Reading and Responding to Children’s Literature: A Qualitative Study of Indonesian Preservice Teachers’ Response in an Introduction to Children’s Literature Course

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This qualitative study describes the experience of eleven Indonesian preservice teachers as they read and learned about children’s literature in an introduction to children’s literature course during one academic semester. Informed by reader response theories, teacher learning, and literary and aesthetic theories of picturebooks, this study examines the preservice teachers’ responses to the instruction in an introduction to children’s literature course, and their literary responses to children’s literature taught in the course. In terms of how the preservice teachers responded to the course instruction, I addressed the question: How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the instruction in an introduction to children’s literature course? And the guiding questions related to their literary response were: How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to children’s literature being taught in the course? What aspects of social and cultural experiences influence their responses to children’s literature?

The narrative method was used to examine the life experiences of preservice teachers in their responses. Data sources included a survey, interviews, recorded course sessions, preservice teachers artifacts, and an instructor reflection log.

Descriptions of the organization of the course provide the context that facilitated the responses. The findings for the course instruction reveal a range of themes pertaining to the preservice teachers’ experiences with literature during their participation in the course. The themes centered on: reading, literature, picturebooks, thinking about using
literature for teaching, literature-related activities, reading aloud, and becoming teachers of literature. The findings for the responses to the children’s literature picturebooks being taught indicated the preservice teachers focus primarily on analytical, personal, intertextual, and transparent aspects. The tales of two preservice teachers illustrate a range of cultural resources that influenced their responses as readers and future teachers.
Dedication

To Enya and Babe
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Vita

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Chapter 1: The Nature of the Problem

Background of the Study

My love of children’s literature and my first encounter with the teaching of children’s literature in classrooms dates back a few years ago to the time was when I first observed in an American elementary school for my master’s degree project. The visit lasted for about an hour, yet the impression remained with me much longer. It sparked my interest in children’s literature for classroom instruction, which later inspired me to pursue the topic further in a doctoral program. I wrote briefly in my Ohio State doctoral application about that moment. Now, much later in the process, I think this excerpt is worth retelling because it still captures the essence of my journey to study children’s literature in classrooms from its very beginnings.

“I was only six years old, but I thought I had finally made it to the big-time. It was the first day of first grade in my bucolic Indonesian hometown, and at last, I could cross the dirt road and enter the Islamic boarding school across the street from the concrete ranch house where I was born. Feeling jittery, I draped a veil over my head and dashed to school, only to discover the unspectacular: barren walls, few books, and most tragic, a rigid curriculum that demanded memorization over dialogue. School was a letdown, even for this naïve child. But two decades later, on a crisp fall day in 2005, I had a second date with the first grade. As I stepped foot into an American school for the first time for my master’s program, the jitters remained, but everything else was different: colorful word
charts decorated the walls, and shelves spilled over with books. The animated teacher, encircled by wide-eyed children, flipped through a book, inviting students to interpret the pictures. She asked open-ended questions like “Why do you think he’s sad” and “Have you ever felt sad before? Why?” I sat quietly in the corner, trying to contain my envy over the teacher’s excessive use of the word “why.” This inquisitive word was seldom part of my childhood education. I saw for the first time that reading was not merely about comprehending; more importantly it was the impetus for critical thinking and discussion.”

I remember leaving that third grade class aware that I had witnessed, for the first time in my life, classroom activities that were centered on literature—a practice that was virtually nonexistence in my own education. I was fascinated with the different ways of teaching children’s literature that the teacher employed in her classroom; I wondered whether her literature teaching was something that she had learned in her teacher education. Furthermore, as a teacher educator in Indonesia, I wondered what it took for student teachers to learn such knowledge about literature and how to include the teaching of literature into their own classrooms.

Since that observation, my growing interest in children’s literature inspired me to design and teach a course introducing children’s literature to prospective teachers in Indonesia. This course familiarizes them with the study of literature (i.e., why it is important to study literature) and enables them, as prospective teachers, to explore the many ways that literature can be used in classroom instruction (i.e., teaching with literature). Not commonly taught in Indonesian teacher education, I wanted to know how Indonesian preservice teachers would respond to literature, particularly picturebooks,
being taught in the course, and how they would respond to the course itself. So, I was interested in investigating the ways in which Indonesian preservice teachers responded to the course instruction in an introduction to children’s literature course, including how they would respond to children’s literature picturebooks being taught in the course.

Professor Anna Soter (1999) raises a basic question: “Why [do] we teach literature at all?” Many researchers have passionately made a case about the importance of teaching with literature in classroom literacy activities (Sloan, 2003; Lehman, 2007; see Lehman, 2009 on teaching literacy in a literary way). Studying literature has been held to contribute to the development of people’s mind (Rosenblatt, 1995), imagination (Hade, 1991), and critical thinking (Sloan, 2003; Soter, 1999). Literature also plays an important role in providing for the basic human need for story, connecting us through the stories of others with others (Dyson & Genishi, 1994). Soter (1999) posits that we teach literature because we believe that literature will “enable students to expand the culture of the home—to broaden the world they know…and to contribute to the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual growth of the individual” and hopefully, as lifelong readers, they will learn “to value literature” itself (p. 14). Reader response theorist Rosenblatt (1995) argues that, when we read literature, we do not merely “look” at characters and take away a literary story, but rather, we are often engaged with the characters and are living through the experience of the story which in turn activates our innate ability to imagine (Hade, 1991).

In addition to the narrative art of literature, children’s literature as it is represented in the majority of picturebooks, also offers readers artistic experience through visual art. In a reference to picturebooks as a literary art object (Sipe, 2008), Nodelman
(1988), in his classic book *Words about Pictures*, writes: “pictures in picture books engage with the words in order to communicate information and to tell stories in a unique way” (pp. viii-ix). Echoing this statement, picturebook expert Barbara Kiefer (1995) contends: “[A]s central as picturebooks are in the lives of many young children and as visually engaging as they can be for older children immersed in visual images of today’s world, the opportunities for developing literacy, literary, and aesthetic understandings through picturebooks are tremendous” (p. 7). Moreover, Penni Cotton (2000) in *Picture Books San Frontieres* asserts that the visual narratives and succinct texts provided in picturebooks provide affordances for classroom use that crosses cultural and linguistic barriers—of particularly relevance in a context where readers are not native speakers of the language in the book. Assertions such as these are important to highlight in the midst of the dearth of studies on visual literacy in the teaching of children’s literature (Lehman, 2009). If studying literature is a matter of offering students an experience (Rosenblatt, 1995), then we need to pursue teaching literature that involves students in the total artistic experience including both written and visual narratives (Kiefer, 1992).

Given the importance of teaching with literature, the question then becomes how to go about it. Thus, ways in which a reader responds to literature continue to generate interest among educators and researchers even three decades after Louise Rosenblatt wrote about transactional reader response theory in the 1930s (Farell, 1990). Reader response as an approach to literature instruction is reported to increase students’ reading motivation, level of participation, and reading ability (Asselin, 2000)—important qualities for lifelong readers. There is a substantial body of research that attempts to describe readers’ responses to literature. In his chapter in the *Handbook of Reading*
Research (volume iii), Marshall (2000) reviewed research on responses to literature in the past decade. His review found a broad variety of reader responses which he grouped according to text, reader, and context: “[T]hose that locate the source of variation in the literary text being read, in the reader doing the reading, or in the context in which the reading is taking place” (p. 389). His review suggests that text encompasses more than just readers’ pleasures (aesthetic); it also appears to support students’ nonliterary academic achievement (e.g., in social studies). Multicultural text also seems to influence readers’ beliefs about social issues. As for the reader, Marshall’s review found, among other factors, that a reader’s age and development influence her/his response. For instance, younger readers engage with the story action, whereas older readers are more engaged by characters (psychological aspects). Another review finding worth mentioning is gender as a factor that influences a reader’s orientations when responding to text. This finding echoes earlier research reviews from Beach and Hynds (1991) and a recent one from Roser, Martinez, and Wood (2011) about the influence of gender in reading. In short, a growing body of research describes a range of variations of readers’ responses to literature.

However, there is conspicuous gap in reader response research. The majority of the research focuses on reader responses at the primary and secondary levels; only a handful of studies were conducted on adult readers. Marshall’s (2000) review pointed out only a few studies on adult readers (undergraduate and graduate participants). I argue that there is even less research about teachers’ responses to literature even though they are the people who are responsible for the teaching of literature in classrooms. What’s more, literary response research generally identifies teachers as part of a context in which
responses may occur (Marshall, 2000; Beach & Hynds, 1991; Roser, Martinez, & Wood, 2011). Usually, only teachers’ moves (Roser, Martinez, & Wood, 2011) and approaches (Beach & Hynds, 1991) are considered. Seldom is the perspective of teachers as readers (Agee, 1997; Draper, Barksdale-Ladd, & Radencich, 2000; Wolf, Ballertine, & Hill (2000) considered. As a consequence of this, we have little information about the kinds of responses to literature that may emerge from teachers.

**Literature response in teacher education**

Research suggests that preservice teachers’ responses to literature are predominantly drawn from their personal experiences (Sadoski, et al, 1998; Griffith & Laframboise, 1998) and associations with characters (Bean, et al., 1999) in literature. Research also suggests that ways in which teachers, in teacher education, respond to literature indicate their goals as future teachers (Wolf, 2001; Griffith & Laframboise, 1998; Brindley & Laframboise, 2002; Brenner, 2003). Many of these studies take place in courses related to children’s literature (e.g., an introduction to children’s literature) where preservice teachers are earning credit toward their degrees. Research on literature response in teacher education suggests that teacher education has a significant influence on “the kinds of literary response that…[student teachers] will come to see as appropriate and even natural” (Marshall, 2000, p. 393). In addition, teacher education seems to provide fertile soil for researchers; conducting literature response research in this context is convenient for researchers because they can investigate student teachers’ responses to literature as well as their learning about the teaching of literature (Marshall, 1999).

**Statement of the Problem**

Although there are studies on reader response in teacher education, little research has
been done that focuses on student teachers as readers. Research most often views student teachers as a context in which students’ responses to literature may emerge. Rarely have investigations been conducted aimed primarily at understanding kinds of literary responses that may emerge from student teachers. Information from such research is needed. Such research would encompass the variety of ways student teachers respond to literature. Because student teachers’ responses indicate their goals as teachers, they need to be considered. The classroom context including the course, the instructor, and the social environments would be seen as a part of the study that could inform the findings and analysis of the research.

**Definition of Terms**

For consistency, this study employs the following definitions of terms:

*Literary/literature response*: The transaction between a reader and literature involving a variety of verbal and observable responses which allow others to hear and see the response process.

*Preservice teachers*. This term refers to undergraduate students, with no prior teaching experience, enrolled in a teacher education program. In this study, I use preservice teacher interchangeably with other terms such as beginning teachers, prospective teachers, and student teachers.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was threefold: to describe Indonesian preservice teachers’ response to an introduction to children’s literature course; their responses to children’s literature picturebooks being taught in the course; and changes in their responses to literature over time. The following are questions that guided this research.
Research Questions

1. How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to instruction in an introduction to children’s literature course?
   a) How did Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the idea of using children’ literature picturebooks to teach?
   b) How did the instructional activities change their responses to the learning of how to teach with children’s literature picturebooks?

2. How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to children’s literature being taught in the course?
   a) How did Indonesian preservice teachers aesthetically respond to picturebooks being taught in an introduction to children’s literature course?
   b) What aspects of social and cultural experiences influence their responses to children’s literature picturebooks?

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of this study is the literature selected for the course. The fact that the most of the texts selected were in English might influence the research participants’ meaning making process with the texts. Another limitation comes from my role as a participant researcher, a researcher who conducted the study in the class that I taught. This role could influence the nature and the extent to which student teachers responded to the literature and to the course.
Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduces the dissertation research providing: the background of the study, a discussion of literature response in teacher education, a statement of the problem, definition of terms, purpose of the study, and the research questions. It ends with a preview of the organization of the dissertation. Chapter 2 reviews theories and studies pertaining to reading and responding to literature, teacher education and literature study. The critical review in chapter 2 concludes with a discussion about literature and picturebooks, including the conceptual categories of picturebook responses. Chapter 3 chronicles methods of the study: the study approach and research design, descriptions of the context and population studied, the organization of the course, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, data reporting, and the issue of trustworthiness. Chapter 4 consists of two major parts. The first part is on the descriptive data detailing the course organization and literature response and teaching introduction. The second part presents the findings for question 1 and 2, concluding with the tales of two preservice teachers. Chapter 5 concludes the dissertation with the implications the research findings and analysis may have on teacher education and literature teaching.
Chapter 2: A Critical Review of the Literature

Introduction

Research has described the role of teachers of literature as mainly providing support for eliciting students’ literary responses. However, research on the ways in which teachers, as readers, respond to literature has been scant even though such research has strengthened our understanding of how teachers are an important part of the context in which students’ responses may emerge. While important, this information has not added to our understanding about teachers as readers. Further, only a few studies have attempted to examine the nature of the transactional relationship between student teachers, literature and the resultant meaning. In addition, since most of the research pertaining to teachers and literature response is conducted in the context of teacher education (e.g., in a course on an introduction to children’s literature), what needs to be explored, I argue, is also the ways in which student teachers respond to literature in connection with their aspirations as teachers.

In the following I will review literature that examines theories and research on reader response transactional theory and student teachers’ literary responses. This literature review also includes discussions of the theories and research on literature, children’s literature picturebooks and responses to them. The aim of this review is to survey and provide the theoretical background which pertains to the aforementioned topics of discussion.
Reading and Responding to Literature

Reading: A Transaction Between a Reader and Text

According to transactional reading theorist Louise Rosenblatt (2005a), “every reading act is a transaction involving a particular reader, a text, and occurring in a particular context (p. 7).” Reading in this transactional sense advocates an understanding that the process of reading hinges upon the state of “moment-to moment” (Corcoran, 1992), as well as the “particulars” of a reading event (Beach, 1993); further, it is understood that the act of reading occurs between a reader and a text within a particular context. Rosenblatt’s (1994) transactional theory is drawn from a transactional paradigm, a combination of different fields of study: philosophy, linguistics, and psychology. From the field of philosophy, Rosenblatt adopts philosopher John Dewey’s notion of transaction. Echoing Dewey, Rosenblatt believes that “human activities and relationships are transactions in which the individual and social elements fuse with cultural and natural elements” (p. 1059). The transactional paradigm contributes to the transactional reading theory and is based on the assumptions that humans internalize language through a transactional process with a particular environment; and that humans make meaning out of a personal linguistic-experiential reservoir. Thus, a reader selectively attends (drawing largely from her personal linguistic-experiential reservoir) in order to transact with the text.

There are two main elements in Rosenblatt’s transactional reading theory: a reader and text. Reader, in Rosenblatt’s theory, is viewed as an active agent who takes charge in the process of meaning making. Rosenblatt (1995) explains that an active reader “must draw on past linguistic and life experience, certain concepts, certain
sensuous experiences, certain images of things, people, actions, and scenes as well as personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition” (p. 30).

The second important element of reading in a transactional paradigm is a text. Texts are stimuli, in the form of symbols (e.g., verbal, images) that may invite “a special kind of intense and ordered experience—sensuous, intellectual, emotional” (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 31). Rosenblatt goes on to explain that a text provides “a stimulus activating elements of the reader’s past experience—his experience with literature and with life” (2005c). In this sense, one text may offer different stimuli for different readers, depending on the readers’ experiences with what the text offers. In addition, a text also serves as a “control” for the validity of an interpretation relevant to the text. Rosenblatt calls texts “a blueprint, a guide for a critical reworking and ordering of what has been called forth into the reader’s consciousness” (p. 126). So, a text contributes to meaning making in the reading process, yet it does not limit a reader’s meaning making.

Apart from reader and text is context, which serves as another important element of reading process in the transactional theory. Rosenblatt’s emphasis on the moment-to-moment state of reading points to the particular nature of the reading transaction: a reader and text transact in a particular context. Contexts in transactional reading include setting and the background knowledge and experience which readers draw upon for meaning making. If the context were neglected, reading, Rosenblatt insists, would be reduced to simply “a parroting of empty words and phrases” (1995, p. 55). She goes on to reaffirm that the resultant meaning from reading is “the organic expression,” not only of a particular individual, but also of a particular setting” (2005a, p. 45). In this dissertation, I
adopt Rosenblatt’s basic understanding about reading process as my conceptual framework for viewing how actual readers, in this case preservice teachers, may respond to literature.

**Reader response research: investigating readers responding to literature.**

Within reader response theories, Rosenblatt’s transactional theory has drawn considerable interest among classroom teachers. After the publication of her first book *Literature as Exploration* in the 1970s, Rosenblatt expressed her appreciation for being received so warmly by the teaching community. She recalled being astonished by teachers’ enthusiasm at the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). In her words: “I discovered an organization that welcomed all who were concerned with the teaching of English in all its modes and at all levels, from kindergarten to graduate school” (1990, p. 101). Even today Rosenblatt’s influential contribution pervades literary education, both in pedagogy and research. Farrell, in an introduction to *Transactions with Literature: A Fifty-Year Perspective* (1990), asserts that Rosenblatt’s theory “has furnished the theoretical basis for research in the teaching and study of literature and has influenced how literature is taught in classrooms” (p. ix).

Rosenblatt’s transactional theory, and reader response theories in general, have led teachers and researchers to examine the nature of readers’ experiences with literature and what their responses tell us about the experiences that they draw upon when making meaning. In their research review on response to literature, Beach and Hynds (1991) divided reader responses into several categories which include engaging experiences, (i.e. “readers’ emotional experiences are central to their literary experience”) and connecting experiences (i.e., “the ways in which readers apply autobiographical experiences, cultural
attitudes, and knowledge of other texts to their literary responses”) (pp. 459-462). Other findings from Beach and Hynds’s (1991) review worth mentioning include how gender influences reader’s response to texts. Their review also suggests the influence of instructional context on responses. Factors such as the physical and social environments of the classrooms as well as teachers’ approaches significantly affect readers’ responses. A more recent review by Roser, Martinez, and Wood (2011) also suggests that context, such as time and space, and teacher moves, appears to influence students’ response to literature. Another important findings from Roser et al.’s (2011) review points to the ways in which literary responses differ according to reader characteristics (e.g., age, gender, socioeconomic background) and the genres/forms of literature being read.

**Cultural mapping in literature reading.** Professor Patricia Enciso’s (1997) study of multiethnic students introduced the concept of readers’ cultural maps to literature response. Enciso investigated students of diverse background as they engaged discussing *Manic Magee* (Spinelli, 1990), a multicultural text whose story centered on black and white characters. Enciso noticed that the students exhibited certain patterns of reading response based on the comments they made during the story discussion. She called these patterns “cultural maps.” Enciso describes cultural maps as the basis by which readers’ “interpret” their “social experiences” In reading literature (like multicultural literature), Enciso argues that cultural maps serve to “provide [readers] the framework for constructing the meaning of new events” (p. 22). Readers will use “familiar ground” or experience in order to make sense of a story that is unfamiliar to them. In Enciso’s study, the students used their cultural maps to make the story characters “familiar” and later used them to differentiate themselves in relation to others in term of skin color, race,
ethnicity, or gender. A reader’s cultural map is uniquely personal; it is developed through their social experiences as a reader. In addition, cultural maps encompass cultural resources and social allegiances. Enciso argues that readers’ “interpretations…can be seen as the transformation of a cultural product into a cultural resource that enables them to explore and express their ideas about difference and their alignments with one another…” (p. 27). For instance, *Manic Magee* is a cultural product. Popular culture, like songs and movies from which students draw their responses, includes cultural products that have been transformed into cultural resources. Readers will use these cultural resources to make visible their social allegiances, either by confirming or distancing themselves in relationship to others. In Enciso’s study, the students used their cultural resources to show the meaning of difference.

**Reader response in international contexts.** The application of reader response theories in international classrooms has generated some insightful findings. Students whose teachers employ reader response theories reported that they enjoyed the non-threatening environment (Ali, 1994), being part of the process (Fogal, 2010), and being able to explore their identities in connection with texts (Yu-ju, 2009). The sense of spontaneity and uninhibited freedom are what Ali (1994) observed with her Malaysian students. The students in Ali’s research appreciated the fact that their classroom did not seek any single interpretation of a text. This was also the case with Fogal’s (2010) Japanese students who were reportedly engaged with the meaning making process. In the context of multicultural literature, Yu-ju (2009) noticed that the Taiwanese immigrant students were also engrossed in discussing their identity in comparison with that of the characters depicted in a book.
Three recent studies on reader response in Indonesia classrooms offer insight concerning the extent to which reader response theories would be applicable in Indonesian contexts. Widodo and Saraswati (2009) examined senior high school students’ responses to three short stories. They found that the students were critically engaged with the stories; they revealed connections with characters or made judgments against them. Interestingly, the responses also reveal the dominant value that was present among the students (e.g., religious value). Widodo and Saraswati credited the teachers’ instruction for facilitating a learning atmosphere conducive to students making responses of this type. In a different study, having noted the students’ disengagement in her drama analysis class, Hetami (2010) attempted to use reader response theories to foreground her teaching approach. Hetami designed classroom activities that were centered on students’ personal responses. For instance, as the students studied a dramatic text, they were asked to respond in many ways (e.g., writing a letter to a character in a story, or designing posters that were informative enough for a lay audience). In her observation, Hetami claimed that students were more engaged, “enjoy[ing] the class more than before.” In addition, Hetami found that the students were able to “perform” all necessary reading skills (e.g., analyzing, or interpreting) (p. 174). Hetami argued that the reader response teaching approach contributed to students’ improvement in their study of literature. Finally, Mulyana’s (2001) study on the effect of the reader response approach in teaching poetry found that in the class where instruction used a reader response based approach there was a statistically higher use of reading strategies and inquiries than students taught with a different approach. Another finding worth mentioning is Mulyana’s claim that students in reader response-based instruction tended to collaborate with others and were
more open to different opinions. Taken together, these studies shed light on the potentials (and the challenges) of reader response theories for teaching in an international context, a context similar to the one in which the present dissertation research was situated.

**Teacher Education and Literature Learning**

In a chapter in the *Handbook of Reading Research IV*, Dillon, O’Brien, Sato, and Kelly (2010) offer a review on the current state of reading teacher education. They report “teacher education programs positively influence beginning teachers.” A study conducted by a task force assigned by the International Reading Association (IRA) reported on the large number of student teachers who felt appreciation for the program they had attended. According to the report, the student teachers made appreciative “comment[s] about what they learned during their programs and how they are teaching as a result of their preparation…” (p. 634).

The extent to which courses in teacher education influence student teachers is also noted in a research review by Floden and Meniketti (2005). Writing their review for *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education*, Floden and Meniketti state that teacher education courses have a positive effect on student teachers’ understanding of the subjects they will teach. An English course, for instance, would give student teachers not only the knowledge about different works of literature, but also the understanding of how to teach it to their own students. Courses in teacher education also appear to influence student teachers in terms of their attitudes. Two studies in Floden and Meniketti’s (2005) review reported the change of student teachers’ attitudes after taking one semester long multicultural class. A telling example from the review was a student teacher who reportedly thanked the course
instructor as she began noticing, “how issues of race ran through education” (p. 280). These research reviews have strengthened our understanding of the influence of teacher education in shaping the knowledge and attitudes of future teachers. Such research also suggests that the knowledge student teachers gain in their programs could shape their teaching practices. In other words, the theories the student teachers learn may guide their future teaching practices.

In a review research on teachers and literature teaching, Beach (1993) asserts that the ways a teacher enacts teaching will reflect an “individual teacher’s beliefs about the role of literature” (p. 5). He cites as examples three high school English teachers. The teachers who have experience studying and responding to literature are more likely to call for their students’ responses than their counterparts who did not have similar learning experience in their teacher education program. In different research, Grossman’s (1990) longitudinal study followed a group of student teachers from the time they were in teacher education until they were teaching. Grossman reported that teachers who were familiar with reading response theory and transactional reading in their programs were likely to invite students to give responses and to have discussions. Teachers who were not familiar with transactional reading, however, tended to be more text-centered. Citing one teacher’s reflection about his professional development as a literature teacher, Grossman recalls: “he came to believe that it was his job as a teacher to build bridges between the literature and students’ lives” (p. 59). Similarly, Hade (1993) raised the question of why it is important to teach about literature and the teaching. Hade argues it is important “because teachers are the most important readers in…classrooms….When readers are around other readers they learn ways of taking from text according to how they see other
readers reading. This suggests that teachers show their students possible way literature can be read” (p. 2). As the most important reader in the class, a knowledgeable teacher will model for students what they should be doing with literature.

**Student Teachers Learning and Responding to Literature**

Wolf, Ballertine, and Hill (2000), who conducted extensive research with preservice teachers, argue that an “engagement in literature and learning is not simply the domain of children; it belongs to teachers as well, especially if teachers are willing to reconsider their life stories in reading” (p. 567). They argue that as readers themselves, teachers should have opportunities to engage in book talks and discussions. And this is true for teachers whether they consider themselves novice or avid readers.

Unfortunately, as research has shown us, we cannot simply assume that preservice teachers who want to be literature teachers take any pleasures from literary reading (Draper, Barksdale-Ladd, & Radencich, 2000). As Eeds and Peterson (1994) have warned us, we should not assume that preservice teachers have been involved in literary discussions. Eeds and Peterson underscore the fact that many preservice teachers had limited or minimal experiences with literary study activities. They describe the following: “As we work with teachers who want to learn more about literature studies, we have found that many have never participated in a book group or a literature discussion themselves” (p. 23). Realizing the preservice teachers’ lack of experiences, Eeds and Peterson initiated a literature study that could “exemplify the ideas [about the] social construction of knowledge and transaction” with literature in a group setting, in the hope of showing the participants that literature studies benefit students in classrooms (p.23). Eeds and Peterson particularly wanted to show the preservice teachers the various roles
they could take by having them participate in a literature group with their fellow student teachers. In effect, this served as a model for their own classrooms. Eeds and Peterson remark: “Participating in a study where all the readers are peers (with one taking a facilitative role) is…an excellent way to polish the ability to recognize places where the teacher [can act] as facilitator, listening with a third ear while still participating in the conversation…” (23).

In addition, Hade (1993), in a reference to his own children’s literature class, asserts that when engaging teachers in literary study, one should also consider introducing them to the ethics of literary reading. Hade was concerned that many preservice teachers in his children’s literature class had preconceived ideas about how to approach literature; their approach tended to be didactic and moralistic in nature. As an example, Hade mentions one student’s written response to *Stone Soup* (McGovern, & Pels1, 986), a French folk tale:

> This story shows that people always want what they don’t have. This is a good lesson for kids to learn. But it also teaches the children to be deceitful, which I don’t agree with. Not that I don’t deceive anyone, but children don’t have the background to make decisions on when to be deceitful (p. 2).

From the perspective of a teacher educator, Hade highlights the extent to which this preservice teacher’s response violates the ethics of reading children’s literature, an ethics which includes texts and *all* the readers of those texts (emphasis in original). These ethics include a set of relationships, the relationship of my children’s literature
students to the literature they read, the relationship of my students to the
children they will be teaching, and my relationship to my students in
respect of their relationships with books and children (p. 8).

Hade goes on to add that within
these relationships exist a tension among concerns for initiating readers,
adult and child, into the world of literature; concerns for enabling readers to
express freely their own responses and to develop their own sense of
authority; and concerns for assisting readers in developing a sense of social
responsibility to other readers and to their world (p. 8).

What we can take from Hade’s example is the importance of providing preservice
teachers with appropriate models for ethical literary reading, both for themselves and for
their future students. If we can draw a conclusion based on the studies above, research
suggests that teacher education’s offering of literature courses should take into account
preservice teachers as readers as well as their professional aspirations as teachers.

**A reader envisioning becoming a teacher.** Studies on student teachers’
responses to literature, which are few in number, provide some information about how
preservice teachers envision themselves becoming teachers. Holt-Reynolds’s (1999) case
study of Mary, a preservice teacher who set her sights on teaching English at secondary
level, illustrates her disparate development as a reader and a future teacher. Described as
a skilled reader, Mary admitted her love of reading, especially how “her own ability to
read and locate potential interpretations” (p. 38) had driven her to choose a teaching
profession. Mary showed an impressive knowledge about literature and instruction. For
instance, Mary could passionately argue for how literature had to be open to multiple
interpretations while including the relevant theories that underpinned and justified her argument—a quality she had undoubtedly learned from instructors in teacher education. When it came to teaching, however, Mary did not take up an instructional role in her literature teaching. Instead, she left students to immerse themselves in stories and interpret them freely, gradually achieving some level of reading maturity—a practice based on her own reading experience. “The teacher doesn’t fit into the picture,” Mary insisted. It didn’t occur to Mary that “a teacher might help readers compensate for lack of experience by attempting to provide background and help readers build a base of experience” (p. 41), a kind of instruction that had helped her become a skilled reader.

Agee’s (1997; 1998) multiple studies on language arts preservice teachers showcase a range of reading experiences and teaching visions. Agee’s (1997) study of two preservice teachers of racially different backgrounds shows the different concerns they had as readers, and how they pursued these as future teachers. Anne grew up avoiding poetry, partly due to an upsetting experience in high school. That experience led her to be “more receptive to new approaches for teaching…” (p. 414) so that she could provide literary teaching conducive to student learning. As a result, Anne seemed determined to study literature and instruction that could help her to assume the role of teacher that she envisioned for herself. The second student teacher, LaTasha, an African-American, constantly struggled to find characters in literature who were like her. It was not until she was exposed to multicultural literature in her teacher education courses that LaTasha began to find reading pleasurable. This led her to see opportunities beyond “the constraints of traditional approaches to literature” (p. 419). Agee’s (1998) subsequent study of language arts preservice teachers reveals that a love of literature and reading
encourage them to share that enthusiasm with their own future students. “My students should love literature the way I did” (p. 94), one preservice teacher remarked. This is similar to Mary from Holt-Reynolds’s (1999) study above. Their visions for themselves as teachers are seemingly “the fulfillment of an idealized teacher role, one largely defined by prior experiences in school” (Agee, 1998). This is quite problematic, Agee argues, because it does not occur to preservice teachers that their students might be diverse and have different interests and issues, including the kinds of literature they find engaging or relevant.

