliet has drunk poison that makes her seem to be died for 24 hours. The poison is magical to kill Juliet only for 24 hours. *Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens brings Spirits to Scrooge's dream. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde presents admiration to the painting of Dorian Gray that magically changes its expression and its appearance that lead Dorian to kill people he thinks become his obstacles to remain young and beautiful as a person and as a picture. The Picture of Dorian Grey is a negotiation on the rigid Victorian moral rules from through homosexuality discourse in the text (Ariyanto: 2015). *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is Oscar Wilde's rejection on the domination of moral value of the Victorian. Wilde as a gay writer offers aestheticism to breakthrough homosexuality discourse that condemned by Victorian society. In Wilde's perspective, beauty, love and admiration on aesthetic is also divine things that cannot be ignored or underestimated as what the society's has done. While *Harry Potter*, *Narnia*, *Lord of the Ring* reconstruct and create new myths. *Inlink* is a community that becomes the canopy of *mythopoeic* school in GB. Philosophical fights often become a chosen model in English works of art. However, efforts to develop another school is quite successful with *Fifty Shades of Grey* by E.L. James (2011), a novel comes from a American *Twilight* fanfiction. Vulgar ideas in expressing sexual life remind us to D. H Lawrence naturalism fiction. Celebration in expressing BDSM behavior brings different perspective in normal sex all this time around. The *Fifty Shade* series are questioning the

society's sanity about normal sexuality. After all, through some example I mentioned above, I conclude that English Literature plays politics to negotiate the government's policy and the society in philosophical modes to construct their identity as a great nation. The reading habit of the people is a gate to move them through literary works as once they have stimulated Industrial revolution. Furthermore, English literature shows the greatness of the Great Britain through the dialectical artistic ideas in literature. Long history of England is recorded in their literary works, through the language traces.

Politics and Creative industries

Learning from American and English literature, we can see that appreciation on literature construct and strengthen the greatness of the nation. If American literature becomes the inspiration of the entrepreneurs to move in creative industries and English Literature become a negotiation medium to assess the nation's strength and inspire the world with the philosophical and artistic ideas, what we can do with Indonesian literature in the AEC era?

Helvy Tiana Rosa as the leader of Forum Lingkar Pena (FLP) has started to use literature as a movement, to inspire people to read and to write literature and transform it into films and TV's series in the name of *Syi'ar*. FLP moves people from different social levels. Furthermore, Helvy Tiana Rosa inspires a massive movement in changing perspective; Western culture is not the only role-model in life, but Middle East is also a worth substitution. This perspective is supporting Muslim wear business in Indonesia that strengthens AEC market. A designer like Dian Pelangi who can mix and match and create universal design based on *syar'i* wear is a compatible asset for the Indonesian Global market. She can respond and read the needs of the market and offering her products with her idealism to the world market. The rise of her success as a designer is also influenced by the zeitgeist: the changing perspective from Western to Middle-East in Indonesia.

Indonesia has a rich culture that still needs to be explored to build creative industries through literature. ***Localpoetic*** is an alternative model of discourse construction in literary works that use locality as the modal of creation or making (Pujiati and Irana; 2016: 130). Local culture in discourse can be a weapon to move people. Ideologies in discourses that are constructed in literature are able to hegemonize massively. However, critical thinking that stimulates to create creative products needs knowledge. Knowledge is gained through reading, and reading ability is assessable in literary works' appreciation.

Conclusion

When literature is erased from the Indonesian elementary school curriculum, it is a poor condition on the development of the nation's intellectuality. The will to a detail reading becomes a privilege for those who can go to the universities and critical thinking in social humaniora field is not a part of the whole nation identity. People are set to be pragmatic and busy with the basic needs that lead them to be a **market** rather than a **producer**. And I would say that the curriculum erasure on literature fools people which will be an open way to genocide. If the fake vaccination that has happened in Dejabotabek out of any political action, but individual crime for the sake of money, it means that members of this nation almost genocide their own people because of their fool in their effort to get money. If the foreign workers who come in massive numbers to Indonesia nowadays is because of the smart economic-politics of the foreign investors, I question how weak our negotiation is since we also have migrant labors who are "slaved" in the foreign countries.

Authors and academician needs to communicate through their works – to negotiate, to access the industrial world – to win the market with a reputable works in the world –to tell the world about the greatness of the nation, to counter Anindita's perception on Indonesian authors as socialite authors who are not productive and proud to be a secondary writers after the western writers in international forums (Republika; May 8, 2016). Literature can be a political strategy in facing the AEC. Jules Verne inspire people on earth to go to the moon, *Around the World in 80 Days* leads people to invent a fast transportation to make a dream of going around the world in days come true. Revolutions in the world are moved and inspired by literature, then it is not a hyperbole to take changes in the AEC market through a literary movements.

References

Books

- Abrams, M.H. 1971. *Mirror and The Lamp: Romantic Theory and Critical tradition*. New York: Oxford University press, Inc.
- Malpas, Simon. 2005. *The Postmodern*. New York: Routledge.
- Pujiati, Hat, and Irana Astutiningsih. 2016. *Spiritualitas sebagai Localpoetic dari Komunitas Sastra di Daerah Tapal Kuda; Jember-Situbondo-Banyuwangi Jawa Timur*. Yogyakarta: Ladang Kata.
- Young, Robert. 1987. *Untying the Text: A Poststructuralist Reader*. London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Thesis

- Adam, Safina. 2016. Fashion Discourse and Power in Twenty-First Century in Lauren Weisberger's The Devil Wears Prada. Skripsi prasyarat kelulusan S-1 Program Studi Sastra Inggris Universitas Jember.
- Pujiati, Hat. 2009. Novel Enchanted dalam Kajian Postmodern Brian McHale. Tesis prasyarat kelulusan S-2 Program Studi American Studies Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- Wanodya, Rahina Manik. 2015. The hyperrealities in cyberpunk Novel Free to Fall By Lauren Miller. Skripsi prasyarat kelulusan S-1 Program Studi Sastra Inggris Universitas Jember.
- Mas'Ula. 2016. Postmodern Strategies in Alex Flinn's A Kiss in Time. Skripsi prasyarat kelulusan S-1 Program Studi Sastra Inggris Universitas Jember.
- Ariyanto, Ika Safitri. 2015. The Aestheticism in Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray: A Genetic Structuralism ANALYSIS. Skripsi prasyarat kelulusan S-1 Program Studi Sastra Inggris Universitas Jember
- Hanifa, Siti. 2016. The Reperesentation of Beauty Discourse in Scott Westerfeld's Uglies Series. Skripsi prasyarat kelulusan S-1 Program Studi Sastra Inggris Universitas Jember.
- Noviani, Ivanda Zahro. 2016. The Representattion of Beauty Discourse in three fairytales: Little Snow White, Cinderella, and Rapunzel Presented in Enchanted. Skripsi prasyarat kelulusan S-1 Program Studi Sastra Inggris Universitas Jember
- Setiawati, Beta. 2005. ""Disneyzation" of Non American Stories in Disneys' Films: A study on Popular Cultur". Tesis prasyarat kelulusan S-2 Program Studi American Studies Universitas Gadjah Mada.

Newspaper

Republika, published on May 08, 2016 linked in Facebook account.