In sum, the research review on teacher education indicates the strong influence of literature courses (e.g., an introduction to literature) in shaping teachers’ literature knowledge and their teaching practices. Further, the research review on student teachers’ experiences when studying literature suggests that sociocultural factors (e.g., race, reading history) influence their experiences.

**Literature**

One of the ultimate goals in literacy classrooms is for students to enjoy literature and to learn from it. Researchers have made a strong argument for the role of literature in education (Hade, 1991; Lehman, 2007; Rosenblatt, 1995; Sloan, 2003). Rosenblatt (1995), commenting on the critical role of literature in the development of people’s imagination, notes: “In its simplest term, literature may offer us an emotional outlet [that allows us to] participate in imaginary situations” (p. 37). Sloan (2003) maintains that literature plays a crucial role in education because it has the potential to ignite children’s imaginations. Teacher educators and early literacy experts suggest that classroom teachers who center their instruction on literature will not only help students to feed their
needs for story (Dyson & Genishi, 1994) but also help them to develop a foundation for literacy (e.g., sense of story) (Lehman, 2009).

Why does nurturing our imaginations matter? It matters because imaginations are what make people human. Imaginations are the basis for human interaction, emotional expressions, and for making choices (Sloan, 2003). Sloan argues: “[L]iterature itself is born out of imagination. The imaginative writer constructs a world that is but never was; within each world there is room for endless imaginative possibilities…literature illustrates what is essential for humans to realize: there are no limits for the imagination” (p. 12). Sloan’s assertion suggests that frequent exposures to a wide range of literature will be beneficial to develop and expand students’ imaginations.

Studying literature is also a way of providing the basic human need for story. Early literacy specialists Anne Dyson and Celia Genishi in their book The Need for Story (1994) claim that everyone basically has a need to create story in order to structure and organize their experiences into “tales of important happenings” (p. 238). Dyson and Genishi posit that literature provides a way to fulfill students’ basic need for story. Teachers can facilitate students’ story creation process when they read literature to them. They argue that stories are the social means that connect students to others. Stories “serve to socialize, to construct selves in the frequent and ordinary interactions through which children become members of their communities” (p. 238). Dyson and Genishi make a connection between reading literature and story sharing in a classroom context. In classrooms, literature which represents an author’s story, becomes a partner (and context) for students’ story sharing. Through teacher facilitation, students, literature, and a teacher can work together to create a new story. This echoes reader response theories (i.e.
Rosenblatt’s transactional theory) by positioning literature as readers’ equal partner in the creation of new stories.

Lastly, studying literature also contributes to the development of critical thinking. Sloan (2003) argues that story sharing along with an exposure to literature may serve as students’ initial introduction to becoming critics, or readers who understand “what literature as a whole is about” (p. 150). According to Sloan, becoming a critic necessitates that readers “engage in a process of discovering for themselves how literature is unified” (p. 150). In the context of younger readers, Sloan maintains that this process entails an “exploration of idea, sharing of response, and growth through reflection” (emphasis is in original)” (p. 151). The whole process requires a systematic study of literature in order to satisfy the need for story, expand minds, and eventually to become a critic. As Sloan remarks: “Becoming a literate critic begins when we experience and respond to our first stories and a poem. It continues in further response that involves exploration, reflection, and making a connection” (p. 177). In other words, students’ critical thinking can be nurtured through exposing them to a wide range of literature, and through engaging them in literature discussions. In addition, critical thinking through literature, as scholars have noted, also can be cultivated through using multiple critical reading lenses (e.g., feminist) (Soter, 1999) or multiple perspectives (Lakshaman, 2009).

**Picturebooks: A Literary and Art Object**

The pleasure and benefits of literature are not solely based on the narrative art of literature. Picturebooks, housed most prominently in children’s literature, offer readers an aesthetic experience through both visual art, and written narrative. A picturebook is a
unique object that experts in the field sometimes refer to it as a literary art object; it is an object that offers artistic experience through stories and pictures (Sipe, 2008) and draws upon readers’ imaginations and pleasures (Kiefer, personal communication).

In the front page of her classic book *American Picturebooks from Noah’s Ark to the Beast Within*, Barbara Bader (1976,) writes:

A picturebook is a text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document; and, foremost, an experience for a child. As an art form it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words, on the simultaneous display of two facing pages, and on the drama of the turning page. On its own terms its possibilities are limitless (p. 1).

Considered one of the most authoritative voices in the field (Lewis, 2001), Bader’s comprehensive description of picturebooks has become the basis for how picturebook art is defined and approached (Kiefer, 2008). Marantz (1977) asserts that a picturebook has a unique quality—the continuity of images—which makes it an art object consisting of pictures and words. Seen this way, Marantz likens a picturebook narrative to a film, because unlike, for instance, “a painting, its [a picturebook’s] aesthetic force derives from the continuity of images, from the relationships of the pages as they are turned” (p. 148). As far as pictures and words in a picturebook are concerned, Marantz argues that they should be treated as a single unit in order for “its potential values (as a visual art form) to be realized…” (p. 150).

Taking up Marantz’s contention, Kiefer (1995) popularizes the notion of “the *interdependence* of pictures and text” in a picturebook. According to Kiefer, the contributions of pictures and text to picturebooks as an art object rest on the fact that they
are partners in offering an aesthetic experience. Kiefer argues, in addition to well-crafted pictures, “a verbal text should certainly be beautiful and bring pleasure in and of itself” (p. 6). Other theorists view the pairing of pictures and words in a picturebook as a marriage of two different kinds of communication (Moebius, 1986) or signs (Nodelman, 1988). Along the same line, Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) note: “The unique character of picturebooks as an art form is based on the combination of two levels of communication, the visual and the verbal” (p. 1). Borrowing Will Eisner’s term, Sipe (2011) refers to picturebooks as “a sequential art.” The term describes the transactional nature of pictures, texts, and readers for a total aesthetic picturebook experience. Sipe posits: “The words tell us things that the pictures omit, and vice versa; in addition, readers/viewers must fill in the gaps that neither the words nor the illustrations contribute” (p. 239). Sipe’s reference to picturebook readers calls to mind Bader’s (1976) comprehensive definition of a picturebook, which also refers to providing “an experience for a child” (p. 1). Echoing this sentiment, Marantz (1977) argues that our view of a picturebook will have implications on the ways in which picturebooks are approached, and experienced. As a unique art form, Marantz insists that a picturebook is an “object to be handled, experienced, and re-experienced—an entry loaded with associational possibilities and visual delights” (p. 148).

The potential of picturebooks for classroom teaching. Researchers have investigated the potential of picturebooks for teaching aesthetic and literary understanding, and literacy and visual literacy development (Nodelman, 1988; Kiefer, 1995; Sipe, 2000; Evans, 2009). In addition, the accessibility of visual narratives in picturebooks has potential for classroom teaching that transcends cultural and linguistic
barriers (Cotton, 2000). Cotton proposes a theoretically sound and research-based pedagogy of picturebooks from elementary to middle classrooms. Seeking to bridge multicultural understanding among multilingual European populations, Cotton highlighted some common features of picturebooks that had potential for teaching for that purpose. The strength of a picturebook, Cotton argues, rests on the fact that it has typically universal themes (e.g., family, friendships) with brief texts and visual narratives enabling readers to access the book regardless of their language background. With features such as these, Cotton insists that picturebooks could potentially facilitate children (of diverse background) learning the “love of book,” “the reading process,” elements of the “literary and linguistic, and awareness about cultures other than their own (p. 1).

**Picturebooks responses.** In chapter titled *reading the visual: creative and aesthetic responses to picturebooks and fine art*, Janet Evans (2009) showcased research investigations into the nature of “responses that come from different picturebooks” (p. 7). Reporting on her own research with a group of middle school students, Evans used *Katie’s Picture Show* (Mayhew), a picturebook focusing on the fine arts, as a “springboard” (Kiefer, 1995) “enabling children to look at and respond to fine art” (p. 106). Evans (2009) invited the students to “think and talk about art” using some “guidance points, questions and speculative ponderings” in order to encourage them to tell stories of their own. She noticed that the students’ response grew deeper as their literacy activities progressed, even as she engaged them with a real painting. The students’ oral and written responses showed a deep engagement and understanding of art “demonstrating the creative and aesthetic links between picturebooks and fine art” (p. 28).
The variety of responses to picturebook may also be facilitated through giving students ample time for responding (Kiefer, 1995). This was also evident in Arizpe (2009)’s research on immigrant students in Scotland as they engaged in reading Scottish picturebooks. Arizpe noticed that giving students ample of opportunities to talk and respond to texts is worth doing because many of these opportunities “reveal the potential of children’s sharing and building on each other’s interpretations of visual images in picturebooks, not only as an (sic) strategy for developing literacy skills but also…for approaching and understanding the difference in personal experiences, leading the way to sharing values as future citizens of the same country” (p. 144). From a human development perspective, age may also influence the different nature of reader responses. Kiefer’s (1995) work with elementary students indicates that younger students like to “respond with physical movements or sound effects.” And when it comes to doing an art response, older students “seemed to be more interested in studying the techniques of the artist,” whereas the younger ones like to “use the illustrations in the book as the springboard for inspiration” (p. 22).

**Adults’ picturebooks responses.** Literary theorists, like Nodelman (1988), have written extensively about picturebooks as a sophisticated literary object for both children and adults. When searching for literature for this review, however, I found that investigations on response to picturebooks focus predominantly on children; studies of adults’ responses to picturebooks are rare. What is more, available studies on adults’ responses tend to group together responses found from picturebooks with those found from literature in general. Picturebooks tend be lumped with other forms of literature (e.g., chapter books or novels). As a consequence, it is difficult to distinguish responses
focused specifically on picturebooks. Aside from these issues, the available studies on adults’ response to picturebooks indicate that the characteristics of adults’ and children’s responses are somewhat similar. Research on adults’ picturebook responses also suggests similarities to those made by older children in terms of the tendency to be analytical when responding to picturebooks (e.g., analyzing the author’s illustrations).

Wolf, Carey, and Mieras’s (1999) extensive investigation into preservice teachers’ engagement with multicultural literature sheds light on some characteristics of adults’ picturebook responses. When discussing *The Middle Passage* (Feelings), a black and white wordless picturebook about slavery, Wolf et al. noticed that the preservice teachers “were most deeply impacted by the visual aspects” of the book (p. 152). These preservice teachers found it hard to express their feelings in words because, as they wrote in their responses, “language cannot describe the horror and pain that [Tom Feelings, the author/illustrator] captures in his art” (p. 152). Picturebooks seemingly evoke a vivid reading experience. Wolf et al. noted that the preservice teachers’ responses were “filled with visual vocabulary” such as “we witness” and “we watch,” suggesting “the feeling that reader/viewer is there, seeing and feeling the horror” (p. 152). As one teacher described her feelings: “It is very, very aesthetically pleasing, but it’s, it’s painful…” (p. 152). Picturebook illustrators and the quality of the illustrations also became a focus of teachers’ analytical responses. Wolf et al. pointed out that the preservice teachers “who analyzed picture books stressed the artist’s ability to match the tone of the story” (p. 156). One teacher, after reading Feelings’ wordless picturebook, was inspired to study the illustrator and critically “trace[d] the artist’s evolution” spanning his career as an illustrator (p. 158). Another group of teachers who read *Musk Rat Will be Swimming,* a
story about Native America, expressed their experience in a written response. They remarked: “The illustrations complement the text; the cover design foreshadows and invites; the writer's craft creates graceful transitions in time and place, between present and remembered events, between other texts and dreamtimes and into the moment the reader shares this book” (p.158).

If we compare the responses to picturebooks between adults and children, we notice some similarities with the initial responses between these two groups. Firstly, they refer to their own lives in order to make sense of stories and illustrations. The responses of immigrant students in Arizpe’s (2009) study and preservice teachers in Wolf et al.’s (1999) research, for instance, are both driven by personal experiences. Both young and adult readers tend to recall their personal lives in order to make sense of a text. Secondly, findings on adults’ responses seem to parallel those found with older children. The analytical responses of preservice teachers in Wolf et al.’s study (1999) where the teachers examined picturebook illustrations and were so intrigued that they went on to study the illustrator, is similar to Kiefer’s (1995) study with elementary students where she found that older students were more drawn to examine the illustrations and the artists’ crafts.

Sipe’s conceptual categories of picturebook responses. Lawrence Sipe (2000, 2008) developed a framework of literary response categories for picturebooks. Drawing from years of research in elementary classrooms, Sipe (2000, pp. 264-267) proposed five conceptual categories which emerged from students’ verbal responses during read aloud sessions. The categories are:

1. Analytical. Responses that deal with the “text as an object for analysis and
interpretation” with a focus on the language and illustrations;

2. *Intertextual.* Responses that suggest readers’ “abilities to relate to the text being read aloud to other cultural texts or products;”

3. *Personal.* Responses that indicate readers’ making connections to their own lives, from their lives to the text and the other way around;

4. *Transparent.* Responses that indicate readers “intensely participating in the narrative world of the story”;

5. *Performative.* Response that suggest readers are “entering the world of the text in order to manipulate or steer it toward their own creative purposes.”

Integrated in these conceptual categories are the aspects of *stance, action, and function.* Stance refers to how readers position themselves in relation to the text. Action indicates what readers “do with texts.” Function applies “to the various ways in which texts may be used” (pp. 268-269). Sipe argues that these three aspects in conjunction with the five categories help us to see the synergetic nature of what are seemingly isolated categories of picturebook responses. Finally, from his research Sipe also found that readers respond to texts through resisting the text itself. Sipe (2008, pp. 166-167) contends that a “personal response did not consist solely of drawing the story to the self in various ways; it could also represent a personal distancing from the story” (p. 166). Sipe identifies three categories of responses signaling reader’ resistance:

- *Preferential or categorical resistance.* Children resist some stories after a cursory examination (e.g., “I don’t like stories like that”).

- *Engaged or kinetic resistance.* Readers evaluate literature based on their immediate emotional reaction to it (e.g., “This story is just too sad—I like happy stories”).
• **Exclusionary resistance.** This is based on issues of representation: who is represented and how they are represented (e.g., “I don’t see myself—I’m left out of this story!”).

**Summary**

Theories of reading response, most prominently Rosenblatt’s transactional reading theory, have anchored our understanding about the equal partnership between readers and text. When readers read, they are actively making meaning. Inherent in this understanding is a belief that the reading context, like a reader’s experience, serves as an important element in reading.

Research into readers’ responses to literature reveals some common characteristics of the mental activities involved. These include relating through personal experience and connecting to other text (Beach & Hynds 1991). Gender (Beach & Hynds, 1991), human development (age and intelligence) and socioeconomic background are other factors that influence the ways readers respond to literature (Roser, Martinez, & Wood, 2011). External factors such as a physical context (time and place) and teacher’s instruction are also found to affect readers’ responses (Beach & Hynds, 1991; Roser, Martinez, & Wood, 2011). A more recent study identifies some responses as “performative” which involves physical movements, characterized by playfulness and humor (Sipe, 2008). Finally, responses to literature can also include readers’ resistance toward text. Readers resist stories considered discordant with their life experiences. They show their resistance through verbal and nonverbal responses signaling their “distancing from the story” (Sipe, 2008, p. 166). Enciso’s (1997) work on cultural mapping in literature response sheds further light on cultural resources that readers draw upon and the social allegiances they align/distance themselves from as they interpret texts.
Reader response inquiry in international classrooms suggests that the application of reader response theory in teaching has encouraged students’ engagement (Hetami, 2010), made them receptive to different opinions, and engaged them in peer collaboration (Mulyana, 2001). This line of inquiry also reveals the presence of personal values (e.g., religious values) that students draw upon when responding to stories (Widodo & Saraswati, 2009).

Research about the study of literature in teacher education suggests that student teachers gain, among other things, a knowledge of literature, which may affect a change of attitude about racial awareness (Floden & Meniketti, 2005); for instance, when they take children’s literature courses. Consequently, such courses could shape their teaching practices. Inquiry into student teachers’ responses in teacher education reveals the critical need for providing literature courses for student teachers. This teaching should include showing student teachers ways to conduct a literary study (Eeds & Peterson, 1994), and the ethics of literary reading (i.e., to not be moralistic or didactic) (Hade, 1993). Research that attempts to trace student teachers’ movement from being a reader to a teacher offers only sparse information. Much of the information is contextually situated with the individual student teacher. For instance, a minority background student teacher who felt excluded from stories and characters that were distant from her life saw teaching opportunities after being exposed to multicultural literature in teacher education. If there is one common theme amongst these studies, it is that memorable reading experiences help individuals envision ways of becoming a teacher.

Literature should be read in a literary way. In this way literature can facilitate children’s cognitive development (Rosenblatt, 1995): storytelling, human connection
(Dyson & Genishi, 1994), imagination, and critical thinking (Sloan, 2003). What is more, picturebooks, a unique format of literature (Sipe, 2008; Nodelman, 1988) and an art object (Kiefer, 1995; Marantz, 1977) that combines pictures and words, offer a total artistic experience, narrative and visual. Inquiries into picturebook responses found similar results with children and adults; these groups both draw from personal experiences in order to make sense of stories and illustrations. They are also similar in that both older children (Kiefer, 1995) and adult readers (Wolf et al., 1999) tend to be analytical in responding to picturebooks. (Wolf et al., 1999).
Chapter 3: Procedures of the Study

Rationale for a Qualitative Approach

This research employed a qualitative research paradigm. Initially developed in the field of anthropology, qualitative research is a common method of inquiry in reader response work (Marshall, 2000). In addition, there are two other reasons this method was selected. First, it closely matched my view on what constitutes “ways of knowing,” and I agree with Glesne (2006) that “the research methods you choose say something about your views on what qualifies as valuable knowledge” (p. 4). In this research, I came to view the world as dynamic and socially constructed, and a qualitative method allowed me to inquire into the social phenomena consistent with this view. Secondly, I chose a qualitative method because I believe, along with Creswell (2012), that the method would be “best suited to address a research problem (italic is original) in which [one does] not know the variables and need[s] to explore” (p. 16). I came to the research setting with a set of research questions about which the literature provided only minimal information—reader response among Indonesian preservice teachers. I needed to explore my research problem in order to gain some understanding. As Creswell remarks: “Exploring a problem is characteristic of qualitative research” (p. 63). In a nutshell, a qualitative approach was chosen for the present study primarily because it supported my belief about the ways of researchers can come to know the socially constructed world, and the
approach afforded the opportunity to inquire into the focus of this research, which is reader responses.

**Research Design: Teacher Researcher**

Research design is defined as “the plan for engaging in systematic inquiry” (Hubbard & Power, 2003, p. 12). The research design of my research was based on the tradition of teachers as researchers, teachers who research their own classrooms. Mills (2007) distinguishes teacher researchers as those who “participate in their own inquiries, and act as both teacher and researcher at the same time” (p. 3). The teacher researcher research design fitted with my research project in which I conducted research in a class where I taught.

**Narrative Methods.** The theoretical underpinning of this research grounded in the literature which speaks to the basic human need for story, and on the understanding that readers draw upon their life experiences in order to make sense of a text. The narrative method is particularly suitable for my research because we share similar purposes (Mills & Airasian, 2012; McGinley et al., 1997). McGinley and colleagues’ description of the functions of the stories fit especially well with my research. They posit: The narrative as a method has a potential “to function as a way of understanding one’s own and other’s experience…” i.e., participating in storied worlds (p. 44). What’s more, the narrative methods also point to “the influence that stories may have on the development of an individuals’ character or self” (p. 46). The narrative method can take the form in documents (e.g., personal journals) and oral histories (e.g., storytelling) (Mills & Airasian, 2012). There has been a growing interest on using narrative method in teacher education research. Mills and Airasian argue that the use of narrative method in
teacher education research is empowering for it “gives an opportunity to validate the practitioners’ voice.” Moreover, the method also “can contribute to our understanding of the complex world of the classroom and the nuances of the educational enterprise that exist between teachers and students” (p. 401). In this research, the narrative method was useful for understanding the Indonesian preservice teachers’ responses to the instruction and literature being taught in the introduction to children’s literature course.

Descriptions of the Context and Population

The aim of this study is to provide a description of the responses of Indonesian preservice teachers to the instruction and literature used in an introduction to children’s literature course. As a former teacher educator in Indonesia, I had planned to conduct the research in a literature class that I would teach in an Indonesian teacher-training program. I was aware of several Indonesian teacher-training programs that could accommodate this research. When I approached the university from which I graduated, the head of the teacher education program, where I had earned my bachelor’s of education and spent two years serving as a junior instructor, responded positively to my research plan. He granted me the permission to teach a core course on an introduction to children’s literature to students in the 5th semester (junior) of the teacher education program and let me consult with the faculty member who was in charge of the course.

Site

The context of this research was at the English Education department, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Jakarta, (Jakarta State Islamic University)—where I earned my teaching degree and later spent two years teaching as a junior instructor. The university is located on the southern part of Jakarta, the capital city. The university has a long history
of serving the needs of higher education for the Indonesian Muslims—who are the
country’s major population (UIN website). According to the UIN’s website, the English
Education department’s focus is to “produce scholars with expertise in English teaching,
with complete mastery of the materials as well as the methodology” who will “become
professional teachers at [Islamic] elementary and secondary schools.” Required courses
include English language knowledge and skills, teaching pedagogies, and Islamic studies.

Access

As an alumni and a former instructor, I had a relatively easy access to the English
Education program. Since I had left for a graduate school, I had maintained
communications with the program chair and staff, and communicated my interest in
doing the field research in the program. As soon as my research documents were ready
for submission to the International Review Board (IRB), I contacted the program for a
permission letter, which they immediately provided to me. They also arranged a class that
I could teach and do research in for a semester. Initially it had been arranged that I would
teach a specially designed introduction to children’s literature course, inviting students of
different cohorts to sign up for the class. However, a few weeks before the semester
began, a member of the program staff informed me that I would be teaching a regular
core course for junior students on an introduction to literature. I presented my
introduction to children’s literature picturebooks syllabus (which I had already presented
to my candidacy exams committee) to the program chair and faculty who usually taught
the course. I explained the aims and the objectives of the course and made it clear that the
course was flexible enough for any necessary modifications. They indicated that I could
proceed and use the syllabus as it was.
Research Participants and Case Study Selection

In choosing research participants and case study preservice teachers, I followed Koeber and McMichael’s (2008) techniques of convenience and purposeful samplings. The convenience sampling allowed me to select participants whose access was easy to secure. My research site was met the convenience criterion. The convenience sampling also allowed me to select participants whose access was easy to secure. I conducted my research in class consisting of preservice teachers who all came from the same cohort. Further as part of, I established some “predefined traits” (p.467) or criteria for participant recruitment that fit my research purpose (see appendix B for a participation invitation). For example, since my research entailed students’ engagement with literature mainly in English, participants had to have a certain level of English proficiency. Fortunately, the preservice teachers recruited for this study had already passed an English proficiency test administered by the program. As for the case study selection, I considered factors such as gender and ethnicity (diversity) and the level of participation in the course. The level of participation meant that I selected case study preservice teachers from whom I could generate a wealth of information (Agee, 1997). Agee’s (1997) criteria such as articulateness and an ability to convey experiences clearly (both orally and through writing) for literary responses investigation were particularly relevant for selecting the case study preservice teachers.

The research participants were juniors in the department of English Education. Forty-four presevice teachers signed up for the course and agreed to participate in the research, eleven of them volunteered to become focal participants in the research. The case study presevice teachers consisted of six females and four males of diverse ethnic
backgrounds (Javanese, Sundanese, Melayu, Acehnese). In addition to the actual course sessions, the case study preservice teachers were asked to meet at least once a week for extended activities related to the course.

Being students in an Islamic affiliated institution, the preservice teachers were obliged to follow certain dress code. They were supposed to wear modest Muslim clothes according to the university dress code: long loose fitting clothes (females and males) and head covers (females). Dress codes were posted on a board at the building main entrance. In reality, however, the preservice teachers freely interpreted the dress codes. Females, although they wore head covers, tended to wear any fashionable style, as long as the clothes covered their legs and arms. It was not unusual to see them sporting tight pants and shirts. Similarly, male preservice teachers would complement their long jeans with casual t-shirts. My typical teaching outfit was a blazer over a shirt and long pants, which I completed with a headscarf.

**Cultural Context: My Story**

This is a story about reading and literature in Indonesian schools from my perspective (as a student and a teacher) which provides a glimpse of the context in which this course was being taught. Literacy researchers Evelyn Arizpe and Morag Styles (2011) have done the extensive research on tracing the history of readers and their encounters with literature. Taking cue from their work (on a far smaller scale), I have decided to recount the history of my reading life. Here I employ the notion of the connections framework put forward by Arizpe and Styles, which is a lens by which we examine our current own lives through looking at the past. Looking at our own lives in
retrospect, Arizpe and Style maintain, will enable us “to reflect on our experiences and thereby deepen our enjoyment and our learning” (p. 5).

The history of my reading goes as follows: I was raised in a big traditional Islamic family. My parents, both devout Muslims, had taught me to read Holy Qur’an from before I could remember. Written in the Arabic language, I could recite the Qur’an quite well, yet I was not able to comprehend the text for the most part. Religious text was dominant in our house. In addition to the Qur’an, which each one of us owned, we also had other text related to religious matters and they, too, were mostly written in Arabic. Secular texts, like magazines, novels, and so on, began regularly coming into our house when my siblings and I attended formal schoolings (K-12). Although being religious, my parents never censored the books that came into our house or that we read. In fact they enjoyed reading non-religious texts, such as news and family related magazines. I remember, once when we received a stack of used magazines, they became a source for my mother’s new hobby, collecting recipes. In general, except for regular Qur’an recitals, I did not have any memorable experiences of any reading activity with my parents.

I could not read the Indonesian language until I was at the second grade. I remember I had an after school tutor who would let me read short stories out loud from a textbook. Books available in schools were predominantly textbooks and short stories published by the government. The themes of these texts were usually centered on friendship, respecting elders, developing good traits (perseverance, politeness). In short, these texts predominantly carried normative messages (e.g., an obedient child will be successful in life). It was through one of those state-funded publications that I was exposed to Indonesian traditional folktales. Only later did I learn that such publications
on traditional folktales by the government were part of its effort to preserve local oral tales (Sunindyo, 1987). Books in picturebooks format, like those in Western countries, were in short supply at the time. According to Sunindyo, then head of the National Library, the lack of appreciation of the profession of illustrator was to blame for the short supply of picturebooks in Indonesia.

By the end of my middle school years, religious and government texts did not interest me any longer. As far as I can recall, my interest in those texts waned when my siblings introduced me to teen magazines and novels. Captivated by these texts, I began to purchase them on my own in order to satisfy my thirst for information and stories. When I entered college, peer began to influence my reading habits more strongly. I began to read Indonesian classic literature and world literature in translation. It was also at college that I regularly updated myself on new publications at bookstores. (I should mention that collections at public libraries were mostly outdated, and so could not compete with the selection at bookstores).

When I began my teaching experiences, as a junior instructor at a teacher preparation program, I became accustomed to the textbooks in K-12 classrooms. As part of the program’s requirement, preservice teachers had to be introduced to textbooks whose contents were in line with the national tests. Textbooks were practically our only source of teaching—a practice that is still predominant in Indonesia these days.

The Course

**Designing the Course.** The course that I designed was an attempt to bring literature to the heart of teaching practices. The rationale of the course was, first and foremost, predicated upon the importance of studying literature and the critical role of
literature in education, as has been argued by many researchers and educators (Hade, 1991; Lehman, 2007; Rosenblatt, 1995; Sloan, 2003). The underlying theories that guide this course and its instruction were, most importantly, Rosenblatt’s (1995) transactional reading theory. Guided by this theory, which emphasizes the importance of the experiential nature of reading (Beach, 1993), the course provided ample opportunities for the preservice teachers to transact with literature, and a variety of ways in which they could respond. Secondly, Lev Vygotsky’s (1978) social constructivism, which emphasizes sociocultural element of human development, anchored this course instruction of the social environment for learning including the influence of peers and instructor, and a supportive physical environment.

The course’s main objective was to introduce the Indonesian preservice teachers to the theories and pedagogies of children’s literature in elementary classrooms. Focusing on picturebooks, the aim of this course was to introduce Indonesian preservice teachers to the art and the pedagogies of picturebooks, including the framework, methods of instruction, and classroom environments that foster literary learning (Lehman, 2007). The course was systematically structured to provide Indonesian preservice teachers the supports needed to study picturebooks both for themselves and for their students in the future. The first half of the course was devoted to building the preservice teachers’ knowledge and understanding about storytelling, literature, picturebooks and the art of picturebooks. The second half of the course focused on a range of issues regarding literature teaching: literacy development, classroom activities, teaching framework and methods (See appendix A for the course syllabus).
**Assigned readings.** It goes without saying that a well-structured course requires well-crafted and carefully selected reading assignments. Smith (2002), in her teaching methodology course for preservice teachers, structured her courses around reading assignments that were “informed by diverse viewpoints” (Smith, 2002, p. 57). Following in Smith’s footsteps, I selected scholarly books and professional readings for the course, pieces that could provide preservice teachers “a schema for reading” so that they were able “to pull ideas together and reflect on their teaching” (Smith, 2002, p. 60). In the following I provide a description of the course’s required texts. (Some readings were for independent, while others were for group presentations).

Cotton’s (2000) book, *Picture Books Sans Frontieres*, was published after Europe integration. The aim of this book was to enhance the mutual understandings between multilingual European countries through picturebooks. It provides a glimpse of European picturebooks from the early 17th century to the present. Targeting teachers of elementary and secondary levels, the book synthesizes research on the potential of picturebooks for classroom instruction. In chapter six, the core of the book, Cotton describes the framework for analyzing European picturebooks deemed suitable for analyzing picturebooks of different languages and cultures. In addition, since it attempts to dissect the visual and verbal relationships, and the themes, the framework affords readers a way to interrogate some ideologies that are present in picturebooks (Beach, et al., 2009).

Kiefer’s (1995) *The Potential of Picturebooks: From Visual Literacy to Aesthetic Understanding* offers a comprehensive review of and research on the art of the picturebook and its potential for visual literacy and aesthetic understanding. In chapter six, Kiefer introduces style as a criterion for the picturebook encompassing elements and
principles of art. In the children and picturebooks section, Kiefer showcases her investigation of children’s responses to picturebooks, and makes a case for the picturebook as a context for young readers’ literacy learning.

Kiefer’s (2010) *Charlotte Huck's Children's Literature*, now in the 10th edition, this book covers plenty of many aspects of children’s literature in relation to young children—from infancy to elementary levels. Kiefer devotes chapter 5 to picturebooks and provides a full description of the art of the picturebook: the definition, art and the artists, and the style. Kiefer completes the chapter with sections on the language and content aspects of the picturebook deemed equally essential in the appreciation of picturebook art. Of other interest from this book is chapter 13 on developing literature-based classroom activities; it provides countless suggestions for teaching with literature.

Lehman, Freeman, & Scharer’s (2010) *Reading Globally, K-8: Connecting Students to the World Through Literature* makes a case for the importance of studying global literature in classrooms. This book is intended for K-8 teachers who want to engage their students with studying global literature in the classrooms. Providing a framework for literary study, the book also shows ways to incorporate the framework across the curriculum. Chapter 6 titled *The Arts* makes reference to quality global picturebooks, a useful addition to the discussion of the picturebook art.

Sloan’s (2003) *The Child as Critic: Developing Literacy Through Literature* makes a strong case of why literature is essential for the development of students’ minds and why literary study should be more presence in classrooms. This book orients readers to some unifying principles of literature, such as genres. Part three on theory and practice is of particularly interest; in this section the book gives an account of the connection
between literature and the human need for story, and how a wide exposure to literature can help readers develop as critics.

Trelease’s (2006) *The Read-aloud Handbook* provides one of the most comprehensive discussions about reading aloud. It begins with an argument about the importance of reading aloud for promoting reading enjoyment (i.e., life long readers) and literacy development, providing recommendations on when to begin reading aloud to children. Considerations of age and book selection for reading aloud are also included. Of particular relevance is chapter three which addresses the stages of read-aloud. Here the author describes framework for reading aloud to a range of audiences including children, teens, and adults.

**Criteria of literature (picturebooks) selection.** In selecting literature to be included in the course, I considered the unique quality of the picturebook as literature and an art object. Evaluating picturebooks as a literary art object, one needs to use evaluative criteria of that reflect the basic definitions of picturebooks as unique art objects that offer a total art experience (Bader, 1976; Kiefer, 1992) with pictures and narration (Nodelman, 1988; Sipe, 2008). The following criteria are not only useful practically but are also helpful for evaluating picturebooks as literary art objects (for picturebook selection list, see appendix A in the course syllabus).

**Criteria for picturebook art evaluation.** In Charlotte Huck’s Children’s Literature in the picturebooks chapter, Kiefer (2010) highlights five aspects of picturebooks that can serve as a basis for a picturebook evaluation: content, illustrations, medium and style illustrations, format, and overall evaluation. In evaluating picturebook content, Kiefer suggests focusing on issues, such as, age appropriateness, character development and
stereotyping, and word-picture theme development. A picturebook illustration can be evaluated by asking questions such as “In what ways do the illustrations help to create the meaning of the text?” and “Are the pictures accurate and consistent with the text?” Questions can also be directed to a picturebook’ medium and style of illustration, e.g., “What medium has the illustrator chosen to use?” “How has the illustrator used line, shape, and color to extend the meaning of the story?” The format of a picturebook also matters. Practical questions such as “Does the size of the book seem appropriate to the content?” and “Is the type of the design well chosen for the theme and purpose of the book?” might be asked. Finally, as part of the overall evaluation of a picturebook, Kiefer suggests asking questions such as “How is this work similar to or different from other works by this author and/or illustrator” and “will this book make a contribution to the growing body of children’s literature? How lasting do you think it will be?” (p. 182).

Additional criteria for picturebook evaluation. Lehman, et al. (2010) devote one chapter to suggesting ways in which teachers can select and evaluate global literature to be used for teaching. Centering on criteria concerning the authenticity of the literature and its merit, this chapter includes nearly every aspect crucial to evaluating global literature. In evaluating the authenticity of a book, a teacher may raise questions about an author’s background, accuracy, stereotyping, and readers’ perspective. When it comes to evaluating the literary merit of a book, Lehman, et al. differentiate the evaluation questions according to genre, fiction (e.g., themes, illustration) and nonfiction (e.g., content accuracy and writing craft).

Picturebooks selected for use in the study. In addition to the aforementioned criteria, the following picturebooks were selected for the themes that matched with the
teaching topics and the interests of the preservice teachers, as indicated in their responses (e.g., from weekly journal). Furthermore, in selecting the books I also wanted to introduce the preservice teachers to a wide range of book genres. The first three books (The Bird Hunter, The Gift of the Crocodile, and Yeh-Shen) were chosen because their themes matched with the teaching topics (storytelling tradition and cultural conventions in picturebook illustrations). The other books each represented different genres including nonfiction (The Librarian of Basra), humor (Ghosts in the House!), and history (Of Thee I Sing).

*The Bird Hunter: An Indonesian Folktale.*

Written by Chia Hearn Chek and illustrated by Kwan Shan Mei (1972), *The Bird Hunter* tells the story of a king, an archery lover, who desires to marry off his daughter to the best archer. Upon hearing the news about an opportunity to marry the king’s daughter, Wajan, a simple village man who knows nothing about archery arranges a plot to impress the king. He presents the king one-eyed birds. “Your Majesty, I shot all my birds with the bow and arrow. I always shoot them in the eye.” Impressed, the king offers him his daughter in marriage. During the wedding party, the King asks Wajan to show off his archery skill in front of the guests. Nearly fainting, Wajan holds a bow clumsily skyward. Impatient with Wajan, a man slaps Wajan on the back. The arrow hits a bird in the neck. Upon seeing this, the king is even more impressed with Wajan and tells him: “You are indeed the greatest archer I have ever seen.” Still recovering from his shock, Wajan tries his trick again. “If not for someone who hit me on the back, I always shoot my birds in the eye and not in the neck.” He declares, “I’ll never touch the bow and
arrow ever again.” Wajan indeed never has to show his archery skill again. He enjoys his marriage with the king’s daughter.

*The Bird Hunter* illustrations appear to use watercolors. The illustrations use a deep hue of colors suggesting a balmy tropical setting. Thin lines and the curvaceous shape of the drawings suggest an exotic oriental kingdom. Characters depicted resemble figures in Indonesian traditional performances (e.g., masks and puppet theatres) including clothing in the traditional batik. These illustrations are set against white background, accentuating the colorful illustrations while at the same time suggesting a story from a faraway place.

*The Gift of the Crocodile: A Cinderella Story*

Written and illustrated by a children’s author Judy Sierra and a Coretta Scott King winner artist Reynold Ruffin (2000), this is an Indonesian Cinderella story. Damura’s tormented life begins after her stepmother and stepsister move in her house. They force her do chores of a servant. During this hard life, Damura finally meets her magic helper, a grandmother crocodile who offers her help whenever it is needed. When a prince holds a party in order to find a prospective wife, Damura turns to grandmother crocodile for help. The crocodile outfits her with a sparkling gold sarong and blouse. Completing her elegant look is a pair of golden slippers. The prince falls in love with Damura immediately but she has to depart hastily leaving him a golden slipper as a clue. The prince finally find hers and they marry. Unable overcome their jealousy, the stepmother and stepsister concoct a plan that nearly kills Damura. The grandmother crocodile saves Damura and sends the stepmother and stepsister off to the dark forest and they are never seen again.
The illustrations are replete with luscious green leafy plants, colorful floras, and the warmth of a sun conveying a tropical landscape image. Pictures are framed in border pages, whereas texts are borderless, evoking an oral storytelling event between a narrator and a reader about a story from a distant land. This sense of storytelling is also evoked from the point of view of the pictures. A number of bird’s eye views (Kiefer frequently uses the term) provide readers with a perspective from above the ground. There are a couple of pages with smaller illustrations suggesting a time lapse. These show the stepmother’s incessantly harsh treatments of the main character, Damura, and the commotion surrounding the royal wedding. The story ends with pictures of a smiling Damura, the prince, and their children playing by a pond under a clear open sky, on a borderless page—suggesting a feeling of relief and hope for Damura’s happiness for years to come.

*Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*

Considered the oldest variant of the Cinderella story ever told, *Yeh-Shen* (1982), retold by Ai-Ling Louie, is a tale an orphan girl left in the care of her cruel stepmother and sister. Yeh-Shen has a loyal fish friend who has magical powers helps to transform Yeh-Shen into a beautiful princess with whom the prince falls in love at first sight. After some troubles finding Yeh-Shen, and using a gold slippers that Yeh-Shen has left behind, the prince finally find Yeh-Shen and they marry. They turn their backs on the cruel stepmother and sister who are later “crushed to death in a shower of flying stones.” Caldecott winner Ed Young’s illustrations are “set in panels like those of a folding a painted screen” reminding of the reader of traditional Chinese painting. Kiefer (2010) adds, “Ed Young’s depictions of costumes and footwear reflect his research into textiles,
consuming, and festivals of the ancient Hmong people. In addition, each shimmering pastel and watercolor illustration reminds us, in shape or shadow, of the contour of the magic fish” (p. 247)

*The Librarian of Basra*

Written and illustrated by Jeanette Winter (2005), *The Librarian of Basra* tells a true story about an extraordinary heroine named Alia Muhammad Baker, the chief librarian in Basra, a city in Iraq. Baker’s great courage helped to rescue almost the entire library collection days before the library was set on fire by the US and UK armies. The book dust jacket goes on to say: “In a war-stricken country where civilians—especially women—have little power, this true story about a librarian's struggle to save her community's priceless collection of books reminds us all how, throughout the world, the love of literature and the respect for knowledge know no boundaries.” The story’s illustrations are set in framed borders suggesting a storytelling from a distant place. Jeanette Winter used bright acrylic and ink, which serve to tone down the sense of destruction caused by the war.

*Ghosts in the House!*

Written and illustrated by Kazuno Kohara (2010) *Ghosts in the House! is a* spooky story with a hint of humor. This story tells about a little witch girl and her companion who invade an empty house filled with ghosts who have been living comfortably there. The little witch and companion chase the ghosts relentlessly. They wash and dry the ghosts and transform them into something useful: table clothes, curtains, and blankets. In the end, the little witch and companion and the freshly cleaned ghosts, live peacefully ever after. According to a review from librarypoint.org “the charm
of the book comes from the simple text combined with bold illustrations. The limited use of color (orange, black, and white) allows the pictures to jump off the page and create a powerful Halloween world for you to enter. White ghosts have a texture and dimension as if someone had stamped them onto the pages with a wood block. All of these stylistic choices make the book feel like a hidden gem from the 1950’s, when really it was only published a couple of years ago.”

*Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters*

*Of Thee I Sing* is written by Barack Obama and illustrated by Loren Long (2010). The book is an open, illustrated letter from Obama to his daughters Malia and Sasha telling about American national figures who have shaped the nation: from painter Georgia O’Keeffe, to the US president who abolished slavery Abraham Lincoln, to farmworker activist leader Cesar Chavez. In each figure Obama asks a question. For example, as he talks about O’Keeffe, he asks: “Have I told you that you are creative?” The book dust jacket explains: “President Obama sees the traits of these heroes within his own children, and within all of America’s children.” Using acrylic paintings, Loren Long’s “evocative illustrations…at once capture the personalities and achievements of these great Americans and the innocence and promise of childhood.”

**Data Collection Methods**

Glesne (2006) posits that research employing a qualitative approach traditionally will “depend on a variety of methods for gathering data” in order to determine “the trustworthiness of the data” (p. 36). This research used multiple methods of data collection. In considering what data collection techniques to use, I followed Glesne’s advice to choose techniques that were likely to: (1) elicit the data needed to gain an
understanding of the phenomena in question; (2) contribute different perspectives on the issue; and (3) make effective use of the time available for data collection (p. 36). So, I created a chart listing my research questions and kinds of data collection methods that enabled me to answer those questions (see appendix E for data collection chart). The following are the data collection methods:

Survey

I used surveys to map out the research landscape and to generate the “baseline data” serving as a “starting point” for my ‘understanding” (Hubbard & Power, 2003, p. 62). In these surveys, I gathered information regarding the preservice teachers’ basic profiles and reading histories. Questions such as name, gender, ethnicity, and city of origin were listed first in order to generate students’ basic profile information. For the reading history survey, I reproduced a reading survey material retrieved from NCTE/IRA’s ReadWriteThink website. Questions such as “why do people read” and “what kind of books do you like to read” were asked to capture the preservice teachers’ thinking about books and reading, and related experiences (see appendix F for surveys).

Interviews

The value of doing interviews in classroom research, Dyson and Genishi (2005) argue is to “deepen an understanding of what we observe in the classroom and sometimes help to interpret observed activities from participants’ perspectives” (p. 76), through “their own words” (p. 78). I conducted three semi-structured individual interviews (adapted from Seidman’s (2006) three-interview series) the beginning, middle, and end of my data collection period. A semi-structured interview allowed me to ask questions and probe for further clarification (Glesne, 2006) with the case study students. In the first
interview, I asked the students a set of questions (e.g., *tell me about the first time you learned to read*) that provided me information about their early experiences related to reading and literature before entering the English Education program. The purpose of this initial interview was to generate participants’ *life history*, which “establishes the context of the participants’ experience,” because in the absence of other context, “there is little possibility of exploring the meaning of an experience” (Seidman, 2006, p. 17). The second interview, which took place at the midterm (session 10), was aimed to find out the details of preservice teachers’ present experience. So the questions related specifically to them—as student teachers enrolled in an introduction to children’s literature course (e.g., *what is your typical day as a student teacher, from the time you’re up until you sleep*?). The second interview enabled “participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs” (p. 17). The third interview, conducted at the end of the research, was designed to “ask participants to reflect on the meaning of their experience” (p. 18). I asked the preservice teachers questions that encouraged their reflection about the course and their learning (e.g., *given what you have observed and participated in this course, what do you learn about reading and literature?*) (see appendix G for interviews).

**Audio and video recordings**

As a researcher and an instructor of the course, my ability to observe and document the observation was limited. In this research, I depended heavily on the audio and video recorders so that I could listen, watch, and observe details multiple times (Glesne, 2006). For recording, I had a digital video recorder mounted on a tripod to minimize shakiness. Complementing the rigidity of the video recorder, I also used a small
flip camera enabling me to flexibly move and zoom in on the object; this was especially useful in a smaller group discussions. An assistant was hired to help with the preparation and operation of the digital recorders so that I could focus on the teaching. A digital voice recorder was also used, mainly for the interviews.

**The Preservice Teachers Artifacts**

Throughout the course, the preservice teachers were required to turn in various written assignments, done individually and collectively (group projects). The assignments included individual work (journals, reading logs), and group projects (picturebook making, literature-based teaching unit project). These written assignments served as important data sources for my research, especially when my purpose was to investigate the preservice teachers’ responses to the course instruction and to literature being taught in the course. In addition, I also took into account any documents preservice teachers brought in to the course (e.g., family photographs) and “anything within the classroom or school that might be useful” (Hubbard & Power, 2003, p. 60) to this study. For instance, by asking the preservice teachers to tell their history of reading in a bookmaking assignment, I attempted to solicit family photographs and other documents that could add to my understanding about the preservice teachers’ past and present reading profiles. The preservice teachers’ artifacts were then collected, organized, and labeled according to the case study preservice teachers’ individual folder.

**Reflective Log**

A log is one data collection tool that teacher researchers can use to record their observation (Phillips & Carr, 2006). Meant to be used in conjunction with other types of observation (e.g., audiotapes and videotapes), a teacher researcher keeps a regular log
(i.e. a researcher journal) on things that catch her attention during observation:

“everything, from funny things she heard, to her worries about management, to what she would do differently next time” (p. 82). Used this way, a reflective log allows teacher researchers to observe and record their personal feelings or insights. As a data source, a reflective log informs the discussion of the research questions, particularly concerning the questions of the preservice teachers’ responses to the course instruction.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

A data analysis in a qualitative method follows an inductive procedure: researchers will put together the different pieces of data sources in some fashion (*triangulation*) in order to understand the phenomena that emerge in the research context (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). In doing data analysis, Creswell (2012) advises that it is important for researchers to follow a certain procedure from data organization to findings presentation, “so that you can form answers to your research question” (p. 236). In this research I adopted Glesne’s (2006) data analysis procedure which is constituted of three phases of data analysis procedure. During data analysis in phase 1 was mainly focused on transcribing digital recordings and coding data as soon they were collected (*preliminary coding*). In phase 2, data analysis focused on creating relationships preliminary coding into a narrative memo (*analytical memos*). In phase 3, conducted after data collection was completed, all data were (re) coded, categorized, and linked to relevant theories. (*See appendix E for data analysis chart*).
Phase 1: Preliminary Coding and Transcribing

Table 3.1. Sample of Preliminary Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preservice Teacher Name</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Literature Instruction</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zahra</td>
<td>This was a good story. I've learned something from this story that being a “kind person is always the right thing to do. So, if there are many people who don’t like us, as long as we do the right things, we will survive. The pain is just temporarily, if we still believe in ourselves, we will solve the problem and will live happily ever after.”</td>
<td>As a student teacher, I learned how to get my student focused on my storytelling. Using pictures, we can ask students to predict the pictures in relation to the story. When Miss Tati asked us to tell our story with our friends, we learned how to be a good storyteller. We learned how to be brave, because as a teacher later, we must stay standing in front of students and we don’t need to be nervous anymore.</td>
<td>But as a university student. I want to know about literature in general, not just in the story picturebook. I also want to learn world literature, like Shakespeare. Indonesian story is important, but I think it’s good if we could learn stories from different part of the world. I think that that will be useful to our new knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Creswell (2012) recommends that researchers start analyzing data as soon as the first data are collected. In this stage of data analysis, I conducted preliminary coding and transcribing. In preliminary coding, I did what Glesne (2006) refers to as creating “rudimentary coding schemes” that is as “the process of naming and locating your data bits proceeds, your categories divide and subdivide,” a process that helped me to “to develop a more specific focus or more relevant questions” (p. 150). The preliminary coding was conducted on the following data sources: audio recording (interviews), the preservice teachers’ artifacts (weekly journals), the reflective log, and videotapes (classroom activities).
My typical activities in phase 1 data analysis took several forms. Soon after finished teaching every day, I transferred videos to my computer to watch later in the evening. I then read through the weekly journals the preservice teachers had submitted that day. From those I highlighted comments deemed relevant to the research questions. I selected the case study students’ journals and typed up their comments. Using a chart, I divided the comments into three categories: literature responses, literature instruction, and other. Other was for comments that appeared not having a direct connection with the first two categories but might contribute to the analysis (see sample of preliminary coding).

In addition, I also wrote a reflection about my thoughts, feelings, and direct observations about the class that day. When I watched the videos later in the evening, I usually updated my reflections adding some comments about specific incidents or students’ interactions that I did not notice earlier. Early data analysis also occurred when I transcribed. I transcribed all the interviews and began gathering meaning from the data. Having done a transcription myself, I agree with Dyson and Genishi (2005) who posit that when “we listen to or watch a tape for purposes of transcription, we inevitably begin to mull over the meanings of what we hear and type. That is, we begin to analyze our data” (p. 71).

Phase 2: Analytical Memos

A systematic data analysis procedure is strongly emphasized in teacher research. Glesne (2006) recommends keeping research memos as “a way to examine systematically where you are and where you should consider going” (p. 150). For researchers, analytical memos could serve as “an avenue to examine data at a greater level of abstraction and to
explore hypotheses, relationships and explanations contained within the data” (Birks, et al. 2008, p. 73). The Center for Evaluation and Research at University of California-Davis describes in its website some characteristics of analytical memos:

Analytical memos are write-ups or mini-analyses about what you think you are learning during the course of your evaluation. They are typically written both during and after data collection. They can be a couple sentences or a few pages in length; whatever is needed to flesh out concepts and patterns that may be emerging in the data. Throughout your evaluation you should step back and write about not only the process of collecting data, but more importantly, what you are seeing in the data (or not seeing). Memos can be summaries of your major findings or they can be comments and reflections on particular aspects of your evaluation. Writing memos also provides an outlet for you to think about any additional data that would be helpful to collect in order to fully “Tell Your Story.”

I decided to write an analytical memo because I thought it would give me room to flexibly code emerging data without becoming overly concerned about a theoretical framework. In this sense I attempted to make sense of the data from the ground up (grounded theory research).

Another benefit of writing an analytical memo is that it also allows people to access what the researchers have learned thus far (Hubbard & Power, 2003), “to communicate research progress to interested others, keeping them informed of the whats and hows and giving them a chance for input along the way” (Glesne, 2006, p. 151). Viewed this way, analytical memos were a way to report my research journey to my academic advisor and to make sure that my research was on the right track. I wrote
analysed memos for each session meeting. I gathered the preservice teachers’ comments (the comments that I had divided into the categories of literature responses, literature instruction, and other). In each category, I looked for common themes and created a narration using the students’ own words. As I thought about this activity, I referred to my research questions that were centered on a) responses to the course instruction, and b) the responses to literature that were being taught in the class. Here is a sample of an analytical memo that I wrote based on preservice teachers’ 3rd week journals.

As they began to read Cinderella picturebook variant from China and Indonesia, students pointed out different aspects about the picturebooks related to the stories. They drew a comparison about the two books: literary product, art objects, and the artistic process. Students compared the books in terms of how the illustrations might reflect cultural significance. Despite the similar elements of story, they believed that they still “can learn something new” if they “investigate’ the books carefully. They said: “From both story, we can find the different things about Indonesia and China story like the symbol (Crocodile-Fish), customs (Batik-Qipao), background (Archipelago-Sun), and the letters (Horizontal-Vertical).” So, there’s no such thing as “common pictures if you can see more detail.

**Phase 3: Post Data Collection Analysis**

Phase 3 data analysis began several weeks after data collection was completed. (There was a short transition period between leaving the site in Indonesia and returning to the US). This gap afforded me time during which I was able to reflect on the research following conclusion of data collection. I also immersed myself in scholarly readings on
data analysis during this time. These readings helped inform me about the kinds of analytical approaches best suited to the nature of my research. For instance, while my analysis still focused on the data that supported the findings related to reader response and literature teaching, in this stage I also tried to explicate a range of themes included in these findings. So, I returned to the analytical memos and looked for some of the major themes discussed. For example, when the preservice teachers had discussions about picturebooks, I looked for subthemes related to picturebooks (e.g., illustrations, authors/illustrators). I describe this data reporting in the next section.

**Reporting the Data**

**Descriptive Data: The Organization of the Course**

In an effort to provide a rich description about the setting in which the responses occurred during this study, I will report the data by first describing the organization of the course, including my introduction to literature response and literature teaching to Indonesian preservice teachers. The physical descriptions include the classroom setting, access to books, and the management of the course. An equally important part of the descriptive data is the description of the course activities related to literature responses. These descriptions include all course activities (e.g., reading aloud, weekly journals) that were designed to introduce the preservice teachers to literature and elicit their responses.

**Findings from Questions 1 and 2: Preservice Teachers’ Responses to the Course Instruction and the Literature Being Taught**

In reporting the findings for question 1, I will describe the major themes which emerged from the preservice teachers’ responses during the study. These themes represented what the preservice teachers’ highlighted in their discussions over the
semester. The themes were culled primarily from data in weekly journals, combined with those from reading aloud, interviews, and my reflective log. Data reporting for question 2 will be done in several ways. First, I will present the narrative descriptions of the preservice teachers’ responses to individual picturebooks and the major themes that emerged from their responses to each book. These themes were culled from the weekly journals, and other data sources including interviews and reading aloud. Then, using the same pool of data, I will present the preservice teachers’ literary responses that have been coded using Sipe’s (2000, 2008) picturebook literary response categories. Finally, I will conclude the findings with the tales of two preservice teachers. The two tales are aimed to provide a micro description of the preservice teachers’ responses about who they were as readers and future teachers. In addition to Sipe’s categories, I will also use Enciso’s (1997) work on cultural mapping in an effort to understand the sociocultural influences in the two preservice teachers’ responses related to literature.

**Trustworthiness**

One important aspect in a qualitative research is to establish trustworthiness (Bowen, 2008) or research validity (Glesne, 2006). In establishing the trustworthiness for the present research, I followed some of the verification procedures outlined by Creswell (1998, as cited in Glesne, 2006, pp. 37-38) throughout the study:

1. A prolonged engagement—I stayed at the research site for about six months, from August 2012 to January 2013, both teaching and doing observations.

2. Data triangulation—I used multiple data collection methods (e.g., observations, interviews), multiple sources (e.g., 11 case study preservice teachers), and multiple theoretical perspectives.
3. Member checking—In attempt to keep my research in the right track and to report the progress, I wrote three analytical memos that I shared to my academic advisor.

4. Rich, thick description—In presenting the findings, I provide thick description of the environment and the context where the results of the study occurred.

5. Negative case analysis—I present a section on negative case analysis showcasing a sample of seemingly disconfirming evidence in the research.

**Chapter 3 Summary**

I began this chapter by giving a justification for why I chose a qualitative research methodology and narrative methods for my research design. I then provide information about the cultural context of the setting. The section on the context and population explains the course design, the selection of course texts and instructional activities, and the research participant selection. The data collection methods section details the multiple techniques I used to procure the data in order to answer the research questions. The procedures of data analysis are conducted in three stages: the first one occurs in the preliminary coding; the second one is the monthly analytical memos; and finally, the analysis that is conducted after the research finishes. These stages indicate the gradual process of data analysis from the very beginning, during the ongoing study, and at the conclusion of research.
Chapter 4: Descriptive Data and Findings of the Study

Descriptive Data: The Course Organization and Context of the Findings

This study’s research questions focused on: 1) Indonesian preservice teachers’ responses to instruction in an introduction to children’s literature course, and 2) their responses to the literature taught in the course. As I began my analysis, I constantly compared data by doing multiple readings of the data sources collected for this dissertation.

I thought back to how I had introduced Indonesian preservice teachers to different ways in which they could respond to literature. Similarly, I thought back to how I had introduced the preservice teachers to the idea of teaching with literature. I designed and taught the course based on the assumption that the preservice teachers enrolled in the class had only minimal experience with literary response, let alone with the teaching of literature. For instance, their reading surveys revealed that few of them had any experience with book clubs or discussions.

Based in these understandings, I wanted to provide the preservice teachers with basic knowledge about why it is important to study and discuss literature, and to develop a deep understanding of literature. Moreover, it was also my intention to introduce the preservice teachers the ways in which literature could be used in classroom instruction. These intentions were reflected in the course syllabus. During the first part I taught literature concepts, whereas in the second half I introduced literature teaching methods.
However, I did not know if I had effectively delivered that message in my teaching. I wondered if there was a connection between the ways the course had been introduced to the Indonesian preservice teachers and their responses to literature and literature teaching. This part of the chapter was heavily dependent on data from my teaching, primarily reflection logs and observation notes, which were then compared with other data sources, (e.g., preservice teachers artifacts, and interviews).

**The Classroom Setting**

The English Education program occupied the fourth floor of the seven-storey building that housed the university’s school of education. My course met in a room a few doors down from the program office. Like most rooms in the building, the classroom was painted white and was free of any decorations (words or pictures). In the front was a white board, and overlapping it was a white screen which reflected light from a projector installed on the ceiling. The weather was typically humid around 85-90 degrees Fahrenheit. The room was not air-conditioned. The air circulation came from glass windows but only few of them were ever opened due in part to the traffic noise from pedestrians and motorcycles. Another source of air circulation was through the doors. However, that was also problematic because of the occasional noise from the hall. In order to let the breezes in we often had to bear with some noise.

The preservice teachers sat in individual wooden chairs. The chairs were arranged in a rows. The preservice teachers faced the front where the instructor was standing—a typical seating arrangement at the university. I changed this arrangement to a semi-circle at the beginning of the class. I intended to create a classroom conducive to literature learning (Lehman, 2007), and a space in which we could have group discussions.
Access to Book

In terms of access to books, I provided books that related to the course. I carried a big tote bag containing picturebooks and a couple of non-picturebook literature books in both fiction and nonfiction to each class session. At the beginning of each class I arranged the books on a desk so that the preservice teachers could see the books that were available for check out. I told the preservice teachers explicitly that the books were for borrowing. They were allowed to check out books at the end of each session. I created a simple checkout system using a piece of paper on which was listed the borrower’s names, the title of the book and the date the book was checked out. I also explained that books had to be returned before borrowing new ones. This practice seemed to impress the preservice teachers. They looked forward to seeing which picturebooks I brought to class and were eager to check out a book as soon as class finished. Those who borrowed the books from me said they read them aloud to their students and younger family members. Some also said that they began lending books to their own students. One preservice teacher who worked as a part time teacher even said that she imitated the way I displayed picturebooks in her class. The books that she displayed caught her students’ attention and they were curious to hear her read them aloud.

Apart from the books I brought in, the preservice teachers also had access to books from the English Education program library. In a designated corner of a student lounge, there were two tall bookshelves which housed a collection of English literature of varying genres, from Mark Shelley to Danielle Steele. The books were a donation from a reading professor to be used by students in the program. Indeed, the majority of the
library users were preservice teachers who were enrolled in intensive reading classes. They had access to the library books during certain hours of the week.

**Typical Course Session**

The course met every Mondays at 1:30, after lunch and noon prayer. I usually arrived at least 10 minutes before the class started so that I could have enough time take care of such preparatory teaching tasks as connecting my laptop to a projector, displaying picturebooks, and so on. The course ran for 100 minutes, I posted the daily agenda on a PowerPoint slide at the beginning of each session.

1-30 - 1:45 – Sharing stories of lows and highs and sharing selected weekly journals.
1:45 - 2:05 – Read aloud
2:05 - 2:20 – Lecture and slides on the day’s topic
2:20 - 2:45 – Group presentation on the day’s reading (scheduled dates only)
2:45 - 3:00 – Small group discussion
3:00 - 3:10 – Whole class sharing about the discussion topic

Table 4.1. Literature-Related Course Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Aloud</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Group Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Reading log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a literature-based Teaching Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures and Group presentations on teaching topics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Literature-Related Course Activities**

As an introductory course to children’s literature, the course was mainly focused on introducing the preservice teachers to the concepts about literature and picturebooks, and less about reader response theory. The way I introduced literary responses was through classroom activities (e.g., reading logs and bookmaking project) and demonstrations (e.g., reading aloud). In terms of the course activities, I tried to establish routines (see *Typical Course Session*) that the preservice teachers might expect during each session. It did not occur to me that I had to give a reason for why I had established the class routines until one preservice teacher wrote to me that my class was predictable. He said that the session ran almost the same way every week. In my response, I told the class that I had intentionally established such routines because I believed that having a routine in class would be good for students. With such a routine they could experience what typically would happen in a classroom.

In the following section I describe the course activities that were related to literature responses.

**Reading aloud.** I conducted a read aloud or a storytelling time in almost every course sessions. I attempted to frame read aloud as a storytelling/sharing event where we shared stories from books and stories from our own lives. In Indonesia, reading aloud is not a common practice. Many Indonesians are more familiar with a storytelling. Oral storytelling performances such as those done with shadow puppets, are deeply rooted in Indonesian culture. So, I had this cultural parallelism consideration in mind when framing the read aloud activity within a context of storytelling/sharing time.
Reading aloud took place typically at the beginning of each session. I blocked 30-40 minutes for reading aloud so that I could have ample of time for reading the text and for the ensuing discussion. In establishing read aloud routines, I adopted read aloud techniques from Sipe (2008, 2010) and from read aloud observations in American elementary classrooms and in children’s literature courses at Ohio State. A typical read aloud activity went like this:

- Reading together the title, examining the image on the cover, and predicting what the story would be about
- Highlighting the author and illustrator, and the distinction between the two
- Showing the pictures on each page and drawing attention to colors and expressions, to help with story prediction and comprehension
- Reading aloud the text
- Marking any pages that contained foreign words and/or unknown vocabulary with a sticky note so that we could return to it later and consult a dictionary

In terms of literature responses, I first introduced the concept of oral literary responses to picturebooks during read aloud. I invited the preservice teachers to make comments about the story and illustrations. For instance, when turning to a new page I asked for their story prediction: “What is happening here,” “What these images remind you of?” (9/10/2012). I asked these questions before I continued reading. This activity during reading aloud introduced to preservice teachers a spontaneous form of a reader response, and at the same time it also provided them a social context in the classroom where everyone, including me, had the opportunity to share their responses and interpretations of literature.
However, sharing oral responses with the whole class was apparently intimidating for some preservice teachers. Not all of them were willing or confident enough to share their responses directly with the whole class. One preservice teacher’s weekly journal revealed her feeling of intimidation about speaking up in front of the whole class. She wrote: “You know, I actually wanted to share my story but my mouth kept shut. I did not dare to talk in front of the class. I was afraid that I would say something incorrect that could make me embarrassed” (J/1/2012).

**Small group discussion.** A small group discussion was another of the regular activities in this course. Like reading aloud, this activity was structured to give the preservice teachers opportunities to share their responses related to literature. More preservice teachers were willing to talk and share their insights in a small group than to the whole class. Small group discussion in class was also considered an uncommon practice. So, when I introduced this activity, I had to consider how best to facilitate it. For example, in terms of the seating arrangement, it had been my intention for the class to be flexible enough to change which groups they worked with during the session (see the Classroom Setting). Therefore, the preservice teachers were expected to move their chairs to form smaller conversational groups at some point during each class session.

Another consideration was to provide the preservice teachers with clear instructions for the discussion. For example, in week 3 when discussing the importance of literature, the preservice teachers were to discuss picture storybooks that they had brought to class. Prior to the discussion, I had posted the following:

- Talk about the story you have read in your group?
- What do the images and text tell you about the story?
• How do the pictures/illustration offer additional meanings to your reading?
• Briefly summarize your stories and share them with the rest of the class?

As with read alouds, a small group discussion was a venue to introduce oral literature responses. In my teaching reflection, I noted to myself: “A small group discussion should be a fertile ground for oral responses” (9/17/2012). The preservice teachers shared their thoughts and took turns listening to each other in these smaller groups. I noted in my teaching reflection that I heard many thoughtful responses during small groups discussions. Even the preservice teachers who were usually reluctant to share were more willing to talk within this format.

**Weekly journal.** One of the literature-related activities concerned with written response was a weekly journal. As the name suggests, the journals were a weekly writing assignment containing the preservice teachers’ thoughts about literature and their reflections on the course instruction of a particular session. The purpose of the weekly journals was to give the preservice teachers an opportunity to reflect on their literary and learning experiences during each meeting. Knowing that writing a reflective journal was a new experience for most preservice teachers, I provided clear instructions and samples of reflective journals. As part of my instructions for writing weekly journals, I asked the preservice teachers to write from the perspectives of both a reader (e.g., *What was your response to the picturebook being read aloud? What did you think about the story?*) and as a future teacher (e.g., *What have you learned for your future teaching? Did you learn something new? What did you like or dislike about your learning experience?*). This instruction proved to be a useful guide for the preservice teachers, especially for those who tended to write a summary instead of a reflection. I read all of the journals and
highlighted the lines I deemed relevant to literature responses and teaching. During the next class session I would read some journals containing insights that were worth sharing to the class and give them some feedback. Many preservice teachers suggested that writing a weekly journal was a profound learning experience since it enabled them to reflect on earlier leaning that otherwise might have been forgotten. They particularly appreciated my feedback on their journals. They said that hearing excerpts from their peers’ journals helped them improve their own writing and they felt validated when their journals was shared with the whole class. One preservice teacher asserted in an interview that she learned over time that it was her personal opinion that made her journal unique and felt encouraged by being asked to express her own opinion. She said: “I really wanted my journal to be picked so badly. And when Ms. Tati finally picked my journal I realized that it was my personal opinion that mattered” (interview/2). This statement, to some extent echoes Ali’s (1994) research with Malaysian college students in a literature class. Those students felt appreciative of the fact that it was their personal opinion that mattered in literature responses.

**Independent reading log.** An independent reading log was another literature-related activity that aimed to promote the preservice teachers’ love of books. Since one of my research foci was to investigate teachers as readers, I chose the independent reading log as an assignment because I believed that it could help the preservice teachers acquire the habit of reading, and eventually of become a good reader. In the reading log, they were required to keep a daily account of the books they chose to read during the assigned time of 10-15 minutes. Initially, the preservice teachers appeared reluctant to commit to reading every day. However, they were encouraged after learning that they could read
any books that they liked. One preservice teacher said that the reading log assignment encouraged her to pick up books of various genres, (e.g., horror stories by Stephen King).

**Bookmaking.** A bookmaking project was the midterm group assignment for the course. The project was the culmination of seven weeks of learning about basic literary understanding. I structured the first half of the course to build the preservice teachers’ understanding and knowledge about literature, particularly in picturebooks. During those weeks of the course, then students had developed an understanding about the importance of literature (e.g., basic need for story, and critical thinking), been introduced to picturebook narrative and arts, and genres in literature (i.e., fiction and nonfiction). The bookmaking project was an idea borrowed from Dr. Kiefer, in whose class I had created a book using pictures and text to tell about my candidacy exam experience. Based on that experience, I knew that I would like to try a similar project in my own teaching.

During the bookmaking project, the preservice teachers in my class worked in groups of three creating a picturebook. Their task was to create a book, consisting of pictures and words, telling the stories about their lives growing up and then to report on a couple of their favorite books they had read for their independent reading log. By focusing on life stories I wanted the preservice teachers to have a firsthand experience telling their own stories in a book. By doing a book review of one of their favorite stories, I wanted the preservice teachers to share their reading about the stories written by others. Finally, in terms of making physical books, my intent was to have the preservice teachers begin to put into practice their new knowledge about picturebook art. In facilitating the bookmaking project, I showed them YouTube videos of bookmaking tutorials and picturebook art. Models of scrapbooks and picturebooks were also provided. I showed
them various ways to make picturebooks encouraging them to explore the crafts of their picturebooks. I also provided a general guideline or rubric which detailed the characteristics of the bookmaking project (e.g., creativity, and quality of pictures) to which the preservice teachers had to adhere.

Creating literature-based teaching unit

As stated earlier the second half of the course focused on building knowledge about the teaching of literature (i.e. literature–based activities) and a framework for literature teaching. So, for the final project, the preservice teachers teamed up to create a teaching unit based on literature. The topics I lectured on prior to the final project were aimed to facilitate their understanding of the task. Thus, each week a group of preservice teachers presented a reading article about the topic, which I then complemented in my lectures (see Group Presenting and Lectures below). As a framework for literature-based teaching, Lehman’s (2007) literary study cycle was employed in the teaching units.

The instruction for the teaching unit included the following:

• Using literature as approach in your teaching
• Integrating books from your readings log into the teaching unit
• Deciding on books and topics that are appropriate for your teaching unit (e.g., family, travel, occupations, disasters, etc.)
• Considering the kinds of teaching activities you can do with books (e.g., independent reading, reading aloud, small group, whole class)
• Connecting reading and writing in teaching (e.g., shared writing, journals).
• Including the study of vocabulary and grammar in your teaching unit
The teaching unit project initially included an assignment to teach the unit to real students. I quickly changed the assignment from a requirement to an optional task, upon learning that K-12 students were taking a national test at that time. Several groups, however, were able to teach their units to real students.

**Lectures and group presentations on teaching topics.** Each week I prepared slides for a seven to ten minutes lecture. I used lectures as an opportunity to connect theories and research about literature with classroom practices. They provided the preservice teachers with scholarly information about literature and teaching practices. In one of the early sessions on an introduction to the importance of literature, I prepared slides on various Indonesian storytelling traditions (e.g., sculptures and shadow puppet theatres). I raised questions about why such traditions existed; why did people use such a wide variety of ways to share stories? I then connected these activities with the theories addressing the human need for story, and the role of stories in human development (Sloan, 2003).

I also shared the responsibility for lectures with the preservice teachers. The preservice teachers were accustomed to preparing and delivering topical presentations. We collaborated on these discussions. In preparing for the students’ presentation, I provided the assigned group articles and picturebooks related to the topic. I would highlight some parts of the reading articles that I wanted the group to focus on. As the group presented their slides, I sometimes interrupted adding comments or wondering out loud about a particular statement. For instance, when one group discussed Trelease’s (2006) stages for reading aloud, I cited a comment from one preservice teacher who said that she had practiced sharing a bedtime story with her niece. I also interjected questions
for the students to ponder. For example, in a discussion about reading literature for promoting critical thinking, I asked whether critical thinking grew naturally, or if it developed through the nurturing process. Many preservice teachers were appreciative of the group task. In a final interview after the course had ended, one preservice teacher said that she appreciated the group presentation assignment partly because it challenged her to read the articles more carefully and, as a consequence, she then became more informed about literature.

The Course Organization Summary

In this section I have laid out the context for the research findings. The course organization descriptive data gives an overview of the course environment, management, and activities. I have described the physical environment where the course was taught including the classroom setting, access to literature, and time management (how the course session was organized). The kind of course activities that aimed to facilitate the preservice teachers’ learning and response to literature were also discussed as part of the description of on literature-related course activities, which included reading aloud, reflective journals, and bookmaking and teaching unit projects.
Research Findings

The focus of the present study is to investigate ways in which Indonesian preservice teachers responded to instruction in an introduction to children’s literature course, and to the children’s literature picturebooks being taught in the course. In an earlier section I have described the course organization and the introduction to literature response and literature teaching, providing a context for the presentation of the following findings. The research findings section will have three separate parts. The first section will lay out the description of the emerging themes of the preservice teachers’ responses to the course, answering question 1: How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the course activities? The second section will focus on the findings of the preservice teachers’ literature responses answering question 2: How did the preservice teachers’ respond to children’s literature picturebooks being taught in the course? The last section is the tales of two readers and future teachers. Focusing on two preservice teachers, Ayu and Awal, I attempt to highlight the cultural influences in their responses as readers and future teachers as they read and learned about children’s literature.
Table 4.2. Reading and Teaching Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Reading Preferences</th>
<th>Reading Influences</th>
<th>Experience with Students</th>
<th>Aspiring Teaching Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ningsih</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Islamic books</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Part time English instructor</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yanto</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Sport Magazines</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aida</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Part time English instructor</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Zahra</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Fiction stories</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jiah</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Japanese Graphic Novels</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ayu</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Any texts</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Private English Tutor</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bowo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Inspirational stories</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Hasn’t decided yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yanti</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Japanese Graphic Novels</td>
<td>Siblings (Brother)</td>
<td>Private English Tutor</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>News and Nonfiction</td>
<td>Parents and Peers</td>
<td>Part time English instructor</td>
<td>Hasn’t decided yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Awal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Japanese Graphic Novels</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Part time English instructor</td>
<td>Senior Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rofi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Biographies and Motivational Books</td>
<td>Siblings (Sisters) and Peers</td>
<td>Part time English instructor</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 1 Findings on Responses to the Course Instruction

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Question 1: How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the instruction in an introduction to children’s literature course?

Sub questions:

a) How did Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the idea of using picturebooks to teach?

b) How did the instructional activities change their responses to learning how to teach with picturebooks?

In this section, the preservice teachers’ responses to the course activities are explored through discussions of the major themes that emerged from the analysis of weekly journals, interviews, and field notes.
**Reading: Purposes and Preferences**

The theme of becoming readers encompasses all responses that referred to preservice teachers’ references to their reading activity outside of class. For the preservice teachers, their personal reading offered them many things: it was a form of entertainment; a way to explore lives different from theirs; a form of inspiration; and a means of learning. Many preservice teachers were entertained when reading. They
typically had entertaining experiences when reading adventurous stories, like fantasy. A fantasy story allowed them to enter into a story and to act as if they were one of the characters. In an interview, one preservice teacher said that she liked to imitate Harry Potter’s acts of waving a wand, flying a broomstick, and talking to fire. Another preservice teacher, who also liked fantasy stories, recalled that as a child she used to mimic a witch in a fairy tale replaying the story dialogue. When reading a fantasy story, they also learned some new and uncommon words. One preservice teacher learned to make sense of the word “alibi” when reading a Japanese detective graphic novel whose story also inspired her to want to become a detective. The preservice teachers’ preferences also included romance stories that ranged from religious stories to Western ones. Romance authors, like Danielle Steele, appeared to be popular among preservice teachers (both males and females) possibly because these stories were easy to follow.

The preservice teachers also suggested that reading activity was more than just seeking. Reading was also a means for entering into other people’s lives. One preservice teacher explained that when reading stories, readers could “feel the stories like what an author would feel; readers get involved inside the story.” Reading stories seemed to enable the preservice teachers to experience the lives of others that were different from their own. One of the benefits of entering into others’ stories was for an inspiration. In interviews, preservice teachers said that they enjoyed reading biographies of public figures (e.g., businessmen, politicians); these stories motivated them to think about themselves as becoming financially successful and respectable people. Similarly others talked about how reading inspired them. One preservice teacher recalled how he was obsessed with a story of a simple young man who managed to go to a university abroad.
(in Egypt). The story inspired his close friend to follow the same path and to study in Egypt. He, too, tried to follow this path, but was not successful. Reading the stories of inspiring people seemed to provide signposts and guidance for some of the students. Such reading helped them to decide what would be good and bad for their lives. As one preservice teacher put it: “[We] imitate the positive thing and leave the negative ones” aside. In a more practical manner, one preservice teacher told of becoming immersed in a horror book to overcome his timidity of ghosts. He recalled: “After reading it, I found that ghosts actually were not that scary. Since then, I never feel any extreme fear of horror anymore.”

Religious piety seemed to motivate some students to read a particular genre. One preservice teacher enjoyed reading stories that made reference to the Holy Book (Qur’an) and Judgment Day—the kind of stories that encouraged people’s increased devotion to God. Her reading preference was popular among her peers; many classmates borrowed books from her. Stories from religious texts also inspired some to dress up like story character. One female preservice teacher recalled that she was inspired to put on a veil (although only temporarily) after reading an Islamic story about a veiled female character.

In terms of nonfiction reading, one preservice teacher admitted that she found pleasure in reading informational text such as newspapers. Even as a child, she had preferred reading news to fictional stories. During an interview she said she was reading Syria Today, a magazine on Syrian current affairs. Overall, despite a range of purposes and preferences for reading, the preservice teachers argued that they would read voluntarily any books whose stories appealed to them.
Preservice teachers’ reading purposes and preferences noticeably expanded over the semester. By week 9, their knowledge about literary genres (e.g., a ghost story could be told in a humorous way) had grown; they responded enthusiastically upon hearing *Ghosts in the House* which was not a humorous story typical to what they knew. Nearing the end of the semester, their expanded reading preferences and purposes were even more noticeable. Many preservice teachers said that they were fascinated with picturebooks; they said they really enjoyed the picturebook art and regularly visited local used bookstores to increase their picturebooks collections. They also confessed that they were increasingly open to many more types of books in their personal reading. One preservice teacher said that she became a devoted fan of horror author Stephen King after reading one of his books for a reading log assignment. Others began to challenge themselves to read books whose themes and writing styles were unusual (e.g., a science fiction and same-sex relationships).

Table 4.4. Critical Reading

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<td>Reading critically affecting critical thinking</td>
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Critical Reading

A discussion of how to be active and critical reader appeared in many preservice teachers’ responses. Early in week 2, they begin to note that they had to be an active reader and be critical when discussing and “responding to the story.” For example, in picturebooks read alouds, they noticed that they had to pay attention to pictures and make predictions before the story was read aloud. “Sometimes my prediction was true but sometimes it was wrong.” They felt that such critical reading was especially noticeable when they shared and discussed stories in small groups; they had to listen to what others said and offer different interpretations. They attributed such critical reading to helping them understand and to make sense of stories. As one preservice teacher admitted: I “read it, analyzed and discussed it; therefore I began to understand.”

A discussion of reading picturebooks as a way of promoting critical thinking also appeared in the preservice teachers’ responses in week 3. They suggested that working with picturebooks could facilitate critical thinking. They argued that discussing images and text in picturebooks could “stimulate their thinking.” Children who read picturebooks would “grow up with a developed sense of critical thinking.” In a more concrete manner, one preservice teacher suggested that for young children who cannot read, “pictures are very important for them, so when reading picturebooks, they will develop their critical thinking.”

Their appreciation of critical reading was even more obvious in a discussion during a second interview (conducted after the course mid-term). Preservice teachers noted that reading also entailed critical thinking, which they defined as the ability to be analytical. One preservice teacher noticed that she was reading critically more often. She
cited how she now tended to pay attention carefully to texts and to analyze them. Another preservice teacher confessed that he had become increasingly attentive to the author’s craft paying attention to how authors organized their writing.

By week 9, the preservice teachers’ discussion of critical reading as a way of analyzing text was even more noticeable. They described their growing analytical reading abilities: “[As readers], we never realized before about points-of-view in picturebooks. If the picture is viewed from a far, it suggests the general overview of a story, but if the picture viewed closer and is getting a close up, it indicates that a specific story object/character is being told.” “I have found that a picturebook is not only about pictures and text. There are many substantial factors and frameworks that we can use for analyzing picturebooks (j/9).” They seemed appreciative of this analytical ability. “I like to analyze a lot. We learned to pay attention to the details of pictures, such as shapes, colors, and even the smallest things.” The preservice teachers seemed to notice that the ability to read critically heightened their appreciation of picturebooks. As one preservice teacher posited: “I begin to know that learning picturebook can be so unique and creative. It challenged us to think critically (j/9).”

The preservice teachers’ critical reading ability also seemed to affect their critical thinking. For instance, they realized that they did not have to agree with everything that an author said. In a final interview, many preservice teachers said that they now realized that critical thinking was indeed really important. One preservice teacher confessed that now he was in the habit of thinking more critically. He now critically thought about any information that he read. He had also grown more observant about the environment
around him. Many preservice teachers argued that they learned about critical thinking after taking this class.

Table 4.5. Perceptions on Literature

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**Perceptions of Literature**

Discussions of literature began to appear as early as week 2 when preservice teachers appeared to be trying to make sense of literature and its importance. Some struggled to “understand about literature.” Others offered their working understanding about literature and why it mattered. They argued that literature offered them an aesthetic experience. One preservice teacher said: “Literature is written aesthetically like a novel, story, or poems. We do not care about true and false, nor believable or not. I use my imagination and my emotion when I read the story. Literature brings my mind out of a box. It improves my creativity (j/2).” This assertion about having the aesthetics of literature echoes earlier preservice teachers’ statements that their purposes for reading were predominantly aesthetic in nature; they associated their personal reading with entertainment, life experiences, inspiration, motivation, and learning.

In an interview after the conclusion of the course, preservice teachers suggested that they also felt like they learned more from reading literature than from reading other texts (e.g., textbooks). More specifically, they felt like reading stories was more
meaningful than reading textbooks. One preservice teacher argued that reading literature had helped her to make sense of theories about reading that she had learned in the past.

In terms of their perceptions of literature, the preservice teachers seemed to revise their understanding about what was considered literature. Many preservice teachers explained in interviews how the course had broadened their previously narrow understanding of literature. They used to think that the only literature was classic literature (e.g., Shakespeare). Now their understanding of literature was more inclusive, and they argued that it seemed making sense to them now that a picturebook was also part of literature—something that was seemingly hard to comprehend at the beginning. In a reflective manner, one preservice teacher wrote in week 12 about his evolving understanding of literature, particularly in relation to teaching. He said that literature and its function in teaching was beginning to make sense to him now. He wrote: “When I first learned (12 weeks ago) about literature, I was still confused and I wondered why I had to study literature; at that time I really had no idea what literature was. But now after studying so many things about literature I realized that through literature I could teach nearly everything to my students in lovely ways, such as through reading aloud, reading log, books borrowing, and so on.”

Table 4.6. Literature as an Object for Learning

| Using literature as a model for writing |
| Using literature for teaching subject matters and content areas |
| Using literature in classroom teaching |

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Literature as an Object for Learning

In addition to the aesthetic experience of reading, the preservice teachers also considered literature as a resource for learning. In one interview, one preservice teacher, a writer and also an editor in a school publication, confessed that literature served as a model for writing for him. He learned to improve his writing skill through reading a lot of literature. Another preservice teacher who was a part time scriptwriter admitted that she used the literature of diverse cultures (multicultural literature) as a model to learn how stories of different cultures were told. A discussion of literature as learning resource seemed to expand as the course progressed. By week 11, preservice teachers had broadened their discussion from focusing on “the importance of literature in people’s lives” to exploring literature as a learning resource. They began to learn that “as an object, literature can be very important for other subject matters.” “Literature can be taught in other lessons, and can be used in many context.” They posited that through “teaching literature, we can use it to introduce other subjects or topics. We can learn about science, math, art, and social studies through literature.” Or to put simply, “We can connect literature to all subjects.” One preservice teacher articulated her understanding about literature and the benefits of teaching with literature in the following:

I have learned that literature is very meaningful. Through literature actually we not only learn about the story but we also can learn everything inside the literature. We can learn about social studies or sciences through literature. We can learn about themes related to social studies with literature. For example when we learn about immigration, we can use a picturebook that tells about immigration, then the teacher can engage the student with the story about immigration, and
making the student curious about the subject that will be discussed. I started to know that obviously literature could be applied to every subjects. And I think when we teach the subject with literature, literature can make students more interested in learning the material—they would learn about the current events that occur in real life through literature. The classroom will be more effective and would not make students feel bored with our teaching instruction (j/12).

On the importance of literature and the efforts of teaching through literature, the preservice teachers appeared to clarify their understanding. Having been in the course for twelve weeks, students began to realize how literature came into play in classroom teaching. “Literature gives a new experience in teaching,” one preservice teacher said. In this class [the introduction to children’s literature course], “we did not realize that we had been using literature for teaching. Literature is not a method; it is just how we are using literature for teaching. I think literature is one of the options to making students aware [about the importance] of literature itself.” Another preservice teacher began to view the expanded role of literature in teaching—noting that it could be used to teach many different content areas.

“Today I learned about literary theme studies and an integrated curriculum. Apparently, I can use literature in many ways. In this meeting, my lecturer said that literature could be included across the curriculum. I can teach everything through literature. Literature could become a basis for many subjects, e.g., learning history through literature, and many others. We can do many activities when teaching through literature. It’s far from a boring class; we can enjoy learning-teaching activities. And I think literature is a must for every teacher from
various fields. Math or science teacher needs to learn literature, because they can use literature in their teaching.”

“What I have learned in this meeting was about the importance of literature. Literature can be very useful for teaching, not only teaching literature itself but also teaching other subjects. For example, throughout the story we also learned about history, geography, math, and so on. And I think using literature can be more effective, because we can relate the current events from the story with the topic that will be discussed, so it will be make sense for students (j/12)”

The Arts

Later during the semester the preservice teachers began to see the connection between literature and other forms of expression, such as music. Some preservice teachers, who were involved in music activities, found it interesting that they could “compose” music inspired by literature. One preservice teacher asserted: “The most interesting part which I like from this meeting is about composing music from children’s writing and children’s books. Apparently, composing music from a book is a thoughtful process and it should be related to the book that is being composed. I really like music, any kinds of music: country, pop, and jazz. That’s why I joined a music group; that’s because I like music.” Some preservice teachers viewed music as a complement to the pleasure of reading. “With music, I can create an atmosphere for reading. When I’m reading I feel like there is a music playing inside my head. I feel calm when reading with music in the background.” Echoing this sentiment, some others connected it to the information they heard about some benefits of music, which included enhancing an environment conducive to learning. “I remember Mozart who is a composer. He creates
classical music that can help students focus on studying. He made music that could help students to comprehend the lesson better (j/10).”

Table 4.7. An Understanding of Picturebooks

| Recognizing an equal contribution of text and images in picturebooks |
| Learning wide potential of picturebooks |

**Picturebooks**

The preservice teachers credited literature, particularly picturebooks, for helping them read more critically (see Literature as an Object for Learning section). They also began to acquire an understanding about picturebooks, as literature and as art objects. In week 4, they referred to the need for an equal contribution between text and pictures in picturebooks. They noted that in order “to make a beautiful story, we need not only to have an ability to write a story but also the ability to draw pictures so that we can deliver the story in an artistic way (j/4).” This increased understanding about the picturebook was even more noticeable in week 5. In reading picturebooks the preservice teachers had become aware of the fact that “pictures are related to the story text.” For that reason, “they have to focus on the pictures since every pictures have value.” As many preservice teachers pointed out, “words can not stand alone without pictures, and pictures can not stand alone without words. They are interdependent.” What is more, the preservice teachers noticed that picturebook reading would involve critical thinking, where they would “have to be critical to what is served by the story.” They argued that reading picturebooks “grows our critical thinking which as an effect it can promote in individual
critical thinking.” They seemed to notice that critical thinking had been absent in their early education. One preservice teacher confessed: “I wished I had learned this [picturebook] during my childhood. It would have improved my critical thinking over time (j/5).”

A discussion of picturebooks for teaching also appeared in the data. As early as week 5, preservice teachers began to notice that they “can learn everything from picturebooks” ranging from literacy activities (e.g., identifying the structure of the story), stories, and to cross cultural understanding. Comparing stories and structures of picturebooks, they argued, would benefit their understanding about literature and cultural differences. They also began to see how picturebooks could be introduced into Indonesian classrooms, including how they would go about teaching with picturebooks. “In my opinion, picturebooks are capable enough to adopt in Indonesia. I have never learned about picturebooks before. So after learning it in this course, I think it would be very fun for students to learn. They will enjoy the story from the pictures, the story message, and at the same time they will learn about the culture of the story. And as an English teacher, through picturebooks we can read aloud in front of the class so that the student can learn how to pronounce English words (j/5).”

Table 4.8. The Art of Picturebook

| Understanding picturebook art elements |
| Learning about a thoughtful picturebook making process |
| Recognizing picturebook as a unique kind of literature |
The Art of Picturebook

Learning about art elements for the first time in week 6, the preservice teachers tried to make sense of their basic understanding about the art of picturebooks. One preservice teacher reflected: “I learned something new about art; in picturebook art every single element contains a special meaning. Lines, shapes, spaces, colors, textures, compositions, and perspectives have their own ways of expressing the message.” So, “every single thing in painting, drawing or pictures has its own role and meaning.” The preservice teachers noticed that “in picturebooks, every single detail conveys its meaning; one picture can tell a thousand of stories.”

They also began to notice that artistic products like illustrations are not simply made by following “the mood of the illustrators” or doing whatever one likes “without any rules and meanings.” They remarked: “I know that drawing a picture, painting, and other arts, is not easy work. In fact the process is quite complex. The illustrators “must enter all elements of art” in their creative process in order to create “pictures that have special meaning.” It is this creative process that makes it possible for one story to have a range of different interpretations of the illustrations. These different interpretations, they argued, might happen “because we gave freedom to the illustrators to explore their imaginations.” Learning the elements of the visual arts of storybooks seemed to increase preservice teachers’ understanding about picturebooks. As one preservice teacher noted: “I learned something new in this meeting. I need pictures to help me comprehend the text. Indeed, in picturebooks text cannot stand alone without images. Similarly, pictures also can’t stand alone without text. They are interdependent. The important thing is we need an artistic picture, not an ordinary picture, in order to complete the text (j/6).”
Having learned about the art of picturebook, one preservice teacher suggested that picturebooks were a unique kind of literature that were clearly distinct from other books. “I think there are two kinds of books: text books and picturebooks. I did not realize the differences before. And I have learned the benefits that come from reading picturebooks.” Some preservice teachers even suggested that picturebooks had to be more present in Indonesian language teaching. They suggested: “The government should give a place for people to read and analyze all kinds of books, textbooks and picturebooks alike (j/6).”

Table 4.9. The Picturebook Narrative

| Understanding picturebook narrative codes and techniques |
| Having a better appreciation of picturebooks |

**The Picturebook Narrative**

In addition to picturebook art, the preservice teachers also seemed to develop an understanding about codes and techniques in picturebook narratives (Cotton, 2002). After discussing Cotton’s book on the picturebook analysis framework, one preservice teacher summarized her new understanding in the following:

Today I learned about the characteristics of picturebook, namely people, settings, and a story in picturebooks. Through people’s expression, we can make out a story without a text. We can observe the character in a picturebook and we can predict what the story is about. The second is settings. It shows readers the time and context of the story. For example, if the setting is in the night, we can draw ‘stars or a moon’ in the picture. So, it will show readers the context of the story.
The last one is the story. We can create a narrative story through pictures. The pictures should be arranged in such a way in order to create a narrative story (j/9).

The knowledge of picturebook narrative seemed to enhance the preservice teachers’ understanding of picturebooks. “The explanation about people, setting, and story related to the position to visual codes, distance, and visual narrative techniques, gave me new information that all elements of picturebooks have meaning.” This new knowledge apparently had deepened their appreciation of picturebook artists. As one preservice teacher put it, “the illustrators thoughtfully put something in their works, everything has meaning. For example if there is a frame, it shows that the illustrator intends to set a distance between readers and the story. Meanwhile if there is no frame, it shows that the illustrator wants to encourage readers to engage closely with the story” (j/9). The preservice teachers began picking up the notion that picturebooks were a unique object. It’s “magical,” as one preservice teacher described it. “According to me picturebooks have magical power which can hypnotize people to read them.” They argued that picturebooks were for everyone, regardless of their age. As one preservice teacher suggested “I think that there is nobody who dislikes picturebooks. It is not only children who love picturebooks, but adults too. Picturebooks are part of literature” (j/9).

Table 4.10. Picturebooks, Visual Literacy, and Critical thinking

| Enjoying picturebook visual art |
| Developing visual literacy using picturebooks |
| Using picturebook for critical reading and thinking |
**Picturebooks, Visual Literacy, and Critical Thinking**

A discussion on the visual literacy of picturebooks occurred in week 7. Having learned the art of picturebooks (such as the art elements, and codes), they seemed to appreciate their increased ability to enjoy picturebook visual art. One preservice teacher noted: “This is the first time I learned about accessing visual narratives. According to me, learning narratives will be more interesting if there is visualization. It also can attract readers to read the narratives. Moreover, I can learn about arts from picturebooks. For example, I learned about the technique of pictures zooming in and zooming out where each can offer different meanings. I also learned about signs and symbols in picturebooks. For example, a dove [in *The Librarian of Basra*] is a symbol of peace. Wowww…that’s very interesting!” (j/7).

In week 13, the discussion about picturebook visualization reappeared. Reading picturebooks was deemed supportive for visual literacy. One preservice teacher elaborated ways in which picturebooks could develop visual literacy, and she contrasted the experience with watching movies. She asserted:

Talking about the benefits of picture book, there are a lot of thing I could get from reading picturebooks. First, a picturebook has not only magnificent words but also is full of inspiring pictures. When reading picturebooks, I sometime wonder why the illustrators drew the pictures in such a style. For instance, they will choose blue instead of red colors. Everything in the picturebook is considered carefully. Second, picturebooks contain minimal words but powerful messages. Third, reading picturebook activates my brain; I like to observe small details in picturebooks. It is a different experience than when watching movies where I
simply watch without engaging my thinking and observation. I have learned in this class that picturebooks are accessible for children. With picturebooks, children can see and analyze details of a book. As a future teacher and a parent, I think this is important to know so that we’ll know how children enjoy reading in an early age (j/13).

Echoing the sentiment about reading picturebooks versus watching movies, another preservice teacher highlighted some of the benefits of reading picturebooks. She argued that, unlike watching movies, reading picturebooks could increase her critical reading ability and critical thinking. She wrote:

I learned about the difference between videos/movies and picturebooks. Actually, when we are watching a video we just focus on the story, what we look in there is just a glimpse, we do not give attentions to the images. Meanwhile in a picturebook our eyes are trained to be more critical of the pictures, and we are drawn to observe everything on a page. Reading this way will train our eyes to be increasingly critical. I confess that watching movies is an interesting activity, but I will learn very little from it. I think reading is better than watching movies. Reading is a way to increase our knowledge and intelligence” (j/13).

Table 4.11. Preservice Teachers and the (Picturebook) Art

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<th>Debunking myths about arts</th>
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<td>Igniting natural passions about arts</td>
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Preservice Teachers and the (Picturebook) Art

Soon after learning the picturebook art elements in week 6, the preservice teachers seemed to debunk the myth that the arts are for a talented few, as in the form of “high art.” “It was the first time I learned about ‘art.’ Honestly, I didn’t like art, because I thought that I wasn’t good at ‘art,’ now ‘I have start to be interested in art.’ “Overall, the class inspired me that art has a very huge meaning. It is not ‘only’ something that is created by artists or talented men, but it also can be created by people like us because God has given us an artistic nature.”

With minimal art instruction in school, many preservice teachers admitted that art had been their passion. One preservice teacher confessed: “Drawing is not something new to me, I started to draw as soon as I was able to hold pen. Drawing is an art that I love so much. However I have never had any formal drawing training. I just draw and draw. And now I am aware that drawing has its own knowledge.” Echoing this sentiment, another preservice teacher spoke of her past passion with art. She recalled: “becoming a painter was one of my dreams when I was younger (I have given it up now). I loved abstract painting. I was so obsessed to become a painter. But I realized that becoming a painter was not easy work. It required hard work and money. I still draw when I am in the mood and have the time.” Others recalled their uninspiring art education experiences. “Actually, I don’t know what I drew during my childhood because I never had an ‘art class’ in the elementary school. Teachers always asked me to draw whatever I wanted to, but they never introduced me to ‘the elements of art. How lucky I would have been had I learned ‘arts’ during my childhood (j/6).”
Table 4.12. Thinking About Using Literature/Picturebooks for Teaching

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**Thinking About Using Literature/Picturebooks for Teaching**

The preservice teachers’ thinking about using literature for teaching seemed to develop over the course of the semester. In week 2, the preservice teachers began to pick up terms such as reading aloud—an instruction that they considered good for children’s literacy development; other terms included “vocabulary building,” and “reading comprehension.” They also considered reading aloud effective instructional method for attracting and keeping students’ attention. They suggested that reading aloud was an entertaining activity not just for children but for adults as well. Discussions about reading aloud continued in week 3 when the preservice teachers made suggestions about the kinds of teaching they would do using picturebooks. Again, they talked about using picturebooks for literacy teaching (e.g., comprehension and vocabulary). In terms of literary learning, the preservice teachers argued that the use of picturebooks in teaching would help students to “visualize” and to enter into a story. They said that this was particularly relevant for young children who could not read texts yet because children can learn best when materials “are taught through visualizations of story characters.”

The discussion about using picturebook for teaching began to expand in week 4. After comparing and contrasting illustrations in Cinderella stories from Indonesia and China, the preservice teachers began to think about aspects in picturebook illustrations
that could be used for teaching about different cultures. They suggested that by
investigating cultural conventions (Kiefer, 2010) in picturebooks, teachers could facilitate
cross-cultural understanding. The preservice teachers argued that an investigation of
cultural conventions would motivate students to do more in-depth research. They referred
to their experiences with researching “Indonesia and China from the Internet source,” as
they discussed Cinderella stories from the two cultures. One preservice teacher asserted:
“I think the interesting part of learning literature is we are not only learning about the
story but also learning about the cultures as they are represented in the pictures.”

Weeks later, the preservice teachers contemplated the possibility of using
picturebooks when teaching subject matters (e.g., history) compared to using textbooks.
“Why can’t we make a history book like a picturebook? I think it will make younger
learners interested in books. Reading materials in Indonesia are generally like textbooks.
They have too many words, and they are boring. I think it is important to attract readers
so that they will be more interested in books (j/7).” Their statements about picturebooks
seemed to indicate their increasing understanding about picturebooks and literature. One
preservice teacher posited:

Picturebooks are part of literature.’ It’s an educational object, for kids learning
literacy. Picturebooks can help people especially children to be able to read and
write. Picturebooks are good for children who are learning to read. By looking at
the visualization of picturebooks for the first time, I’m sure children will be
interested in reading more and more. And for adults it’s an object of entertainment
that stimulates their intellectual curiosity. Moreover, picturebooks not only contain
pictures but also words; I can see the pictures and read the words at the same time.

How amazing picturebooks are. (j/9).

Table 4.13. Teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Using Literature

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<td>Envisioning TEFL using literature</td>
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**Teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Using Literature**

As future EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers, the preservice teachers began to see how literature could play a role in their teaching, particularly how literature could be used for teaching English. Trained mostly in using textbooks and a grammatical method, the preservice teachers suggested that the use of literature in English teaching would motivate students to learn. One preservice teacher posited: “Teaching English needs interesting stuff to help teachers improving students’ understanding about the materials delivered. I think literature is stuff to help teachers in teaching English; literature can be introduced to teach English.” The preservice teachers also reflected on the practice of English teaching in Indonesia and contrasted it with their new knowledge about literature. One preservice teacher suggested: “Many English teachers in Indonesia teach English with boring methods. Typically, they just give tasks and homework to their students. Eventually, students would think that English is difficult and boring. That was how I felt when I learned English in the secondary schools. And now having been in an introduction to literature course for almost twelve weeks, I learned that I can create an English class using literature as the basis for teaching (j/12).”
Some preservice teachers offered some concrete plans as to what they would do when teaching English using literature. One preservice teacher envisioned his teaching in the following way: “Today’s class has inspired me to design a teaching plan that is based on literature. I will divide my project into four sessions. Reading aloud will be the first activity I’m going to do. And my objective is to support students as they write a narrative text. With picturebooks, I can make the theory of narrative more relevant so that it will make sense to students what a narrative is (j/13).”

Table 4.14. Literature-Related Activities

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<td>Sharing activities for facilitating flexible thinking</td>
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**Literature-Related Activities**

This theme refers to the preservice teachers’ discussions about classroom activities related to literature. These were activities involving literature that they could implement with children. The preservice teachers also seemed to be interested in activities that were collaborative in nature. One of the activities was the book talk, an activity that Lehman (2007) describes as books’ “short sales pitches” aimed to tempt students to read the books (p. 30). The preservice teachers saw the book talk as an activity that could be used to interest children in books. They envisioned classrooms where they could begin teaching by talking about books to their students. “I will begin teaching by talking about books I have read or I’m currently reading. A book talk is a
good way in supporting students’ love of reading. The younger they love reading, the more their critical thinking will develop (j/11).”

Another sharing activity related to literature that garnered the preservice teachers’ interest was the buddy system. They were very interested in the buddy system (Kiefer, 2010), which they described as “a system that consists of two or three people who share the same topic but come up with different perspectives. This practice is good to support children retelling the story. Children can build a story through a sharing activity (j/11).”

The preservice teachers also associated the buddy system with collective learning activities. One preservice teacher posited: “One of the activities that I’m interested in the most is a buddy system. This is an interesting activity because students can choose reading partners and create a community of readers who have similar book interests. I think students will be motivated to read and to learn in this activity format. They will learn more from sharing with other readers who may have different interpretations about a story. Having a buddy system will benefit students in learning literature.” In terms of a community of learning, the preservice teachers also suggested that a buddy system provided an opportunity for students to study and to get to know each other. One preservice teacher suggested: “Students of different background knowledge can share their knowledge with their partners so that they can learn from each others (j/11).”

The preservice teachers seemed to believe that a buddy system could help in encouraging flexible thinking, which they defined as the ability to consider different opinions, and to do critical reading. One preservice teacher argued: “The buddy system means that there are two people who have read the same story, and they share the interpretations of the story with their reading partners. I am sure that these readers will
have different interpretations about a story. That’s also what makes this activity unique because readers could get benefit from hearing the reading interpretations from others. Students will learn from multiple perspectives, which eventually will help them to develop flexible thinking (j/11).” These comments about literature-related activities that cultivate critical thinking, and allow multiple interpretations and perspectives seem to parallel Mulyana’s (2001) study of a literature class that employed reader response classroom activities. Mulyana found that the students tended to read critically; they were inquisitive about the books they read. What is more, the students were willing to collaborate with others and were open to different opinions.

Table 4.15. Reading Aloud

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noticing the versatility of reading aloud for teaching</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying physical performance in reading aloud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognizing read aloud for literacy and literary instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading aloud book selection and age consideration</td>
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</table>

**Reading Aloud**

The preservice teachers appeared to take great interest in reading aloud. The discussion on reading aloud covered a wide range of topics. One topic focused on the versatility of reading aloud for teaching. During read alouds, students could learn a variety of skills ranging from those involved with literacy development, to a knowledge of genres (e.g., poetry), to cultural understanding. One preservice teacher noted: “My favorite activity is reading aloud. In this activity students will enjoy the story and learn
some new words” including “how to pronounce” the words. “They also can learn about English tenses, and the style of writing. Through literature we can teach English grammar.” The preservice teachers could also see the relevance of reading aloud when creating poetry. “In teaching literature for children or young learners, we can have activities such as making a poem from a picturebook being read aloud. This way the students will learn how to make a poem from literature (j/11).”

Another discussion topic about reading aloud focused on physical movements when doing a read aloud. The preservice teachers likened reading aloud with a storytelling activity where there were body “gestures and movements” involved in order to enhance the “literature experiences.” One preservice teacher noted: “There is a relationship between movement and literature experience. It is like a storytelling. When reading a book that has characters like animals, I can move my body and change my expression depending on the character in the story. So, this will challenge me to deliver the story through expressions and body movements. Reading aloud this way, I will make my students more interested in and paying attentions to my teaching (j/11).” In interviews, some preservice teacher argued that reading aloud was such an attractive activity because it kept them engaged in class. Referring to the fact that this course met after lunchtime, the preservice teachers said that reading aloud was refreshing and made them less sleepy in the afternoon.

The preservice teachers began to notice the appeal of reading aloud in literature classrooms. Reading aloud was regarded as having a prominent place in classroom instruction. Referring to three phases of literary study framework discussions (Lehman, 2007), one preservice teacher posited: “Reading aloud is the most favorite activity. It is
an interesting activity for teachers as storytellers, and students as audiences, for they are both interactive. In the three phases of literature framework, reading aloud takes place in nearly all phases. It appears in the first and the second phases. From here we realize that reading aloud is very important.” Echoing this sentiment, another preservice teacher envisioned ways she would use read alouds in her teaching. “In preparing reading aloud, I will first read the book myself. I then practice how I can move my body, use facial expressions, and control my voice. Moreover, I will also need to know the background of a story related to the history, cultures, customs, food, and so on, so that I can share this information with my students as I read aloud (j/12).” What is more, they argued that reading aloud was also appealing because it allowed a book to be read more than once. A storybook would be read multiple of times, even when children knew the story by heart. As one preservice teacher suggested, “teachers use a familiar book to retell the story in order to keep students’ interested in reading aloud. Teachers would read aloud three or four times until to the point where students would know the story by heart (j/11).” Also in relation to reading aloud in classrooms, a preservice teacher who was a part time language instructor confessed that he observed and noted some of my reading aloud strategies so that he could try practicing the strategies later in his own class.

Another topic of discussion that emerged related to the match between children’s ages and the selection of books. For instance, when discussing young readers, one preservice teacher noted: “I understand that infants have certain behaviors in each developmental stage. So, parents and teachers have to consider how and what book they will read to them. For example, when infants are at four months of age, they have a little or no choice but to listen and observe. So parents should surround their infants with the
[environmental] supports for the infants’ love of reading. This is how we introduce reading to children (j/13).” This was also the case with the selection of books. They suggested, “in each age, we should choose books that are suitable for children according to their ages. Books should be selected carefully, particularly books that would interest children (j/13).”

On the topic of book selection for reading aloud, after discussing Trelease’s (2009) article on reading aloud, the preservice teachers noted: “I learned that not all books could be used for reading aloud; there are some books that are appropriate for an independent reading and there are some others that could be shared with peers. What’s more, actually reading aloud is not just for picturebooks, but for magazines, novels, articles, anthologies, and other texts as well. So this activity is appropriate for all ages, not just for children, but for teenagers and adults as well. “ Regarding teaching for all ages, they observed that teaching using literature, through reading aloud “makes learning English fun.” And above all, this teaching is “not only enjoyable for children but for adults as well (j/13).”

In a more reflective manner, one preservice teacher wrote her growing understanding about reading aloud in the following.

What I have learned is that the unique process of children’s admission to a story. By four months, children actually are able to listen and observe what adults or parents talking. I just realized that children of four months old could be invited to interact with books, and they would be capable to respond to what they hear. Apparently, I had a wrong perception; I thought children of four months old would not understand storytelling. Apparently, the earlier we introduce children
to a story, the sooner they will learn to think and observe. This will grow their critical thinking. What is more, reading aloud is also used as a way to bond with family. For example, a father reads aloud to his family, and then the family can discuss the story from the book. In conclusion, reading aloud is very useful. It has makes us interested in reading. Reading aloud is a fun activity. Plus, there are so many benefits that we can gain from this activity (j/13).

Reading Aloud and Physical Bonding

Another aspect of reading aloud that drew the preservice teachers ‘interests was the notion of physical bonding between children and their caregivers. Referring to Trelease’s (2009) article on reading aloud, the preservice teachers suggested that reading aloud could facilitate a child and parents’ physical bonding. They noted: “Parents should consider the physical bonding that occurs during the time of reading aloud. Why is physical bonding important? Establishing a physical bond is helpful in making children more focused on and interested in a story.” On children and caregiver physical bonding, one preservice teacher recalled her own bedtime storytelling as a child with her father. She said:

I strongly believe that when parents read bedtime stories to their little child it will make a strong connection between the parents and the little child. When I was a child, my father always told me his childhood stories, which were mostly about ghosts. I enjoyed it a lot. Every night, I always waited for my father’s stories because I was curious what stories he would tell. That’s why I felt closer to my father than to my mother when I was a child (j/13).
Table 4.16. Becoming Teachers of Literature

<table>
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<th>Being knowledgeable about literature</th>
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<tr>
<td>Planning and implementing teaching activities using literature</td>
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**Becoming Teachers of Literature**

Discussions across the themes suggested that preservice teachers’ intend to teach using literature. This present theme will focus on the preservice teachers’ intentions as future teachers who plan on using literature in their classrooms. Many preservice teachers argued that one of the basic qualities of literature teachers was being knowledgeable about literature. The preservice teachers seemed to suggest that teachers’ love of reading would not be sufficient unless they had also studied literature themselves. They insisted that reading would give them a “surface” knowledge only, but studying literature would give them a much deeper and wider knowledge about literature itself. One preservice teacher insisted that acquiring knowledge about literature was important for teachers so that they would know what literature to offer their students.

After meeting for nine weeks, the preservice teachers began to discuss how they would use picturebooks with their own students. One preservice teacher wrote: “Someday when I become an English teacher, I will start my class by introducing and reading aloud picturebooks. Doing this routine, I will get my students’ full attention (j/9).” In terms of teaching using literature, they began to recognize some of classroom activities that were based on literature, and how these activities could be applied in their own classrooms.

I learned that there are many activities that I can apply in my class. In the beginning of the class I will read aloud, then I will ask students to write some
words and to make a poem out of those words, and I will end the class by reading aloud again. From this [literature] class, I learned many things. For example, now whenever I read a storybook, I pay attention not just to the story but to the details as well. I’ll pay attention to the plot, structure, organization, images, and so on. I notice now I tend to be critical when interpreting the meaning conveyed by the story (j/9).

Echoing this statement, another preservice teacher added a suggestion for an activity to use in her classroom.

I learned that there are many class activities that are related to literature, some of them are reading logs and journal writing. As I see, by using a reading log, students will get used to reading any genre. Even though the reading log may seem like a boring activity at the beginning, I think that doing reading logs would make students like to read, and eventually the reading logs will help form the students’ reading habit. Like everyone said a force of habit can eventually become a habit (j/10).

In general, the preservice teachers argued that teachers had to facilitate students’ reading habits. As one preservice teacher asserted: “As teachers, we have to make the effort to develop students ‘love of reading.’ And eventually the students will become aware of the importance of literature (j/11).” When I asked in a final interview, “What have you learned from the course?” one preservice teacher argued that as a future teacher he learned that literature was not supposed to be boring, and that, in fact it could be really interesting.
Summary of Findings for Question 1

The findings for Question 1 reveal a range of themes detailing the preservice teachers’ response to the course instruction. The themes include: a) reading and reading critically; b) literature, as a resource for learning and language arts; c) the art, narrative, visual literacy and critical thinking associated with picturebooks, as well as the preservice teachers’ thinking about picturebook art; d) thinking about using literature for teaching, including for teaching EFL; e) literature-related activities like book talks; f) reading aloud and its role in creating a physical bond; and g) becoming teachers of literature. The themes that emerged over the course of the semester-long study also answered my questions concerning how the preservice teachers might come to think of using of picturebooks for teaching, and how their thinking might change over time.

Question 2 Findings on Literary Responses

In this section I address the following question: How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to picturebooks being taught in the course? The following questions are also of interest:

a) How did Indonesian preservice teachers aesthetically respond to picturebooks being taught in an introduction to picturebooks class?

b) What aspects of social and cultural experiences influenced their responses to picturebooks?

In answering this question, I first present a section describing the preservice teachers’ responses to each picturebook selected for the study. I also present descriptive narratives of their responses to individual picturebooks. In the following section, findings of patterns of responses will be presented. These findings are responses across
picturebooks that have been coded using Sipe’s (2000, 2008) conceptual literary understanding categories. The difference between the two sections is that while in the earlier one I aimed to show major themes that emerged from the preservice teachers’ discussions of selected picturebooks, in the later section I intend to show the major themes of the preservice teachers’ responses that had been coded using a system established by Sipe. I believe the descriptions from the two sections complement and strengthen the findings of the present research question.

A Narrative Description of the Preservice Teachers’ Picturebooks Responses

Table 4.17. Themes in The Bird Hunter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addressing moral issues</th>
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<tr>
<td>Disagreeing with the story ending</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding the message of the story</td>
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</table>

The Bird Hunter: An Indonesian Folktale

In journals responding to The Bird Hunter—a story about a simple man who, through his trickery, manages to marry a king’s daughter the preservice teachers seem to take moral issues with the story. First, they have an issue with Wajan, the main character. Being ‘lucky’ was how preservice teachers described Wajan (the main character). “He was lucky! How it could be that the liar is always being lucky all the time? It’s unfair.” Asked what they would have done if they met a person like Wajan, one preservice teacher said: “I’ll kick him out.” That said, some preservice teachers were still interested in being friends with people like Wajan. They said, “Wajan is smart, he knows how to
think really fast. We want to learn how to think like him, to be smart. So that we can outsmart people like him [Wajan].”

Many found the story ending disagreeable; it was not something that they would hope for from a story. “I hate the end of the story! He should have been caught by the king because he had lied.” For many preservice teachers, the notion that traditional stories like *The Bird Hunter* could carry “many moral views” was a concept; it never occurred to the preservice teachers that such stories could also contain moral teaching. Along this line, the notion of sowing bad deeds or bad karma also emerged; they believed that an action that departed from lies would eventually “get bad effect from the lies.” Such a firm moral value was possibly a reflection of its prominence in “society,” as one preservice teacher pointed out “people were still doing the story telling because most of the stories have moral values. Therefore, it’s very important for parents or society to impart the stories to their children or other societies.”

**Cinderella Stories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.18. Themes in <em>The Gift of the Crocodile</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noticing cultural influences in the illustrations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding the moral teaching the message of the story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing elements of the story (Indonesian and Western Cinderella)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*The Gift of the Crocodile: A Cinderella Story (from Indonesia)*

In responding to *The Gift of the Crocodile*, the preservice teachers noticed the cultural influence in the book illustrations, “such as in the front of the cover,” where there
were “sarong,” and “malayu skirt,” an Indonesian wrap around traditional skirt that is still popular today. Similarly, the cultural influences could be found on pages where there were “traditional houses” like those found in Sumatra, and where the characters’ names reflected Indonesian culture. Remark ing on the significance of culture in picturebook illustrations, one preservice teacher explained: “An illustration shows us where a folktale comes from; it shows us the culture that influences a folktale; it helps us to predict what the story is about; it helps us to imagine the characters and settings in the folktale; and it helps our comprehension in reading a folktale.” Pictures in picturebooks, become a “signal from the author that both text and picture are meaningful.” “We predicted the story by pictures first. We analyzed from a little thing, such as colors, shapes, and subtle differences between pictures, and so on.” So, the preservice teachers concluded that we have to “look carefully at the picture” when reading a picturebook.

As a literary object, some preservice teachers noticed that picturebooks could put forward certain moral values or teaching. They argued: “The moral value from the crocodile character is that a hero (fairy) does not have to have a handsome or beautiful face. Being kind comes from the heart (inside) not from the cover (outside).” The book seemed to teach them that being a “kind person is always the right thing to do. So, if there are many people who don’t like us, as long as we do the right things,” and “keep polite to everyone” “we will survive. The pain is just temporarily, if we still believe in ourselves, we will solve the problem and will live happily ever after.” In other words, they believed that being a kind person would bring a true and lasting happiness. The preservice teachers also argued that for young children, the teaching value of the story could be “a support for [their] confidence, especially if they have problems similar to Cinderella (Damura)
like living with a stepmother and sisters.” Young children could learn from the story about how to deal with life’s challenges.

Many preservice teachers also began to analyze the story in *The Gift of the Crocodile*. They compared the story elements with other Cinderella stories they knew from Western versions. For instance, they noticed that the “fairy godmother is replaced by a crocodile. Everybody knows that there is almost nothing in common between the fairies in [Western] Cinderella and a crocodile. The fairy [in Cinderella] is cute and little, while the crocodile is big and wild.” Others offered a more profound analysis comparing Cinderella stories across cultures. One preservice teacher said: “I learned that the origin of the story affected the story itself. The Cinderella story from China showed traditional Chinese pattern [in the clothing], whereas in the story from Indonesia, Cinderella wears *Batik*, a traditional Indonesian pattern.” They also analyzed the story structure in terms of what they were familiar with. For instance, many preservice teachers suggested that *The Gift of the Crocodile* reminded them of “Bawang Merah Bawang Putih” (Red Onion and Garlic) a popular Indonesian folktale a story about a kind girl (Garlic) and her mean stepsister (Red Onion). Some preservice teachers also suggested that *The Gift of the Crocodile* reminded them of a Hollywood Cinderella story starring Hillary Duff and Selena Gomez.
Table 4.19. Themes in *Yeh-Shen*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparing the illustrations as representative of the cultures of Indonesia and China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing the ways in which the illustrations were made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having mixed opinions about the story: interesting vs. boring (predictable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making personal connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing the illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing the meaning of symbols in the stories</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*

As they began to read Cinderella stories from China and Indonesia, the preservice teachers highlighted different aspects from the two storybooks. They compared the two books as literary art objects, and the artistic process involved in the making these art objects.

The preservice teachers compared the books in terms of how the illustrations reflected culture. For example, although *The Gift of the Crocodile* and *Yeh-Shen* share similar story elements, the preservice teachers argued that they still “can learn something new” if they “investigate” the books carefully. They said: “From the stories, we can find the different aspects about Indonesian and Chinese stories, such as the symbols of crocodile (Indonesia) and fish (China).” There’s no such thing as “ordinary pictures if we want to see more detail,” they insisted.

Many preservice teachers were curious about the picturebooks illustrations; they attempted to analyze the artistic process used to make the illustrations. One preservice
teacher suggested that in order “to make an illustration for a picturebook, the illustrator must do research about the culture of the story being told. An illustrator doesn’t just put the picture by his/her way. I believe it must be a long process. In addition, an illustrator should be creative in drawing pictures that could complement the story.” Echoing this, another preservice teacher wrote that the making of picturebook illustration “should be based on long research to learn the culture and getting to know the details [of the culture]. This is not an easy and simple work, and it takes a long time to make a picturebook.”

They seemed fascinated with the Yeh-Shen illustrations, and admired Ed Young, the illustrator. They said: “Ed Young’s illustration is very artistic and meaningful.” Yet, they also thought that Ed Young’s illustration might not be too helpful in aiding comprehension, especially for young readers. They said, “the picture are more complicated; we couldn’t predict the story from the pictures without reading the text.”

In terms of the storyline, the preservice teachers seemed to have mixed opinions about the Cinderella stories. Many preservice teachers suggested that they loved the story “because the story has a happy ending.” Many others found it simply boring “because the plot is certainly predictable;” they had “already predicted the end of the story.” And a few others wondered about the reality and the fantasy of the story: “Why is Cinderella story so very famous? Have people from different countries ever seen the reality of this story?”

The character of Yeh-Shen generated many opinions and personal connections from the preservice teachers. The range of their connections varied. Many showed their unfavorable opinions about Yeh-Shen’s character whom they considered “very weak” for not defending herself against the stepmother and sister’s cruel treatment. One preservice teacher remarked: “I dislike that kind of [weak] personality. We must be strong in facing
all problems. Don’t cry easily, because it will only encourage others to bother us even more.” One preservice teacher offered a solution: “if I were Yeh-Shen, I would not want to live with my step mother. I would live with relatives.” Many preservice teachers found that the ending of Yeh-Shen with the deaths of stepmother and stepsister was “satisfying” compared to other Cinderella stories. One of them said: “I like that the antagonistic characters finally died. I felt satisfied with that because I hated the stepmother and sister. I hated them, I felt like wanting to hurt them with my own hands.” Some preservice teachers showed more sympathy toward Yeh-Shen—offering some justification for her seemingly weak attitude. “According to me, when Yeh-shen cried it showed that she had a pure heart. There was nothing she could do except cry. I think she was not weak, but she tried to relieve her pain by crying. I also believe that crying is the easiest way to relieve my burden and pain.” And after all, being “patient” and “kind” will only bring “benefit to us.”

The preservice teachers also offered analytical responses about the books’ illustrations. In their analyses, they made comparisons between Yeh-Shen and the Gift of the Crocodile. They argued that Yeh-Shen and Damura [the Gift of the Crocodile] basically had the same “essence of the story. The differences are only according to the author’s and illustrator’s activity.” The Yeh-Shen story is more artistic than Damura [the Gift of the Crocodile]. “By looking at the illustrations in Yeh-Shen,” I could see that the illustrator was awesome.” Many preservice teachers considered Yeh-Shen’s illustration challenging, yet aesthetically satisfying. I’m “still confused about how to predict using the illustrations of Yeh-Shen.” The “story is more complicated than Damura.” In general, Yeh-Sen’s “illustrations looked so deep, the combination of colors made it more artistic. I
think the illustrations were a little bit mysterious.” On the contrary, the illustrations of Damura [The Gift of the Crocodile are quite clear].” They are “mostly colorful and they look simple and easy to understand.” “I think the Damura storybook is more suitable for children.”

Symbols in the books’ illustrations appeared to spark the preservice teachers’ responses. One preservice teacher said:

In Yeh-Shen, the illustrator put something that became a symbol of China (the koi fish). The fish became a fairy godmother. Why was it a fish? I think, people in China regarded koi fish as a source of ‘lucky.’ In Damura from Indonesia, the fairy godmother was a crocodile. Why was it a crocodile? I think it was because a crocodile was a symbol of ‘loyalty.’ People in Indonesia used ‘buaya’ (the crocodile) to name a city (Sura-baya), a place (Lubang Buaya), and a bread (Roti Buaya).

What is more, they also noticed that the contexts could influence elements of a story. One preservice teacher added: “In Yeh-Shen there was a story about the Spring Festival. I think that was because in China people hold a Spring Festival when celebrating the New Year. In Damura, the story made reference to a dance party I think it was because Indonesia is a multicultural and multiethnic country that is famous for dancing. Dancing is a very popular tradition in Indonesia.”
Table 4.20. Themes in *The Librarian of Basra*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Making personal connections to Alia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appreciating the story from a non-mainstream perspective (from a Muslim character’s point of view)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about current events in a picturebook</td>
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</table>

The Librarian of Basra

Many preservice teachers felt personally connected with the story of Alia, *The Librarian of Basra*. They admired Alia’s courage in risking her life for saving books. They said: “I love Alia. I don’t believe everyone would be willing to save books in a library when they are in danger, but Alia is different. She is a book lover. She loved books more than she loved herself. That’s amazing!” Alia’s story seemed to change their perspective about books and affect their attitudes toward reading. One preservice teacher admitted:

Through this story, I realized that I have different perspective about books from her. Honestly, reading book is just work for me because my lecturers always forced me to read a book every day. I don’t like book because I think reading books is a burden. I want to read a book for pleasure, but I can’t feel that way. You know, there is always a book I carry with me for an extensive reading assignment (for a reading class), but I don’t know how eager I am to read the book, unless I have a deadline to finish it. But now, I really envy Alia. She regards books as her best friend. She brings them with her everywhere, and she tries to keep her books safe even though there is a war in her country. Books are
everything to her. It changed my perspective about books. Books are important whether I like it or no. Books can be my best friend or my burden depending on my perspective about books themselves. Now I believe that loving books is the way to see the world.

Learning from the Alia story, the preservice teachers took away from it the message that “we can do anything for something we love. I can see from Alia’s effort, what she does to save the books from the war.” Many preservice teachers declared: “I want to be like her.”

Many of the responses also referred to the importance of multicultural literature, in this case telling a story from a perspective that was different from the mainstream. Many preservice teachers found the story refreshing. It told a true story from a Muslim perspective, one which was usually negatively portrayed especially in the mass media. One preservice teacher posited: “This story was based on a true story. When Mrs. Tati read aloud this story, I found something new. Usually, “English,’ is always related with "a Western culture,’ but in this story, the author used Muslims as the story main characters, and Basra, a city in Iraq, as the story setting.” Being Muslims themselves, many preservice teachers felt connected with the positive message of the story and hoped others could take the good things from the book.

The notion that news or facts can be presented in such a compelling way, as in the true story of The Librarian of Basra, appeared to be a new revelation for the preservice teachers. One preservice teacher admitted: “One thing that made me surprised was that news could be used by a brilliant author as story in a picturebook.” The preservice teachers began to see that there was so much they could do with nonfiction picturebooks
like the Alia story. One preservice teacher suggested: “I can learn history and art. The history can tell the events in the past. Even if I don’t travel much, through non-fiction picturebooks I can learn about other countries: histories, customs, buildings, and cultures. For example, *The Librarian of Basra* is set in Iraq. Through this book we can learn about Iraqi culture (e.g., the buildings, and the history of war in that country).” For many preservice teachers, this storybook more than others seemed to have inspire in them the desire to write their own stories. On preservice teacher declared: “The lesson inspired me to become a writer someday.”

**Table 4.21. Themes in *Ghosts in the House!***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing perceptions of ghosts; ghosts can be funny too</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being entertained by a story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing connections with movies</td>
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**Ghosts in the House!**

In their responses to *Ghosts in the House!* the preservice teachers seemed to find that the story had changed their thinking about ghosts. They highlighted some aspects about the story that were significant for altering their thinking. “Ghosts are not just to scare you; they can be funny too. The girl and her cat made the ghosts became like decorations in the house curtains, tablecloths and blankets. The story made me think that actually, I can do funny things with ghosts; I don’t need to be afraid of them. We don’t need to be afraid of ghosts, because they actually are not that scary.” The preservice teachers appeared to learn that a story could combine spooky and humorous elements at
the same time. One preservice teacher commented: ”The way the author tells the story is so funny. There’s nothing scary or terrifying in this book.” Echoing this statement, another preservice teacher posited: “I thought that it was the funniest ghost stories that I have ever read. How could it be, a little innocent girl who was not afraid of ghosts. On the contrary, the ghosts are afraid of the little girl.” The preservice teachers imagined what children could learn from reading the book. “I thought this book was suitable to be told to children, so that it would make help them not be scared of ghosts.”

Overall, many preservice teachers suggested that the story was entertaining. One preservice teacher declared: “I like fun stories like this.” Their responses also showed their connections to other texts and they made sense of the story. In this case, they made connections with a movie. One preservice teacher recalled: “The first time I heard the story. I thought of the Casper film. There were a couple of similar elements: both Ghosts in the House! and Casper were kind of funny ghosts (not scary); Casper also had a friend, a little girl, as his companion.”

Table 4.22. Themes Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father to daughters</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Lincoln and slavery abolition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family bonding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters

The preservice teachers’ response to Obama’s Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters focused largely on the content, the author, and on how they connected with the book. In terms of the content, the preservice teachers seemed thrilled to read the story about “a letter from an American leader Barack Obama to his daughters.” The letter “was telling things that were very meaningful.” The story “brings messages of a father to his two lovely daughters.” One preservice teacher said “I like the content of this book, because Barack Obama tells of many famous people who could give inspirations to his daughters.” One figure from the book that drew their attention was Abraham Lincoln for his dedication to abolishing slavery.

The preservice teachers found the stories in Obama’s book inspiring. They said: “The story was so interesting. It gave me much inspiration. We can be anything that we want. Barack Obama tells his daughters that they are so special. Obama tell his daughters that they could be anything they want to be in this life. This book is the kind of inspirational and motivational book that I like.” The story seemed to inspire them as a future teachers and future parents. As future teachers, the story taught them “to inspire and to motivate is not just the parent’s duty, but it also the teachers’ duty, as the guardian in the school. Teachers always have to motivate their students to become whatever the students want to be. The teachers have to give them spirit so they are motivated to reach their dreams.” The story also rang true to them as parents in the future. They said: “If we have children later, we should give our children freedom to choose their dreams, but we also have to guide them so that they don’t do anything wrong.” The preservice teachers agreed that “this book motivates them to be better and more.”

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Seemingly fascinated by Obama’s storytelling to his daughters, one preservice teacher imagined recreating a similar story about her family. She said: “I imagined that the story of Obama and his daughters was a story of mine. There will be my sister, father, mother, and me. I love them all. I like this book so much. And I like the cover because it has a blue color, which is my favorite.”

Table 4.23. Literary Responses Across Picturebooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Response</th>
<th>The Bird</th>
<th>The Gift</th>
<th>Yeh-Shen</th>
<th>The Librarian of the House!</th>
<th>Of Thee I</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytical</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>Personal</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Literary Responses across Picturebooks**

This section presents the collective responses made by the preservice teachers to the six children’s picturebooks selected for the study and taught in the course. The preservice teachers’ responses across picturebooks are coded using Sipe’s (2000, 2008) conceptual literary understanding categories.

**Analytical.** In responding to picturebooks being read aloud, many of the
preservice teachers’ responses seemed primarily “to be dealing with the text as an opportunity to construct narrative meaning” (Sipe, 2008, p. 85)—the text in this context refers to what Sipe (2000) calls “a union of visual and verbal sign” (p. 264). About 69% of the preservice teachers’ responses fit to the analytical category. The range of their analysis includes the elements of structures, illustrations, the story summarization, characters, and being critical toward the text.

**Structural.** Sipe (2008) states that structural analysis refers to a reader’s ability to “step back from a particular episode or illustration that was being discussed at the time and adopt a more inclusive perspective” (pp. 97-98). The universality of story structure in traditional literature, like folktales, is considered to help readers to “assimilate” the structure and, thereby, to improve their reading skills (Bosma, 1992, p. 4). According to Bosma, universal structures such as “goodness generally outsmart evil,” and “evil does not win, but receives its due or is recognized as evil” (pp. 4-5) can be found in most folktales. Such structures will enable beginning readers to make use of prediction in stories (Sipe, 2008) and help them to develop into more skillful readers. As mature readers, many preservice teachers in the study seemed to have assimilated the universality of folktales. In particular in their reading of *The Bird Hunter* their comments indicated that they had anticipated what would ensue based on their reading of traditional stories. They hinted at what they anticipated from the story, and indicated surprise when it was different from what they had anticipated. In a response to *The Bird Hunter: An Indonesian Folktale*, Aida, a female preservice teacher, wrote of her surprise with the story’s ending.

I thought Wajan would not get married to Bintang Dewi (the king’s daughter)
because he was a liar. But at the end of the story, Wajan could get what he wanted just because he was a lucky boy (j/2).

Aida’s response suggested at least two ways in which she had anticipated what was going to happen in the story, reflecting the common characteristics of folktales that Bosma (1992) described earlier. First, people who lie should not receive good things in their lives. Second, liars who indeed receive such goodness are simply lucky; they may have received good fortune when, in fact, they do not deserve it. In this case, Aida seemed to be critical of the story because it rewarded a liar instead of punishing him.

At times, the preservice teachers seemed delighted to learn about new details and characters in traditional stories. For example, when we read The Gift of the Crocodile: A Cinderella Story (from Indonesia), Nina, a preservice teacher, discussed how she enjoyed its “unique” story, especially with “new characters that are not familiar in the [Western] Cinderella story.” Nina obviously knew about the story and characters in the Western Cinderella story; she was able to make a comparison between the two story versions. She also seemed appreciative of finding out about a similar, yet unique story. But at the same time, Nina appeared bewildered with some details in the Cinderella stories. Nina said: “There is also something new that I don’t understand and that is how come a fairy godmother in the Western Cinderella story is a woman, whereas in The Gift of the Crocodile the fairy godmother is a crocodile” (j/3).

Nina’s bewilderment seemed to stem from her observation that the crocodile godmother in the book was depicted as a large beast, a guardian of a river, and a creature who would harm you. Only people who were polite could win the crocodile’s heart and receive her magic help. In contrast, the fairy godmother in the Western Cinderella is
usually portrayed as a beautiful woman. Her kind smiles and motherly talk become a source of comfort for Cinderella. Yanto, a male preservice teacher, made a similar observation about the distinctions between the fairy godmothers in the Cinderella stories. He wrote:

“There is almost nothing in common between the fairies in Cinderella and a crocodile; the fairy godmother in [Cinderella story] is cute and petite, while in this story the fairy godmother is a big and wild crocodile” (j/3).

Despite some differences in the details, the preservice teacher seemed to concur that traditional stories like Cinderella were basically the same, largely because “the essence of the story is not changed.” If there were some differences, they seemed to attribute such differences to the “the authors and illustrators’ creativities” (j/5).

**Characters.** According to Sipe (2008), the analytical approach entails the analysis of the “characters’ actions, feelings, thoughts, intentions, and the ways their external appearance may give us information about these elements” (pp. 101-102). The preservice teachers seemed to use the story characters in the illustration as a way to make sense the story. For example, in one of her responses to *The Gift of the Crocodile*, Nina pointed to the appearance of the fairy godmother, a large crocodile, as a message that she could take out from the story:

“A hero (a fairy) does not have to be handsome or beautiful. Being kind comes from the heart (inside) not from the cover (outside)” (j/3).

The preservice teachers also focused on the character’s intention as a way of making sense of the meaning of the story. At times, they did this by extending the original text. For example, when I read aloud *Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters*, there was a
A man named Abraham Lincoln knew that all of the America should work together. He kept our nation one and promised freedom to enslaved sisters and brothers. This man of the people, simple and plain, asked more of our country—that we behave as kin. After discussing the book Yanto wrote in his journal:

The part that I like best from the book is when Obama tells her daughters that they should aspire to becoming like Abraham Lincoln. Obama’s message resonated with me because I’m also very impressed with what Lincoln has done for Black American citizens. He fought for Black Americans’ rights to live as free human beings. He stated that Black Americans had the same right to live as other citizens. Lincoln fought tirelessly despite there being many who disagreed with him, until he finally got killed. Fortunately, he finally succeeded to set free Black Americans. As a result, now Obama becomes the president of USA” (j/11).

Yanto’s comment suggested his personal connection to the story about Abraham Lincoln. He admired Lincoln’s crusade against slavery. And if we compare it to the book, Yanto’s responses obviously extended the original text. He talked about Black American and the civil rights movement, topics that were not explicitly mentioned in the original text. It seems that his comment was in part a result of our discussion during Obama who had then been recently reelected which was one of the reasons I selected for the book reading aloud. When I reviewed my teaching notes and videos, I noticed that indeed we had had a discussion on the history of slavery, Black Americans, and the election of read aloud. It seemed that the book discussion had contributed to Yanto’s response to the book.
Illustrations. At times, the preservice teachers used picturebook illustrations as a way to make sense of the narrative meaning of the story (Sipe, 2008). When analyzing illustrations in this way, the preservice teachers paid attention to the illustrations as a total unit of design (Kiefer, 2010). So, unlike an analysis of character illustration where they tended to narrow the focus on the character’s external appearance during these discussions they referred to an analysis of the illustrations in the picturebook as a whole. Much of the preservice teachers’ discussions of picturebook illustrations focused on their significance to the story. After discussing cultural conventions (Kiefer, 2010) in The Gift of the Crocodile and Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China, Awal commented:

I learned that the origin of the story affected the story itself. A Cinderella story from China showed a Chinese traditional pattern [in the dress], whereas the Indonesian Cinderella would wear Batik, a traditional Indonesian pattern (j/3). Awal’s response seemed to suggest his understanding that the context of a story could influence how the story is being told, including how the story is depicted through illustrations.

Another commentator, Ayu, a keen observer whose comments were often insightful, attempted to judge the quality of the illustrations from the two books, and weighed in on who might be the potential readers for each book.

I think the illustration in The Gift of the Crocodile is for children’s taste; children can predict the story easily by seeing the illustrations. Yeh-Shen, however, is for adults’ taste. The illustrations are more artistic. The story was not easy to predict from simply looking at the illustrations (j/3). If I were asked to choose between The Gift of the Crocodile and Yeh Shen, I would choose Yeh-Shen. Why? First,
*Yeh Shen* is full of art. By looking at the way the story was visualized, I could see that the illustrator was awesome. He put something that symbolizes Chinese culture in the illustration, that is the koi fish. I loved his drawing, although I still found it hard to predict and describe the illustrations in *Yeh-Shen* book. On the contrary, the illustrations in *The Gift of the Crocodile* were quite clear. I think the book was more suitable for children (j/5).

Ayu then suggested some of the factors that made the illustrations important to a reader.

“In my opinion, there are many advantages that we can derive from folktales’ illustrations. Illustrations show us where a folktale comes from; they show us culture that influences a folktale; they help us to predict what the story is about; they help us to imagine the characters and settings in a folktale; and illustrations help comprehend the story (j/3).

**Theme.** That stories and literature could contain a message seemed to be a novel idea for many preservice teachers. When we read *The Bird Hunter*, the first read aloud picturebook, I asked them about the moral or the message that the story was conveying. Nina seemed to be puzzled by this question. She wrote: “For a while I did not believe that traditional stories could include many moral views in them” (j/2). But once they were aware of the fact that a story carried a message or moral lessons, the preservice teachers seemed thrilled by the idea. After reading *The Gift of the Crocodile*, Zahra concluded:

This was a good story. I’ve learned something from this story, that the kind person is always right. So, if there are many people who don’t like us, as long as we are right, we can still survive. The pain is just temporary. But if we believe in ourselves, we can overcome the obstacles and we will live happily ever after (j/3).
In *The Librarian of Basra*, Jiah seemed fascinated with the story of Alia, a librarian who bravely rescued the Basra library collection from being destroyed during the Iraq war. The lesson that she drew from the story was that “we can do anything for something we love. I can see from Alia’s efforts what she does to save the books from the war” (j/7).

**Critical.** According to Sipe (2008), the way readers respond to literature may also indicate “their literary critical resistance to the moral, message, or theme of the story” (p. 110). These instances of critical analysis were found in *The Bird Hunter* where many preservice teachers showed their critical stances to the story. Nina was critical of the story because it failed to provide consequence for the trickery and lies of Wajan. Instead, he received a reward by marrying the king’s daughter. Nina critiqued: “The story didn’t address Wajan’s lies” (j/2). Zahra simply disagreed with lying and she believed that there should be negative consequences for those who lie. Zahra said: “This story told that a lie can be concealed with some tricks. I do not agree with something that begins in a lie. Although a liar can hide his lies and live happily, I believe that one da the liar will be repaid for his lies” (j/2). Rofi took on similar critical stance toward the story message by attempting to explain how the story turned out in such a way. Rofi said:

I disagree with the story because my prediction was wrong. In my opinion, Wajan, who had lied about his archery skill had to be caught by the king. How could it be that a liar is always lucky? It’s unfair actually. But I think I understand why; maybe Wajan was safe because he was lucky and smart. Therefore, he could always come up with reasons that seem make sense to the king. That’s why he could get away from his lies (j/2).

Rofi seemed to predict that Wajan’s tricks would be revealed and eventually he would be
caught by the king. But when the story had a different ending, Rofi seemed frustrated; how could a liar escape from punishment and even marry the king’s daughter? Rofi then tried to reassess his interpretation of Wajan. He concluded that Wajan was a cunning and lucky person. Overall, this comment from Jiah seemed to summarize the typical response about Wajan and the story. Jiah stated: “Fortune came to him. I hate the end of the story!” (j/2).

**Personal.** The second largest portion of data fit into the personal category. About 22% of the preservice teachers’ responses indicated that when reading the picturebooks they had “connected their lives with some element of the text or used knowledge gained from a text to inform their lives” (Sipe, 2008, p. 152). The preservice teacher made personal connections in at least two ways. Some of the time when interpreting the text their personal feelings or experiences paralleled those of the story (*life-to-text connections*). At some other times, they used “the story as a form of (vicarious) experience to assist in understanding or dealing with life” (p. 161) (*text-to-life connections*).

**Life-to-text connections.** The most obvious connections they made to stories were statements suggesting that they had made comparisons with or drawn inspirations from characters in the story. After discussing *The Librarian of Basra*, Aida, who was often time heard complaining about her heavy reading load that semester, drily compared her attitude towards reading with Alia the librarian who rescued the library books and kept them from being destroyed. In comparing herself with Alia, Aida’s statement seemed apologetic. “She [Alia] is a librarian, and I think that she is a book lover. Through this story, I realized that I have different perspective about books than her” (j/7).
Echoing this sentiment, Ayu also felt connected with Alia the librarian, especially with her heroic act of rescuing the library books. Ayu felt inspired by Alia’s bravery. “I love Alia. In my opinion, not everybody would be willing to save books in a library when they were in danger. But Alia is different. She is a book lover. She loves books more than she loves herself. That’s amazing! I want to be like her” (j/7).

In *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*, our discussions about Yeh-Shen’s sparkling slippers led to a discussion about the tradition of binding women’s feet in culture of old China. Some argued that women with small feet were more desirable in China. This discussion seemed to connect with Yanti’s experience when she bought shoes in a Chinese store. Yanti recalled:

> I know that in China small feet were a symbol of beauty. It reminded me of my own experience. I also have small feet, and I used to feel ashamed of them. Then one day I went to a shoe store owned by a Chinese man. He really loved my feet. He said that I was so lucky to have small feet. He also said that in his country (China), women had to bind their feet in order to make them smaller; men in China regarded women with small feet as more beautiful. Since then, I’ve never felt ashamed again about my small feet (j/5).

The preservice teachers also connected with texts that seemed to mirror their lives in some way. Yeh-Shen, who was depicted as a victim of her stepmother and sister’s abuses, was often seen crying hopelessly. This scene resonated with Ayu who appeared to be shy and timid herself. She admitted that she also cried as a way to release her pain.

> I like the part where Yeh-Shen cried until she fell asleep (when her fish friend was dead). In my opinion, when Yeh-Shen cried it showed me that she had a pure
heart. There was nothing she could do except crying. I don’t think she was weak; she was trying to relieve her pain by crying. I, too, believe that crying is the easiest way to relieve my burden and pain (j/5).

The comment was rather unique; Ayu was the only person who thought that crying was not an indication of a weak personality. In fact, she seemed to insist that crying was a natural human expression. In contrast, many preservice teachers seemed unsympathetic with Yeh-Shen blaming her for not defending herself. For example, in an earlier section I have quoted Yanto who called Yeh-Shen “weak.” He insisted that unlike Yeh-Shen “we must be strong in facing all our problems. Don’t cry easily, because it will only encourage others to bother us even more” (j/5).

The preservice teachers’ connections to the story sometimes reflected their past lives; these connections seemed to offer them a new perspective in the present time. Yanto commented:

“*Ghosts in the House!* is a funny story. It is very different with what people commonly thing about this kind of story. The part I liked best from the story is the ending where the girl and her cat turned the ghosts into household property, like curtains, table clothes, and blankets. The story made me think that actually, I can do funny things with ghosts; I don’t need to be afraid of them (j/10).

At the beginning of the course, Yanto had remarked that he had an extreme fear of ghosts. His friends, in attempt to support him, challenged Yanto to face his phobia by reading lots of ghost stories. He finally succeeded in overcoming his phobia. So, when reading *Ghosts in the House!* he remembered his past fears. Now, however, thanks to *Ghosts in the House!* he had a new perspective on ghosts in literature, realizing that
ghosts be scary when they appeared in horror stories but could also be funny as they were in this humorous story.

**Text-to-life connections.** At times, the preservice teachers used part of a story to envision their future lives. For instance, after discussing *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*, Aida contemplated her future as an independent woman. She said:

Through the *Yeh-Shen* story, I learned that many women characters in Chinese stories were portrayed as independent women. I like that attitude, and I want to become an independent woman. I think that an independent woman can do anything she wants. And as an independent woman, she will depend on no one. She can have freedom in her life. How beautiful it is to be an independent woman, and I like it! (j/5).

Notice that Aida made reference to Yeh-Shen and she then continued discussing the depiction of independent women in Chinese books. The rest of her comment gives her definition of an independent woman; one who has a freedom to do anything and will depend only to herself. She ended her comment on a more personal note, praising the way in which independent women lived the lives and saying she wanted to be one of them. In this comment, then, it was as if Aida the *Yeh-Shen* story as a way to talk about her aspirations to become an independent woman herself.

Discussions about the stories also caused the preservice teachers to position themselves inside the story; what would they do had they been in a similar situation. At times, their responses reflected their own contexts. For instance, in discussing Cinderella stories from Indonesia and China, Yanti wondered what she would do if she were a Cinderella character.
I think if I were Yeh-Shen, I would not want to live with my step mother. Maybe I would look for my uncle’s house or some other relatives. I would prefer not to live with her [the stepmother] but I would probably still visit her sometimes.

Living with a stepmother would make my life miserable (j/5).

Yanti’s response suggested that she had a big family including many relatives who were close to one another. Yanti seemed to suggest that if anything bad happened to her, she could always find a safe home with one of her many relatives. In the Indonesian context, Yanti’s comment about living with relatives was not considered uncommon. Indonesian culture has a tradition of close-knit extended families which include not just siblings but also aunts and uncles, cousins, nephews, and so on. Family members are expected to take care of each other. Typically, then, it is not uncommon for someone to seek out help from family and relatives before asking for help from anybody else. So, it made sense that Yanti would go to her uncle if things were not going well at home with the stepmother, for instance, instead of, for example, seeking help from official agencies working with domestic abuse or going to the police.

Intertextual. Sipe (2008) asserts that when making intertextual responses, the reader’s attention moves “from within the text to its relationship with other texts” that they are familiar with (p.131). It is “how stories ‘lean’ on stories (and other texts)” (p. 131). Such intertextual responses made up 7% of the data. In the simplest intertextual responses, readers use phrases such as “it’s like” or “that reminds me of…” to show that they were making associative links to “other stories” or “other texts” (p. 131). The story in The Gift of the Crocodile seemed to remind the preservice teachers of an Indonesian tale called ‘Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah (the title literally means Garlic and Red
Onion).’ Aida commented:

_The Gift of the Crocodile_ is a wonderful story. But I think the story is similar to _Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah_ in Indonesia. And I think the best part of the story was Damura’s attitude. She was polite to everyone. Even though her stepmother always punished her, Damura always obeyed her instruction” (j/3).

The tale of _Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah_ is widely known in Indonesia. It has a similar plot to the Cinderella story. Garlic (the protagonist) has to endure Red Onion’s (the stepsister) cruelty. Eventually a guardian comes along who has magical powers and helps Garlic to meet a prince. After overcoming some obstacles the stepsister and stepmother put in her way, Garlic and the prince are finally had wed. When reading _The Gift of the Crocodile_, Aida’s immediate response was connecting it to _Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah_, a tale that she apparently knew quite well. In addition, while asserting that she liked _The Gift of the Crocodile_, Aida’s comment also seemed to suggest that _Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah_ was a more well-known Indonesian tale than _The Gift of the Crocodile_ was. If we could analyze her comment, Aida seemed to suggest that _Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah_ was a better fit as an Indonesian version of Cinderella story, than the less well-known _The Gift of the Crocodile_.

An intertextual response also includes making connections with other texts. Ayu connected _Ghosts in the House!_ with _Casper_ (1995, starring Christina Ricci and Devon Sawa), a Hollywood movie about a little ghost who strikes up a friendship with a young human girl. “The first time I heard the story. I thought it reminded me of the _Casper_ film. There were a couple of similar elements: like _Ghosts in the House, Casper_ was a funny ghost (not scary); Casper also had a friend, a little girl, as his companion” (j/10). Another
intertextual movie connection was made to *Ghostbusters* (1984), a Hollywood movie about a group of ghost hunters which is also humorous. When I read the book aloud, the preservice teachers shouted “Ghostbusters” as I turned to a page showing the little witch girl chasing the ghosts around a room.

For Yanto, reading *Ghosts in the House!* seemed to remind him of a routine from an Indonesian standup comedian. “It’s a funny story. It reminds me of a line from Raditya Dika [a comedian]. He said that we don’t need to be afraid of ghosts, because they are actually not that scary” (j/10). Yanto then described some silly looking ghosts that made ghosts looked funny instead of scary.

**Transparent.** Sipe (2008) described the transparent response category as a state where readers are seemingly entering a storyworld. It is “the ability to position oneself inside” a story Sipe remarked (p. 172). Although only 2% of all the responses fell into the transparent category, these responses were powerful, nevertheless, when one thinks about the emotional intensity that the preservice teachers drew on as they positioned themselves inside the stories. When reading *The Bird Hunter*, Jiah seemed very upset with Wajan who had lied to the king about his archery skill and, yet, still managed to marry the king’s daughter. There was a scene where Wajan almost got caught when the king asked him to demonstrate his archery skill in front of the wedding guests. Jiah recounted the scene vividly:

The interesting part of this story was when the king introduced Wajan as a good archer to all his guests. The king asked him to show off his ability in archery. Wajan was so shock. He tried to find ways to refuse the king’s order, but this time
he couldn’t refuse it. Hahahaha, I laughed! “Caught you, Wajan! you are a liar.

You are a liar!! (j/2).

As she recounted the scene, Jiah’s tense emotional intensity gradually increased. When she laughed, her story seemed to shift as if she was present in the story and reporting on what was happening. Jiah might have had, what Louise Rosenblatt called, “a lived-through experience,” –a moment within the story when a reader feels emotionally involved in the story (Sipe 2008). Another transparent response occurred with Ningsih. After discussing Cinderella stories from Indonesia and China, Ningsih made up her mind that she liked the Yeh-Shen story better. Ningsih said:

I prefer this story to [Western] Cinderella story, because in this story Yeh-Shen’s stepmother and stepsister died at the end of the story. I felt satisfied with that because I hated the stepmother and sister. I hated them, I felt like I wanting to hurt them with my own bare hands. I’m happy that these antagonistic characters disappeared (j/5).

As admitted, Ningsih’s preference to Yeh-Shen was largely due to a ‘satisfying’ execution of the story in which the antagonist characters were exiled to a forest where they eventually crushed to death by stones. It seemed that she could not stand seeing Yeh-Shen being made so powerless by the stepmother and stepsister; Ningsih wanted to directly confront the cruel stepmother and sister. Her emotion was intense; she was upset that Yeh-Shen did not stand up to the cruelty of the stepmother and stepsister. Finally, when the stepmother and sister were sent to forest and died soon after, Ningsih seemed satisfied with the ending. As a reader, Ningsih seemed to prefer stories where a bad act received an immediate punishment.
Question 2 Findings Summary

In presenting the findings of the second research question: How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to picturebooks being taught in the course? I have described the major themes which appeared in the preservice teachers’ responses to the individual picturebooks selected for the study. These descriptions revealed the dominant themes discussed by the preservice teachers as they read each picturebook. I have also coded the literature responses across picturebooks using Sipe’s (2000) picturebook response categories. This section provided the inclusive findings of literature response across picturebooks used in the study.

Ayu and Awal: Tales of Two Readers and Future Teachers

Although in the foregoing discussions of findings, descriptions and literary categories allowed us to identify some of the salient ways that the preservice teachers responded to the literature and the course, those discussions do not completely articulate the unique ways the cultural influences and the changes experienced during the study affected individual preservice teachers. Nor do the preceding discussions demonstrate how particular preservice teachers orchestrated responding to literature as readers and future teachers in synergetic ways. In this section, I attempt to address those gaps. Sipe’s (2008) three aspects of literary understanding, namely stance, function, and action will be adapted to examine the individual preservice teachers’ experiences in the course both as readers and future teachers. Stance is used to describe how the preservice teachers as readers “situate themselves in relation with literature” (p. 182). Function and action are used to delineate the specific ways they think, as future teachers, they will use texts for (literature used for) and what they will likely do with the texts (do with literature).
Enciso’s (1997) work on cultural mapping, which includes cultural resources and social allegiances, will be used as a tool to examine the cultural influences on which the preservice teachers draw as they respond to literature. Data used for this analysis were drawn from all of the sources employed for this study, including a survey, interviews, preservice teachers artifacts (journals, mid and final assignments), and my reflective logs.

Ayu and Awal are the two preservice teachers chosen for case-study analysis because I wanted to include a female and male, and because based on my examination of their reading and interactions with them during (and after) the course, their work seemed to be representative of many of the preservice teachers in the study, particularly with respect experiences with reading and teaching.

Table 4.24. Ayu as a Reader and a Future Teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background</th>
<th>As a Reader</th>
<th>As a Future Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• went to pesantren (Islamic boarding school)</td>
<td>• makes a personal connections with Yeh-Shen and Alia</td>
<td>Literature Used for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• draws from popular culture, <em>Casper</em> (movie), <em>Taylor Swift</em> (music)</td>
<td>• cultivating critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has social allegiances as a Muslim with the Alia story</td>
<td>• serving as a model to improve writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• shows humanist concern with Shmuel (<em>The Boy in Striped Pyjamas</em>), and <em>Anne Frank</em></td>
<td>• learning from the story message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• teaching material and source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do with literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• reading aloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• analyzing authors’ craft as a writing model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• analyzing illustrations and art elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• as an inspiration on what to teach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ayu

*Ayu as a reader.* Ayu, the elder of two sisters, is the daughter of parents who are both teachers. She went to an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) prior to entering to the
university. Pesantren is a boarding school, typically gender segregated, where students receive education in Islamic studies after school and in the evenings and in secular subjects during the day (Dhofier, 1999). In pesantren, her pleasure reading was mostly Islamic novels. As she entered the English Education program, Ayu began picking up Western novels from authors of various genres including Mary Higgins Clarks (a mystery and author) and Meg Cabot (romance author). She took an intensive reading course that required her to review dozens of English novels during the semester. The course instructor provided many of books needed for this intensive reading. So Ayu’s preference in reading were influenced partly by the books she was exposed to and had provided for her in the English Education program.

In class, Ayu was polite and looked shy; she hardly ever made any comments or raised questions unless she was called on. In writing (e.g., journals), however, Ayu could articulate her comments and thoughts insightfully. As shown in an earlier section, in responding to picturebooks read alouds, Ayu’s stance to texts varied from the meticulously analytical (as in The Gift of the Crocodile illustration), the deeply personal (in reference to Ye-Shen’s pain and Alia, the librarian’s, bravery), to intertextual connection (when she compared the Ghosts in the House! to a movie). These responses also indicate that Ayu’s drew upon certain cultural resources and social allegiances that she felt part of.

I have described earlier that after reading Ghosts in the House! many preservice teachers suggested that the story was unusual in terms of how ghosts were depicted typical Indonesian ghost stories fall into the horror genre. When Ayu read Ghosts in the House!, she connected it to a Hollywood movie called Casper claiming that they shared
some similar elements—a story about a friendship between a ghost and human told in a humorous manner. Ayu seemed to draw on her knowledge of popular culture in order to meaning about this new text. The Casper movie in this case was a cultural product that had been adapted by Ayu as a cultural resource she could use to make literary meaning (Enciso, 1997). Another cultural resource that Ayu drew upon was from popular music. For the midterm bookmaking project, Ayu and her group made a picturebook that told about their lives, reading histories, and reviewed books that they currently loved. The group working hard to design a book that depicted their story; many handcrafted elements were incorporated in the book as part of their efforts. When giving feedback on the project, I asked the preservice teachers to think about the kinds of music that would best represent the story in their book, and Ayu wrote:

> If I were asked to choose what kind of music is suitable for my bookmaking project, I would choose some of Taylor Swift’s songs like *Fifteen*, *A Place in this World*, *Brought Up that Way*, *Enchanted* and *Eyes Open*. I think Taylor Swift’s songs could represent what I wrote in my part of bookmaking project (j/10).  

In her bookmaking project Ayu drew a picture of herself with both hands on hips looking confident. The accompanying text read, “Hi, I’m Ayu. I’m a woman not a girl anymore.” Many considered Taylor Swift’s songs empowering for girls and young women since they represented the feelings and experiences of girls as they dealt with the ups and downs in life. Taylor Swift’s songs, in a way, were considered the voice of empowerment for girls who were bravely expressing themselves. So, in my interpretation, Ayu thoughtfully selected Taylor Swift’s songs because they represented her desire to become an empowered and confident woman.
Ayu’s response to literature also disclosed the social allegiances that she felt she had. One social allegiance was her identity as a Muslim. In an earlier section I have shown that many preservice teachers, Ayu included, felt connected to *the Librarian of Basra*. Here is Ayu’s reflection after reading the book:

“This story was based on a true story. When Mrs. Tati read aloud this story, I found something new. Usually, English,’ is always related to ‘a Western culture,’ but in this story, the author presented Muslims as the story’s main characters, and Basra, a city in Iraq, as the story’s setting. By reading this book, I hope that there will be no one who hates Islam, and no people who think that books are not important. I don’t want the tragedy of Hulaghu Khan, King of Mongolia and his soldiers who burned the books of the Baghdad library to come back in this era. I hope it will never ever happen again (j/7).

Ayu’s reflection provided a number of revelations. Prior reading the book, Ayu apparently assumed that English books were associated with Western culture; that is, she thought that English books typically told stories about Western mainstream culture. After reading this picturebook, however, Ayu appeared surprised that the book presented a sympathetic depiction of Muslims and of Islamic history. Ayu then changed her tone about the book, indicating that the author had seemingly gained her trust. She quickly developed a social allegiance (Fiske, 1990; Enciso, 1997) with the book and the author; she credited the author with righting some misperceptions about Islam by presenting a factual story about Islam and its legacy from the perspective of Muslims. She even hoped that more people would read the book so that they would change their negative perceptions about Islam. Ayu also added other historical information as if to emphasize
the importance of book; she recalled a time in an Islamic history when the Mongolian army commanded by Hulaghu Kan invaded Baghdad and burned its massive library collection. Ayu clearly had read the history of the Baghdad invasion by Mongolians, and connected it to the story of *the Librarian of Basra*.

In *Alia’s Mission* (Stamaty, 2004), another picturebook that was also inspired by the true story of Alia the Basra Librarian, the invasion of Baghdad (at that time the capital city of Iraq) by the Mongols and the destruction of its library is briefly described. The memory of the Mongolian army’s total destruction of the library of Baghdad so traumatized Alia that it gave her the courage to rescue the book collection of the library of Basra from another war. Likewise this history also seemed to traumatize Ayu. At the same time, she also had high hopes that a story like *The Librarian of Basra* would remind people about the value of books and taking care of them.

As a reader, Ayu also indicated her allegiances as a humanist; one who adhered a belief that human beings should be treated equally irrespective of their differences (races, religions, etc.). A telling example was Ayu’s responses to *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (J. Boyne, 2007), a book about a friendship between Bruno, the son of a holocaust mastermind, and Shmuel, a Jewish boy living in a concentration camp. Ayu read this book for a reading log assignment. In each session I provided five minutes for book talks where I briefly overviewed books that the preservice teachers could borrow for their reading logs. One day I brought in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. Ayu checked out the book from me after the book talk. Later, in the bookmaking project, Ayu wrote her thoughts about the book and compared it to the *Anne Frank* movie (starring Ben Kingsley, among others). Ayu called *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* one of “the best
children’s book I have ever read.” During an interview, Ayu also said of this book that she knew about Nazis and the Holocaust from pesantren (Islamic boarding school). One of the teachers had shown them the *Anne Frank* movie. The movie, she said, left a lasting impression on her; she did a Google search on the Holocaust, and read books related to the Holocaust. So, when she heard about *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* during the book talk, Ayu recalled the Holocaust story, and immediately checked out the book. Ayu said that she liked the story because it was concerned with history; a history that dealt with human’s atrocities where one group of human beings had murdered others. She remembered that she cried when watching *Anne Frank* whom she described as a talented writer who died too young. Ayu said the story of Holocaust that she saw in *Anne Frank* made more sense after reading *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. But, she still could not begin to understand how the Holocaust tragedy could ever have happened: “Why were Nazis were so cruel to the Jews? Why did they practice ‘genocide’? I can’t accept that!”

Her response to the movie and book about the Holocaust made visible the humanist allegiance that Ayu subscribed to her life.

*Ayu as a future teacher.* The most salient function of literature (*literature used for*) that Ayu encountered over the semester was that literature could be used for cultivating critical thinking. She said reading literature critically made her brain active, and she regretted that she did not learn to be a critical reading when she was younger.

“Honestly, I began to understand in this course that literature could improve an Individual’s critical thinking. I thought how lucky I was to have learned this during my childhood. It will improve my critical thinking over time” (j/5).
Ayu’s comment also indicated that she valued the ability to think critically. She seemed to believe that using literature for a critical thinking had to be cultivated from an early age. When asked in an interview to clarify what she taught about using literature for critical thinking, Ayu said that after learning to read critically, she now indeed read all texts more critically. For instance, when reading books for information, she tended to suspend her judgment until she read the information from multiple sources. Additionally, Ayu described a range of other purposes that literature could be used for, including serving as a “model” to “improve writing;” medium to “appreciate art” such as the art of picturebook; and as a source of “moral values.”

As a future English teacher, Ayu also attempted to contextualize the use of literature in an Indonesian classroom teaching. Ayu wrote:

Teaching English needs interesting stuff to help teachers to enhance students’ understanding of the given materials. I think literature is what helps teachers in teaching English; literature can be introduced to teach English. Generally, English teachers in Indonesia teach English with boring methods. Typically, they just give tasks and homework to their students. Eventually, students would think that English is difficult and boring. That was how I felt when I learned English in the secondary schools. And now having been in an introduction to literature course for almost twelve weeks, I have learned that I can create an English class using literature as the basis for teaching (j/12).

Ayu’s comment suggests that she associates literature with “interesting stuff” as opposed to a boring stuff. Ayu offers that teachers could reap some benefits from using literature for teaching, even for teaching English. Her reflection on her past English learning
experience seems to justify her conviction that teaching using literature would engage students’ interests and enhance their understanding of English.

*Do with literature.* Ayu’s discussions concerning literature also indicated what she would likely do with literature in her teaching. The most common activity with literature reported by Ayu was reading aloud. Reading aloud was her favorite activity in the course. She said that she enjoyed observing me read aloud and often took notes, so that she could practice later. To start a class with a read aloud was a novel and interesting idea, Ayu said. For one thing, reading aloud would grab students’ attentions and get them ready to learn thus beginning the class with a motivating activity. Reading aloud was refreshing, Ayu claimed. When I asked if reading aloud was more suitable for younger students, Ayu insisted that the appeal of reading aloud was universal regardless of the ages. She used herself as an example saying that as an adult reader, she still enjoyed and benefitted from hearing books read aloud.

The range of activities that Ayu considering trying with literature included teaching writing using picturebooks as models of the authors’ craft. Such an activity would include analyzing the illustrations and learning about the art of the picturebook because, as she pointed out, “everything in picturebooks is considered carefully” (j/13). Overall, Ayu thought that literature could provide her with many ideas she could use in her teaching. In a teaching unit using literature (the final project for the course) she said that literature might inspire her and her students to do research about related topic using sources like “websites and newspapers,” so that the class would have some knowledge about the topic, and she as a teacher could teach in a more integrated and authentic manner.
Table 4.25. Awal as a Reader and a Future Teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background</th>
<th>As a Reader</th>
<th>As a Future teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• went to pesantren (Islamic boarding school)</td>
<td>• analytical</td>
<td>Literature Used for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• has a natural talent for drawing</td>
<td>• literature response contains many religious referents</td>
<td>• a model for good writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a writer</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>• a vast array of possibilities of teaching using literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• an editor</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Do with literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• part time English instructor</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>• reading aloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td>• researching topics discussed in literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td>• making a book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td>(bookmaking), consisting of pictures and texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Awal

Awal is the eldest of three sons whose father is a teacher and whose mother is a homemaker. Awal has a natural drawing talent. He began drawing before he was able to read. When started to read, Awal was drawn to comic books because he liked to copy the pictures, and it motivated him to read. Awal’s reading preference included Japanese graphic novels, and Islamic novels, and inspirational stories. Like Ayu, Awal also went to a religious boarding school (pesantren) before entering the university. In pesantren, Awal began to write as a hobby. He served as an editor for his pesantren’s publication. His involvement with this publication had inspired him to publish an English-Arabic dictionary that sold in modest number in the pesantren community. Awal maintained a busy schedule; in addition to being an active contributor to an Internet-based writers community for pesantren writers, he was also a part time English instructor in a language center. This background seemed to influence the nature of his responses to literature, and to inform his thinking on the use of literature and the teaching of it.
Awal was attentive and observant, and was not hesitant to ask questions or to share his opinions in class. In responding to literature, his stance was predominantly analytical. He was keen to analyze the story plot and cultural convention in picturebook illustrations. For instance, when we discussed the Cinderella stories from Indonesia and China, his reflections seemed to focus on how the story variant came to be. He pondered:

As I read to the two Cinderella stories, I asked myself, *Why is the Cinderella story so famous? Have people from different countries ever seen a real version of this story?* (italics in the original) I think there are some elements of the story that could be found in many cultures. That’s why I think the Cinderella story will always be relevant since the story was taken from our lives (j/4).

At times, Awal’s comments about literature were imbued with religious referents, suggesting a cultural map that was laden with his experiences of Islamic texts. The most notable of these referents was found in his reflection on the midterm bookmaking project. After experiencing the process of making a book, Awal seemed to acquire a new perspective on the importance of books. He quoted an Arabic proverb (popular among *pesantren* students) as if to emphasize the significance of his new revelation. He said: “I learned a new perspective from the bookmaking project. Book is one of the most important things in our life. A proverb from in Arabic says, “The best friend of man is books” (j/6).

Having learned about the art elements in picturebooks and later applied the knowledge in the bookmaking project, Awal reflected on the significance of art and God-given natural talents. “Overall, the class inspired me about the meaning and importance
of art. It is not ‘only’ something that is created by artists or talented men, but it also can be made by everyone of us because God has given all of us natural artistic abilities” (j/6).

Reflecting on the process of bookmaking project from its beginning to completion, Awal likened it to a religious experience where God was an omnipresent factor.

From the bookmaking project I did with my friend [group], I learned that to create something is not as easy as I initially thought. It needs an extra energy both physically and imaginatively. To imagine the book I wanted to create was as difficult as to bring it to reality. I needed inspiration. I needed inspiration that was artistic, meaningful and full of creativity, and that was my biggest challenge. My inspiration came from everything around me; it came from what I saw, heard, and thought. I try to be attentive to the stuff around me and connect my observations to my bookmaking project. Sometimes, my inspiration came unexpectedly, and that’s what I called the gift from God. Therefore, I think an inspiration is a blessing from God because it comes to my mind like a revelation brought by Gabriel (j/8).

In likening the process to a spiritual experience, Awal went on to cite a biblical story concerning the creation of the universe, a task that took God seven days to complete.

After getting an inspiration. I had to bring it to reality. It was a handiwork that required skills to complete. I drew every single object from my mind onto a piece of paper. It took me four days [to finish]. It was hard work. I learned that everything needed such a process. We could not make something in an instant. That’s what God did in creating the universe. He spent seven days creating every element of the universe although He could make it only in one second. God wants
to show us that we, human beings, need to follow the process and not be tempted to take a ‘shortcut.’ From this process we can learn many lessons (j/8).

In citing the biblical story of the universe creation, Awal wanted to highlight the message that everything ought to pass through a process; nothing happened instantly. Even God the Almighty took his time to create the universe. So, with this story Awal reminded us that artistic creation required patience, taking the time to find inspiration and executing the process steadily. It was clear that Awal’s Islamic text experience was his “familiar framework” that gave him a reference for interpreting his new experience with literature (Enciso, 1997, p. 24).

**Awal as a future teacher.** Awal’s background as a writer and editor clearly informed his uses of literature. One of the most salient functions of literature for him was as a model for writing. Awal said that he was motivated to read literature of various genres, partly, because books helped him keep up with his work as an editor and writer. Further, authors’ writing craft gave him a model for good writing. He said that readers like him could pay attention to authors’ writing (e.g., styles and structures), and learn from the craft. Awal seemed quite motivated to use literature in his teaching practice. For a final teaching unit project, Awal and his group designed a teaching unit whose objective was to teaching students about narrative texts and stories. Awal and his partners picked a picturebook that was good fit for introducing students to the “generic structure of narrative text.” The group described how during their first meetings, they would read the storybook aloud and discuss about it. Then in the later meetings, they would introduce the concept of narrative texts referring to the storybooks that had been discussed. Nearing the course conclusion, Awal seemed to grow in his conviction that literature could be
used as a foundation for teaching. This was quite a departure from his contentious understanding about literature earlier in the semester. Awal wrote in his reflection:

When I first learned (12 weeks ago) about literature, I was still confused and I wondered why I had to study literature; at that time I really had no idea what literature was. But now, after studying so many things about literature I realized that through literature I could teach nearly everything to my students in lovely ways, such as reading aloud, reading log, books borrowing, and so on (j/13). While Awal’s reflection clearly indicates changes over time in his thinking about literature and teaching, it also suggests his transformation as a reader and a future teacher. As a reader, Awal had transformed from one who would read books for the sake of reading, to a reader who now understood the meaning of literature. As a future teacher, his new understanding about literature had opened for him an array of possibilities for the uses of literature in teaching. And for Awal, these possibilities became teaching opportunities as he learned many ways to teach using literature. Not only did he seem to grow his knowledge of literature, but he also seemed to have a clear plan of what to do with literature as a teacher.

Using literature. As a part time English instructor, Awal had some experience with students. His discussions about literature suggested some of the ways that he would use (and had already tried using) literature in his teaching. The most common use of literature reported by Awal was reading aloud. During read aloud in my class, Awal liked to sit in the front row carefully observing and taking notes. Later at home, he would review his notes, recalling what he had observed so that he could conduct read alouds later with his own students. When he did indeed read aloud to his students, he
remembered feeling fulfilled watching their enjoyment students as he read to them. He said: “Now I also read aloud to my students and they loved it” (j/13).

Another good reason to use literature in teaching, Awal suggested, was that he was encouraged to conduct more thorough research about the topic under discussion. In preparation for teaching narrative texts, for instance, Awal spent time researching narrative texts and preparing an introduction to the concept for his students. Admitting that the preparation took him quite some, Awal said that he was excited and looking forward to teaching it. He remembered the feeling after teaching: “I felt so good when teaching it and felt satisfied after I had done teaching. In contrast, in the past I was hardly prepared and that made me nervous; so I didn’t feel satisfied teaching at all” (interview).

Another activity that Awal thought he would do with his students was to make a book. Awal who was a writer and had a talent for drawing, was inspired to create his own picturebook. He planned to illustrate an Islamic classic text that was commonly taught in pesantren.

From literature class, I got the idea to create my own picturebook. When I was in junior high school I learned *Muthola’ah Muthola’ah*. It’s not just a story. The story has really valuable lessons for students, too. But unfortunately, the story is just a text without images. Therefore, I plan to draw the images of the story so that it will be my picturebook (j/10).

*Muthola’ah*, or *Ta’lim al Muta’allim* is one of classic texts taught in many pesantren (Dhofier, 1999). The text contains stories on ethics and traditional wisdoms about the exemplary lives of being pesantren students. When detailing his future plan to create a
picturebook, Awal imitated the research process that an author and illustrator go through to make a quality picturebook.

“From what I’ve learned (from this class), I need to make some observations or do research. I have to know the origin of the story. Since the stories are told in Arabic, I guess that the origin might come from one of Arab countries” (j/11).

Awal’s plan to create a picturebook apparently was motivated by his students’ enthusiasm with his read aloud, and also by the fact that not many picturebooks are available in Indonesia.

One thing that encourages me to create picturebooks is my students. They loved the story time and I enjoyed reading aloud to them. This made me realize that through story I could make my class more enjoyable. It’s too bad that picturebooks are not common in Indonesia. I think it would be good if I create a picturebook as a way to promote my students’ love of books (j/11).

Awal’s teaching job seemed to influence the way he viewed books. Having developed a new understanding about literature and its importance, Awal came to realize the potential of learning through literature. Especially with picturebooks, Awal observed opportunities for teaching using picturebooks. He was also aware of the challenges presented by the scarcity of picturebooks in Indonesia. The challenges did not seem to discourage him, however. Making use of his talent for drawing Awal saw the possibilities for creating his own picturebooks. His talent extended the possibility of teaching using literature in his Indonesian classrooms. Awal is probably one of those teachers who insist that if they don’t have it, then they we have to create it.
Negative Cases

I have mentioned in Chapter 3 that, during data analysis, in an attempt to establish the trustworthiness of this study, I also paid attention to cases or evidence that seemed to disconfirm the conclusive findings of this study. I can point to only one negative case, and that is where a preservice teacher seemed to be resisting the course instruction. This preservice teacher, who was not part of the case study group, suggested that the course activities “felt like being in a kindergarten.” He made this comment in reference to the read aloud activity, where I read texts aloud and asked the preservice teachers to pay attention to the pages and predict the story. For this preservice teacher, such an activity appeared to be childlike. And he exhibited resistance to the activity through his comments and his subsequent behaviors. In my explanation, I told him (and the class) that reading aloud was not just an activity for children; grownups also often enjoy hearing a read aloud. I showed the class a YouTube video with adults reading aloud. I also explained that when I read aloud, I wanted to model for them (as future teachers) the ways to read aloud, so that they would know how to read aloud to their students. I noted this as a negative case where an Indonesian preservice teacher resisted to a new teaching idea that was different to what they had typically experienced.

Chapter 4 Summary

The introduction to literature course aimed to provide a context in which Indonesian preservice teachers learned about children’s literature. I also structured it in such a way that it offered preservice teachers plenty of opportunities to respond to literature. The classroom setting, access to books, and time management all had to be considered so that the Indonesian preservice teachers were supported by a learning
environment that was centered on literature. The same considerations applied when structuring the course activities. All of the activities were related to literature. Most of the activities focused on exposing the preservice teachers to literature, such as reading aloud, independent reading, and bookmaking project. A few others were designed to explicitly prepare the preservice teachers to become literature teachers, as with the teaching unit assignment. The course activities were also structured to provide a balance between activities that were independent (journals, independent reading), small group (group discussions, presentation, bookmaking and teaching unit projects), and a whole class (reading aloud) in the hopes that the preservice teachers would benefit from the varied formats.

The research findings addressing question 1 (*how did Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the course instruction*) reveal a number of major themes that cropped up during the course of the semester. Comments concerned with reading and critical reading noted by the preservice teachers included references to a range of reading preferences and perceived purposes for reading. The preservice teachers also referred to the importance of critical reading with increasing regularity as the course progressed equating such reading with critical thinking. Likewise, the preservice teachers’ perception of literature was expanded. From an understanding of a children’s picturebooks as merely objects that provided aesthetic experiences, preservice teachers came to see picturebooks as objects that had potential for learning and extending language. Further, they explored many topics and interest in their discussions. The preservice teachers came to recognize how the narrative text and the visual text both contributed to the telling of the story and became familiar with the art elements and narrative codes and associated picturebooks.
They also came to appreciate the visual literacy that is so important to picturebooks. In fact, several students remarked that their interest in art had been sparked as they read more and more picturebooks. The preservice teachers also began to think about how they would use literature for teaching. For instance, they discussed the use of picturebook illustration analysis for cross cultural teaching, and they planned to use literature for teaching EFL. In terms of classroom activities based on the use of literature, preservice teachers were particularly interested in activities that were collaborative in nature, such as book talks and buddy systems. They also expressed interest in read alouds, partly as a versatile instructional activity for literacy and literary development, as well as a meaningful activity for establishing a bond between children and their caregiver. Finally, they communicated their opinions that literature teachers needed to be knowledgeable about literature so that they would know how to teach from it.

The research findings which addressed question 2 (how did Indonesian preservice teachers respond to literature being taught in the course) were presented in two separate sections related to the preservice teachers’ responses to six picturebooks. The first section, focused on responses to individual picturebooks, highlighting major points of the discussions preservice teachers had around each book. Through these discussions they talked about the moral issue they had with a specific character in The Bird Hunter; compared an Indonesian version of Cinderella with Western Cinderella stories and analyzed cultural symbols in the illustrations for Yeh-Shen. They also made connections to several books including personal connections with The Librarian of Basra and intertextual connections between a movie and the book Ghosts in the House! Finally, many students discussed how they felt inspired by Abraham Lincoln in Of Thee I Sing.
The tales of Ayu and Awal, as readers and future teachers, help answer research question focused on the aspects of social and cultural experiences that influenced the preservice teachers’ responses to literature. Using the notion of cultural mapping, their individual stories shed light on the cultural resources preservice teachers participating in the course may have drawn from including familiar sources like religious texts or popular cultural products (e.g., movies and music) as they interpret their new experiences with literature. As future teachers, their responses also indicated how their backgrounds, like Awal who was a part time teacher, might influence how they would go about using literature for teaching. Lastly, in an attempt to show this study’s trustworthiness, I have presented a negative case that seems to be in conflict with the findings in this chapter. I present this as evidence that all the data have passed a thorough analysis including those that were not matched with the conclusive findings.
Chapter 5: Summary, Implications, and Recommendations

Summary

Overview of the Study

Most research focuses on the ways in which student teachers provide opportunities for and elicit from students their responses to literature. There is little research on reader response in teacher education which focuses on student teachers as the readers. The purpose of this study is to describe student teachers’ responses to course instruction in an introduction to children’s literature class. This study looked at both their responses to children’s literature picturebooks being taught in the course as well as the changes in their responses related to the literature over time. These descriptions encompass the variety of ways in which student teachers responded to literature, including those that were aligned to their goal of becoming teachers. This study provided a narrative description of the course setting and the activities related to literature, the analysis of the responses student teachers made to those activities which occurred over the semester, and the analysis of their responses to children’s literature being taught in the course, including the sociocultural influences which appeared in their responses.

Methodological Procedures and Data Collection

A qualitative method of inquiry was used to investigate the ways in which Indonesian preservice teachers responded to literature during an introduction to children’s literature course. The narrative method was used to examine the life experiences of the
preservice teachers as they related to their literature responses. Eleven case study preservice teachers were studied in depth beginning in late August when the course began and ending in the middle of December in 2012. Evidence about preservice teachers’ responses to literature was collected using surveys, tape-recorded interviews, videotaped course sessions, preservice teachers artifacts (i.e. weekly journals, bookmaking project, teaching unit, reading log), and my reflection log.

Organization of the Course

Descriptions of the context that facilitated the preservice teachers’ response to literature:

Book Access. The preservice teachers had access to books from me (the course instructor) and from the small library in the English Education department. I carried to every class a tote bag full of books, mostly picturebooks, which the preservice teachers could borrow. Many who borrowed books said they read them aloud to children. In addition, they also had access to books from a small library in the English Education program. This collection was generally popular novels

Reading aloud. I blocked 30-45 minutes (of the total 100 minutes class meeting time) for reading aloud picturebooks. The read aloud was framed as the storytelling/sharing time where I read the preservice teachers a story from an author/storyteller. The preservice teachers were encouraged to verbally respond during read aloud, although some felt timid about speaking up in front of the whole class.

Small group discussion. The preservice teachers engaged in small group discussion about the stories and tasks related to the topics presented. I provided them
with prompts to guide their discussions. The preservice teachers felt comfortable in small
groups; many of them participated in small group discussions.

_Weekly journals._ The preservice teachers had to write a reflective journal after
each weekly class session. The journals focused on their reflections about the story
picturebook that had been read aloud, and also about the instruction from that day. I
provided models and gave feedback on their reflective journals.

_Independent reading log._ The preservice teachers had to log at least 10-15
minutes a day reading books of their choice. The log encouraged them to read on a
regular basis, and to expand their book selection (e.g., genres).

_Lectures and group presentation on teaching topics._ I lectured on theories,
research, and teaching practices relevant to the topic discussions. I shared this
responsibility with the preservice teachers. After the first several weeks, preservice
teachers worked in groups to present on assigned teaching topics.

_Bookmaking._ For the midterm project, the preservice teachers teamed up to create
books consisting of words and pictures. In the books they were asked to tell a story about
themselves (e.g., family), and write a review about favorite books they were presently
reading.

_Literature-based teaching unit._ For the final assignment, the preservice teachers
collaborated to design a literature-based teaching unit. As part of this unit they had to
provide a teaching framework and activities that were centered on literature. As an
optional task, some preservice teachers had the opportunity to teach their units to real
students.

**Findings**
**Question 1**: How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the instruction in an introduction to children’s literature course?

a) How did Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the idea of using children’s literature picturebooks to teach?

b) How did the instructional activities change their responses to learning how to teach with children’s literature picturebooks?

*Reading: Purposes and Preferences*. For Indonesian preservice teachers, reading was a form of entertainment, a way to explore lives different from theirs, and a way to learn. Their purposes and preferences noticeably changed when they were encouraged to read books by various authors (e.g., Stephen King), and of different genres (e.g., horror), format (e.g., picturebook), and themes (e.g., same-sex relationship).

*Critical Reading*. Preservice teachers argued that critical reading entailed active reading. Active reading for them facilitated a critical stance as well as the ability to be more analytical toward text (e.g., attentive toward words and pictures).

*Perceptions of Literature*. The preservice teachers’ perceptions about literature shifted during the course. Initially they only considered classic books (e.g., British literature) as literature. However, as the course progressed they began to include picturebooks as literature.

*Literature as an Object for Learning*. Their perceptions of literature shifted to include the idea that literature was an object that supported learning. For example, books could be used as models for writing and connected to all subjects (e.g., math, science, social studies).
The Arts. Preservice teachers noticed the connection between literature and other forms of expression, such as music. They found it interesting that they could “compose” music inspired by literature.

Picturebooks. The preservice teachers developed their understanding about picturebooks as literature and as art objects. They suggested that “in order to make a beautiful story, we need not only to have an ability to write a story but also the ability to draw pictures so that we can deliver the story in an artistic way”.

Picturebook Art. They recognized picturebooks as a unique kind of literature that consisted of elements of art created by a thoughtful artist.

Picturebook Narrative. The preservice teachers’ understanding about picturebook narrative codes and techniques seemed to enhance their appreciations of picturebooks.

Picturebooks, Visual Literacy and Critical Thinking. Preservice teachers increased their knowledge of the visual art of the picturebook which they said helped to enhance their visual literacy and critical thinking development.

Preservice Teachers and the (Picturebook) Art. They debunked the myth that art is only for a talented few. They seemed to embrace their natural passions for art.

Thinking about Using Literature/Picturebooks for Teaching. Participants envisioned several ways to make use of children’s literature in their teaching. These included using the picturebooks during read aloud, using the illustrations in the books to gain cultural understanding and to teach specific subject matters.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Using Literature. The preservice teachers argued that literature is “fun” material for teaching EFL suggesting that students would feel motivated to learn English through literature.
Literature-Related Activities. The preservice teachers were interested in activities that were collaborative in nature (e.g., book talks and the buddy system). These collaborative activities, they argued, could facilitate flexible thinking.

Reading Aloud. The preservice teachers considered reading aloud a versatile teaching activity. It could be employed for literacy and literary instruction. Other considerations when reading aloud included book selection and the age of audience as well as the ways in which the book was read aloud or performed.

Reading aloud and physical bonding. Preservice teachers argued that reading aloud could facilitate the bonding between a child and parent; “establishing a physical bonding is helpful in making children more focused on and interested in a story.”

Becoming Teachers of Literature. The preservice teachers argued that one of the main qualifications for literature teachers was to have a good knowledge of literature so that they would be aware of what the literature had to offer for student learning. The preservice teachers also suggested some teaching plans using literature.

The changes shown by Indonesian preservice teachers indicate the extent to which their perceptions and attitudes on reading, literature, the arts, the teaching of literature, and their future aspirations for becoming teachers shifted after participating in an introduction to children’s literature course for one semester. These are remarkable shifts considering their lack of experience with literature and teaching methods—e.g., their initial reading survey suggested that none of them had ever been part of any literature discussions. These shifts came about, to some extent, due to the course objectives which included: understanding picturebooks and how to read them critically; and exploring the potential of picturebooks for learning (see Appendix A for course syllabus). Moreover,
the preservice teachers also attempted to contextualize their knowledge by looking for teaching opportunities using literature in the Indonesian context (e.g., teaching EFL using literature). These findings, I argue, strengthen our understanding that courses in teacher education (such as this one) are influential in shaping the knowledge and teaching practices of beginning teachers (Floden & Meniketti, 2005; Dillon, O’Brien, Sato, & Kelly, 2010). Moreover, as this present study’s findings suggest, such positive influences seems to have similar effects on beginning teachers who have minimal experiences with books, as with these Indonesian preservice teachers.

**Question 2:** How did the Indonesian preservice teachers respond to children’s literature being taught in the course?

a) How did Indonesian preservice teachers aesthetically respond to picturebooks being taught in an introduction to children’s literature course?

b) What aspects of social and cultural experiences influence their responses to children’s literature picturebooks?

*The Bird Hunter: An Indonesian Folktale.* In responding to this book, the preservice teachers said that they began to understand the fact there is a message in a storybook. They appeared to have moral issues with the story, particularly when the “bad” character was rewarded instead of being punished. They disagreed with the story ending.

*The Gift of the Crocodile: A Cinderella Story (from Indonesia).* The preservice teachers noticed the influence of culture on the illustrations. They compared the story elements of Cinderella from this book with the Western version.
Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China. The preservice teachers compared the illustrations of the two Cinderella stories from Indonesia and China. They noticed the meanings of symbols in the books and were appreciative of the thoughtful process of illustration. In terms of the story, they had mixed opinions about the story of Cinderella. Many considered the plot was predictable and boring, while others enjoyed the variations between the two versions. That said, many preservice teachers felt connected to the story and drew personal connections when they interpreted it.

The Librarian of Basra. Many preservice teachers felt strong connections with the main character Alia, a female librarian from Basra, Iraq. They felt appreciative that the story depicted a non-mainstream perspective about Islam, and showed a Muslim as the focal character. They also learned that a true story like Alia’s could be told in a picturebook format.

Ghosts in the House! After discussion of this spooky, yet humorous story, the preservice teachers seemed to change their perceptions about ghosts. Ghost are not always terrifying; they found they can be funny, too. The preservice teachers were clearly entertained with the story. Many connected their reading to other texts about ghosts (e.g., movies).

Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters. The preservice teachers seemed to enjoy the story written by Barack Obama to his daughters. In the book, Obama highlighted inspirational figures from whom his daughters could learn. One figure that the preservice teachers singled out was Abraham Lincoln who was mentioned for his role in abolishing slavery. The fact that Obama wrote a message to his daughters through a
Story picturebook seemed to impress the preservice teachers. They said that the text and illustrations depicted bonding between a father and his daughters.

**Responses Across Picturebooks:**

These findings are the preservice teachers’ responses across picturebooks that are coded using Sipe’s (2000, 2008) conceptual literary understanding categories.

*Analytical.* In responding to picturebooks being read aloud, many of the preservice teachers’ responses seemed primarily “to be dealing with the text as an opportunity to construct narrative meaning” (Sipe, 2008, p. 85). About 69% of the preservice teachers’ responses fit in the analytical category. They were analytical about the aspects of structure, illustrations, and the story message. Their analytical reading also indicated a critical stance toward a story.

*Personal.* About 22% of the preservice teachers’ responses indicated that when reading the picturebooks they had “connected their lives with some element of the text or used knowledge gained from a text to inform their lives” (Sipe, 2008, p. 152). At times, when interpreting the text they drew on their personal feelings or experiences in parallel with the story (life-to-text connections). For instance, one preservice teacher felt embarrassed about her poor attitude toward reading after learning about Alia’s heroic act in *The Librarian of Basra*. At other times, they also used “the story as a form of (vicarious) experience to assist in understanding or dealing with life” (p. 161) (text-to-life connections). For example, one preservice teacher discussed the life of an independent woman after her description of the Chinese women characters in *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*.
Intertextual. The intertextual responses, where “stories ‘lean’ on stories (and other texts)” (Sipe, 2008, p. 131) made up 7% of the data. One example of an intertextual response was when the preservice teachers read The Gift of the Crocodile and commented that the story reminded them of an Indonesian tale called ‘Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah (literally meaning Garlic and Red Onion), a popular folktale that has story elements similar to Cinderella.

Transparent. This response suggests an ability to position oneself “inside a story,” (Sipe, 2008, p. 172). About 2% of the preservice teachers’ overall responses were included in the transparent category. One example of this response category was found in a preservice teacher’s reading of The Bird Hunter. She seemed very displeased Wajan, despite his trickery, ends up marrying the king’s daughter.

Ayu and Awal: Tales of Two Readers and Future Teachers

Ayu. Before entering the English Education program, Ayu spent her senior high school education in a pesantren—an Islamic boarding school, typically sex segregated, where students learn secular education during the day and Islamic teaching in the evening. As a reader, Ayu’s responses to literature at times were predominantly personal as she drew personal connections with story characters. Ayu empathized with Yeh-Shen’s pain in the Chinese Cinderella story, and she made a strong connection with Alia in The Librarian of Basra. In interpreting stories, Ayu drew on cultural resources from popular culture such as Hollywood movies and pop music. She used cultural resources already familiar to her in order to make sense of her new experiences (cultural mapping) with literature. In addition, Ayu’s literature responses also indicated some of the allegiances that she had. For instance, she felt strongly connected to The Librarian of Basra, a story
about Muslims that was told by a Muslim woman character. Ayu also showed a strong allegiance as a humanist when she read the holocaust stories in _The Boy with Striped Pajamas_ and _Anne Frank_. As a future teacher, Ayu was considering using literature for several reasons: to cultivate critical thinking; as a model to improve writing; to learn the moral of the story; and as teaching resources. Ayu was also considering some of literature-related activities that she could use with literature which included: reading aloud, analyzing the author’s writing craft and studying picturebook art. Overall, Ayu believed that literature would inspire her about what to teach to her students.

_Awal_. Like Ayu, Awal also went to _pesantren_ before entering the English Education program. Awal had a natural drawing talent. In senior high school, Awal had been a school editor and had published books (a dictionary and works of fiction) which were distributed mainly among _pesantren_ students. In addition, he also worked as a part time English instructor. As a reader, Awal tended to be analytical. For instance, he was concerned about the story structure and cultural conventions in picturebook illustrations. When interpreting his new experience of studying literature, Awal used his cultural resources. He would often refer to Islamic texts that he learned in the _pesantren_. For instance, he likened the creative process of the bookmaking project to God’s creation of the universe in terms of how a gradual process led to the completion of the end product. Awal said that God created the universe gradually in seven days. Similarly, in making a picturebook he had to follow a creative process from its inception to the execution. As a future teacher, Awal considered including literature in his teaching as a model to improve writing. He also believed that there was plenty of opportunity for teaching using literature. In terms of the activities that he would use with literature, Awal enjoyed
reading aloud and seriously considered making a picturebook for his teaching. Overall, Awal believed that teaching through literature would motivate him and his students to conduct in-depth research and hold discussions on topics presented in the books they read.

The tales of Ayu and Awal showcase the responses of two preservice teachers who seemed to have shared sociocultural backgrounds (e.g., Islamic schooling) but who drew on different cultural resources in their literature experiences (both as readers and future teachers). They relied on particular aspects of their backgrounds (i.e., the cultural products and social allegiances) as they made meaning about their experiences with literature. It is unclear what motivated these differences. Nevertheless, despite their similar schooling, they focused on different perspectives when reading the literature (e.g., Ayu’s interest in story characters and Awal’s observation on story structures) and during the literature activities (e.g., Ayu’s use of pop culture and Awal’s use of religious text as references). Their cultural reading shows us that they, in an attempt to make sense of the new experiences with literature in this course, returned to the store of experiences (Rosenblatt, 2005) that were meaningful to them—a kind of literature reading that arguably should be fostered in classrooms. This reaffirms our understanding that literature response is a uniquely private transaction between a reader and literature and the present context (Rosenblatt, 1995). We do not know the nature of readers’ cultural reading unless ample opportunity is provided for making genuine responses. These tales show us that a cultural reading possibly only occurs in a classroom where students, as readers and future teachers, are provided with many contexts for responding to literature, the kind of contexts that Ayu and Awal seemed to have benefitted from.
Implications for Teaching

Teacher Knowledge and Preparation

Preservice teachers need to understand why literature matters. Although the majority of preservice teachers would agree that books are important, many of them have only a vague idea of the value of literature in education. The preservice teachers in this study came to understand why literature matters by exploring their own stories and reading histories, and by coming to understand the human need for story. Their reflective journals revealed throughout the course of this study their developing understanding about literature and its value. So, although many preservice teachers said that they valued books, their initial articulation of this understanding was confused (e.g., “why did we have to study literature?”). As the course progressed, their journal entries revealed a growing understanding of the value of literature (e.g., “literature is the source for nearly everything; if we don’t include literature, where do we teach our students from?”). This finding seems to suggest that it would be helpful for teacher educators to remember that when introducing preservice teachers to literature, they first need to show why literature matters for them.

Preservice teachers need to reflect on their experiences with literature. The benefits of reflection in teacher education research have been documented. Research suggests that reflective journals contribute to the development of student teachers’ learning to teach (Phillips & Carr, 2006). The majority of the findings of this study were culled from reflective journals that preservice teachers wrote every week. The journals captured their reflective interpretation about their experiences with literature. The preservice teachers felt the benefit of keeping a reflective journal. They especially
appreciated the fact that reflective journal writing helped them to recall their experiences related to literature. As one preservice teacher said in an interview, “the journal writing assignment helped me to recall earlier lessons” (interview/3).

Preservice teachers need to be encouraged to draw from their cultural sources as part their experiences with literature. As the findings suggest, in interpreting new experiences (be they stories, or activities) preservice teachers tend to use sources they are already familiar with and then make meaning out of them (cultural mapping). Their interpretations might lead to a new perspective, as was the case with the Indonesian preservice teachers after they read The Librarian of Basra. In this case they were thrilled to read an empathetic story about Muslims who were usually portrayed negatively in the Western mainstream media. The use of cultural resources also encouraged preservice teachers to revisit their old experiences to gain new insights. Awal, for instance found his knowledge about Islamic text newly relevant as he learned to create a picturebook. His new experience with literature made his existing knowledge new.

Preservice teachers need to learn from a range of activities related to literature that support them both as readers and future teachers. This research has shown me that preservice teachers, when interpreting their experiences related to literature, take on the perspectives of both a reader and a teacher. They are engaged with the story and illustrations and, at the same time, are attentive to the teaching aspects of the book. For example, in the Cinderella stories from Indonesia and China, they passionately compared dis/similarities between the stories and the cultural influences evident in the illustrations. At the same time they thought about instructional activities that could be used with the storybook. It was as if preservice teachers constantly interpreted their experiences with
literature as both readers and teachers. I credited these dual interpretations to the range of activities related to literature that had been used to facilitate their literature responses. The course activities, such as reading aloud, group discussions, the reading log, reflective journals, bookmaking, and teaching unit development, strongly contributed to how they positioned themselves both as readers and teachers of literature.

*Program Content: Children’s literature and Indonesian Teacher Preparation.*

The study’s findings concerning the introduction of children’s literature courses into Indonesian teacher preparation programs are promising. There is noticeable growth both in understanding the literature and seeing its value for teaching.

Another similar study is Surya Sili’s (1998) exploratory research on the implementation of literature-based instruction in Indonesian elementary language arts classrooms. Sili trained a group of in-service teachers to deliver language arts instruction that was based on children’s literature. Although initially the teachers in Sili’s study appeared reluctant, they gradually gained confidence with literature-based instruction especially after observing student growth in reading, writing, and attitudes toward books. Sili’s analysis sheds some light on the possibilities inherent in the use of children’s literature in Indonesian teacher education programs. However, she was concerned with the sustainability of the effects of these in-service teacher training approaches which took place in workshops and seminars that typically lasted for a short time and did not have any ongoing support. What is more, the literature-based program that Sili introduced to the teachers is not common educational practice in Indonesia nor is it part of teacher preparation programs. Therefore, I agree with Sili that there should be a systematic effort to introduce literature as part of the program content of teacher preparation programs in
Indonesia. There is evidence for this from both studies. While teachers in Sili’s study reportedly improved their instructional practices in reading, writing, and other subjects, preservice teachers in my study indicated their appreciations of the development of critical reading after learning about children’s literature. Further, the preservice teachers’ perceptions of literature developed in such a way that they began to consider the use of literature for a range of purposes including: literacy, subject matters, and as authentic material for EFL teaching. Together, these studies point to the benefits of the use of literature in classroom instruction. A further implication is that there is a need to establish courses on an introduction to children’s literature in Indonesian teacher preparation programs.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

As I did an analysis for this research, at times I found myself curious about some of the findings and unclear about others. The following are some possibilities and recommendations for further research that I would like to point out.

Most of the responses related to literature occurred mainly in the context of picturebooks written for younger children. Investigating preservice teachers’ response to literature targeting older readers, such as books for young adults, may elicit different kinds of response patterns. Further research is needed to examine how different kinds of literature influence the patterns of Indonesian preservice teachers’ reading response.

This study focused on preservice teachers’ literature experiences in an introduction to children’s literature course. This course was focused more on introducing Indonesian preservice teachers to literature, response, and related classroom activities,
and less on their experiences teaching literature to real students. Further investigation of preservice teacher’s experiences when teaching literature in classrooms is needed.

This research includes myriad data sources that could be used to generate different analyses into the experiences of Indonesian preservice teachers. While this study investigated only a few aspects of preservice teachers’ experiences in a children’s literature course, further analysis and interpretations of data from this study could increase our knowledge and understanding about Indonesian preservice teachers’ experiences with literature.

**Recommendations for Indonesian Literacy Policy**

Improving literacy is one of Indonesia’s strategies for promoting a democratic society. The Indonesian government is committed to increasing literacy levels to improve the quality of Indonesian lives “by enabling economic security and good health and enriching societies by building human capital, fostering cultural identity and tolerance, and promoting civic participation” (Indonesian Ministry of Education Literacy Report, 2006, p.1). While Indonesia’s basic literacy skills’ rates have increased over the last decades, Indonesian students’ critical reading ability is still in the bottom 10 of 72 countries surveyed (PISA, 2009). Obviously, there is a lack of critical reading ability among Indonesian students. What’s more, Indonesian students do not seem to have many of the habits associated with “good readers”.

Efforts to cultivate reading habits through the use of children’s literature are virtually nonexistent in Indonesian schools and in Indonesian homes. Many Indonesian parents do not read to their children or take them to libraries or reading centers. The situation appears to mirror what is practiced in Indonesian schools where books are not
an integral component of classroom instruction. Most Indonesian teachers rely almost exclusively on textbooks. For its part, the Indonesian government has committed to improve Indonesia’s literacy and cultivate reading habits through the improvement of teacher education and by providing access to literature (RENSTRA).

This qualitative study reports on the results of introducing Indonesian preservice teachers to children’s literature courses in which they learn about literature and pedagogical activities for its uses in classrooms. Findings indicate a development in the preservice teachers’ understanding of the role of literature in teaching and of how to apply literature to classroom teaching. They discovered many opportunities for teaching using literature, including reading for enjoyment, literacy development, and teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). They also explored how these opportunities could be applied in the classroom. The findings also suggest the preservice teachers’ positive attitudinal changes in terms of the reading habits. Their own reading for pleasure increased and they began reading more varied genres. From these findings, I recommend that there should be a deliberate effort to integrate literature into Indonesian literacy education, and the effort should begin by preparing competent literacy teachers in Indonesian teacher education.
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ReadWriteThink. Reading survey material retrieved from www.readwritethink.org

RENSTRA: Strategic Plans of the Indonesian Ministry of National Education Year 2010-2014


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**Children’s Books Cited**


**Children’s Literature Listed in the Syllabus**


**Movies Cited**

*Casper* (1995)

*Ghostbusters* (1984)
Appendix A: Course Syllabus

Introduction to Children’s Literature Syllabus (2 credit hours/100 minutes)
Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Jakarta — Odd Semester (Autumn 2012)

Course Description
This course is designed to introduce preservice teachers to the basic understanding of the art of picturebooks with an emphasis on fostering an aesthetic and critical reading of the picturebook art form, exploring the potential of picturebooks as contexts for literacy learning and curriculum integration.

Course Objectives
• To gain an understanding of the picturebook as an aesthetic object, including the visual and textual elements of picturebooks
• To develop an ability to evaluate picturebooks critically and develop ways to deepen reader response to these works
• To explore the potentials of the picturebook as a learning object for literary and literacy teaching, as well as for curriculum integration
• To gain appreciation of the importance of fostering a positive learning environment that respects and encourages a variety of responses

Course Readings
Required texts: (we’ll only read chapters relevant to course topics)

**Picturebooks for Read Alouds:**

• A-Ling, Louie., & Young, Ed: *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella story from China*
• Sierra, Judy, & Ruffins, Reynolds: *The gift of the crocodile: A Cinderella story*
• Aldana, Patricia: *Under the spell of the moon: Art for children from the world’s great illustrators*

**Course Internet Sources**

• Reading and literature instruction in K-12, ReadWriteThink
• Youtube

**Course Requirements (100 points)**

**Individual Assignments (40 points):**

• **Attendance and Participation (5 points):** Each member is expected to attend and participate fully in all entire class sessions. The course offers a variety of opportunities for classroom participation.

• **Readings (5 points):** Each member is expected to come prepared with the readings assigned and discuss about them—please see reading due dates.

• **Weekly journal (15 points):** Write at least one page long reflection after each class to be submitted at the following week. This is an opportunity for you to reflect on what you’ve learned, and are still pondering about (*model will be provided*).

• **Independent reading log (15 points):** Each member is required to read 30 minutes a day, books of her/his choice. An independent reading log sheet will be provided.
Group Assignments (60 points):

- **Group presentation on a teaching topic (15 points):** Your group will do a 10-15 presentation on a teaching topic.

- **Midterm (week 8), the art of the picturebook (15 points):** Your group will create a publication consisting of stories, poems, photographs, and artwork inspired by picturebooks (*samples and details on making publication will be demonstrated*).

- **Final (week 15), picturebooks for teaching across curriculum (30 points):** Your group will create a teaching unit for a specific grade level (elementary/middle/high school)

**Reading Due Dates**

Week 2: Sloan (2003, pp. 116-117): *The human need for story*


Week 4: Read Kiefer (2010), pp. 175-176: *Cultural conventions*

Week 6: Read Kiefer (1995, p. 6): *What is a picturebook?*

Week 7: Read Cotton (2000, Ch. 6): *A framework for analyzing European picture books*

Week 9: Read Kiefer (2010), pp. 107-108): *Developing initial literacy*

Weeks 12: Read Lehman et al. (2011, Ch. 2): *Literary theme studies and an integrated curriculum*

Week 13: Read Trelease, J (2006, Chapter 3). *The stages of read-aloud*

**Course Topics**

**Week 1: Our Stories and Histories of Reading**

- Topic: Introduction and sharing stories from childhood, books, and other forms of story
  - Read Aloud: *Librarian of Basra*, by Jeanette Winter
  - Slides: On Tati’s reading history
  - Small Group: Sharing your story to your group and to class

**Week 2: Why literature? Why is it important?**

- Topic: Human’s need for stories (featuring Indonesian storytelling)
• Read Aloud: Chek, Chia Hearn; Mei, Swan Shan: *The bird hunter: An Indonesian folktale*, by Chia Hearn Chek, & Swan Shan, Mei.
• Slides: on Indonesian storytelling
• Assignment: Use the Internet, newspapers, books, and other sources to find on Indonesian traditional story with pictures/illustration (*model will be provided*).

Week 2: Sloan (2003, pp. 116-117): *The human need for story*

**Week 3: Why literature? Why is it important?**
• Topic: Cultivating critical thinking
• Read Aloud: *The gift of the crocodile: A Cinderella story*, illustrated by Reynold Ruffins
• Slides: Readers as critics
• Small Group: Talking about texts, thinking about texts, responding to texts
• Assignment: Print and share the story you found and have some students to talk about it to class (*model will be demonstrated*).


**Week 4: The Art and Artists of Picturebook**
• Topic: Cultural conventions in picturebooks
• Read Aloud: *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella story from China*, illustrated by Ed Young, & *The gift of the crocodile: A Cinderella story*, illustrated by Reynold Ruffins
• Slides: On picturebooks cultural conventions
• Whole Class: Identify and compare patterns, motifs, and illustrations of traditional stories from Indonesia and China.

Week 4: Read Kiefer (2010), pp. 175-176: *Cultural conventions*

**Week 5: Folktale Comparisons**
• Topic: Story structure and cultural conventions
• Read Aloud: *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella story from China*, illustrated by Ed Young, & *The gift of the crocodile: A Cinderella story*, illustrated by Reynold Ruffins
• Slides: On story structure
• (Volunteer) Group presentation: Discuss and analyze story structure
• Small Group: Discuss and analyze story structure in traditional stories from Indonesia and China (from last week’s read aloud).

**Week 6: Matter of style and elements of design**

• Topics: Matter of style and elements of design
• Read Aloud: *Under the spell of the moon: Art for children from the world’s great illustrators*, by Patricia Aldana
• Slides: On style and elements of design
• Small Group: Discuss and analyze design elements of picturebooks from past read alouds
• Week 6: Read Kiefer (1995, p. 6): *What is a picturebook?*

**Week 7: Fiction and nonfiction children’s literature picturebooks**

• Topic: Fiction and nonfiction literature
• Read Aloud: *the Librarian of Basra*, by Jeanette Winter
• Slides: On fiction and nonfiction literature
• Group activity: Share your reading logs, discuss and identify two books (fiction and nonfiction) you have brought with you

**Week 8: Bookmaking Presentation Day—Mid-Term Group Project Due**

**Week 9: Understanding Words-Pictures Relationships**

• Topic: Picturebook codes and words-pictures relationships
• Read Aloud: *Librarian of Basra*, by Jeanette Winter
• Slides: On picturebook codes and words-pictures relationships
• Small Group: Discuss and critically examine the codes and words-pictures relationships.

**Week 10: The Language of Picturebooks, and Reading Writing Connection**

• Topic: The language and writing of poetry
• Read Aloud: *Ghosts in the House!* By Kazuno Kohara
• Slides: On reading and writing connections
• Whole Class: Shared/interactive writing

**Week 11: Classroom Activities Based on Literature and Picturebooks**

• Topic: Literature-based classroom instruction
• Read aloud: *Thee I sing: A letter to my daughter*, by Barack Obama, & Loren Long
• Slides: Integrating children’s literature into a teaching curriculum
• Group presentation: Kiefer (2010, Chapter 13)—Developing Literature Program

**Week 12: Framework for Teaching with Literature and Picturebooks**

• Topic: Framework for Teaching with Literature and Picturebooks
• Group presentation: Lehman et al. (2011, Ch. 2): *Literary theme studies and an integrated curriculum*
• Whole Class and group activities: Discuss the application of picturebooks in Indonesian teaching curricula. Each group will consult the final project progress.

**Week 13: Instructional Methods for Picturebook Teaching**

• Topic: Reading Aloud
• Group presentation: Read aloud Trelease, J (2006, chapter 2). *Stages of Read-aloud Handbook*
• Group activities: Each group will consult the final project progress.

**Week 14: Teaching Unit Project presentation**
Appendix B: Participant Invitation

My name is Tati Durriyah. I earned my Bachelor of Education from this university in 2001, and taught as a junior lecturer at this teacher preparation program for two years. I’m currently a doctoral candidate at the Ohio State University, USA.

You are invited to participate in a classroom research on an introduction to children’s literature class taught by me. The purpose of this research study is to learn about Indonesian prospective teachers’ learning and responses to children’s literature, picturebooks, as they participate in the course. This research is being conducted as part of my dissertation project.

I am asking you to participate because I believe that your active participation in the class would help me to better understand how Indonesian preservice teachers would respond to the course instruction in an introduction to children’s literature, and to literature being taught in the course. The benefit to you of doing this is that you might benefit directly from your participation in a carefully structured course on an introduction to picturebooks course, allowing you to engage in a literary study and classroom activities conducted fully in English. In addition, you will benefit from ongoing access to resources related to picturebooks and literacy instruction.

Your participation is confidential, meaning that I will be the only person who knows that you are participating in this study. All the information you give in this study will be considered private; I will identify you with a pseudonym (or you can opt for keeping your real name if you prefer). During this research, I will ask your permission to audio and video tape our interviews and classroom activities. I will also request your permission to make copies of your written work, e.g., journals and course assignments, during your participation in the course.

As with all research, your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty. Please sign the following form and return it to me at your convenient time.

Sincerely,

Tati Durriyah
Doctoral Candidate
Durriyah.1@osu.edu
Appendix C: IRB Approval

Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board
Office of Responsible Research Practices
300 Research Administration Building
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1643
Phone (614) 688-8457
Fax (614) 688-8366
www.orrp.osu.edu

August 15, 2012

Protocol Number: 2012B0344
Protocol Title: READING AND RESPONDING TO PICTUREBOOKS WITH INDONESIAN PRESERVICE TEACHERS, Barbara Kiefer, Tati Durrhyth, School of Teaching & Learning
Type of Review: Initial Review—Expedited
IRB Staff Contact: Jacob R. Stoddard
Phone: 614-292-0526
Email: stoddard.15@osu.edu

Dear Dr. Kiefer,

The Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB APPROVED BY EXPEDITED REVIEW the above referenced research. The Board was able to provide expedited approval under 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) because the research meets the applicability criteria and one or more categories of research eligible for expedited review, as indicated below.

Date of IRB Approval: August 15, 2012
Date of IRB Approval Expiration: August 15, 2013
Expedited Review Category: 6, 7

If applicable, informed consent (and HIPAA research authorization) must be obtained from subjects or their legally authorized representatives and documented prior to research involvement. The IRB-approved consent form and process must be used. Changes in the research (e.g., recruitment procedures, advertisements, enrollment numbers, etc.) or informed consent process must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented (except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects).

This approval is valid for one year from the date of IRB review when approval is granted or modifications are required. The approval will no longer be in effect on the date listed above as the IRB expiration date. A Continuing Review application must be approved within this interval to avoid expiration of IRB approval and cessation of all research activities. A final report must be provided to the IRB and all records relating to the research (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit for at least 3 years after the research has ended.

It is the responsibility of all investigators and research staff to promptly report to the IRB any serious, unexpected and related adverse events and potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This approval is issued under The Ohio State University's OHRP Federalwide Assurance #00006378.

All forms and procedures can be found on the OHRP website – www.orrp.osu.edu. Please feel free to contact the IRB staff contact listed above with any questions or concerns.

[Signature]
Steve Beck, PhD, Co-Chair
Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board

hs-017-06 Exp Approval Rev CE
Version 03/1389
Appendix D: Research Site Authorization

Ohio State University Institutional Review Board
c/o Office of Responsible Research Practices
300 Research Administration Building
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1063

Please note that Ms. Tati L. Durriyah, Ohio State University doctoral student, has the permission of the English Teaching Program at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Jakarta to conduct research at our program for her study, “Reading and responding to picturebooks with Indonesian preservice teachers: A qualitative study on student teachers learning and responses to picturebooks” beginning as soon as in August 2012.

Signed,
June 27, 2012

M. B. Setiadi, M.Pd.
Program Chair of English Teaching
Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Jakarta
Jl. Ir. H. Juanda, No.95, Ciputat, Tangerang, 15412, Indonesia
(021) 7401925, (021) 7443328
## Appendix E: Data Collection and Data Analysis Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Types of Data</th>
<th>Early Data Analysis</th>
<th>Monthly Data Analysis</th>
<th>Later Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Responses to the course and instruction  
   a) How did Indonesian preservice teachers respond to the idea of using children’s literature picturebooks to teach?  
   b) How did the instructional activities change their responses to the learning of how to teach with children’s literature picturebooks? | Surveys  
(reading history and basic profile)  
Interviews  
Reflective log  
Video & audiotapes  
Preservice teachers artifacts  
(assignments, journals of response, learning) | Frequency counting | Preliminary coding  
Preliminary coding  
Transcription/preliminary coding | Memo writing/  
Monthly Report to dissertation committee  
Coding (categorizing, theme searching): making connections/looking for patterns  
Displaying data/visual representations: graphs and charts |
| 2. Responses to Picturebooks  
   a) How did Indonesian preservice teachers aesthetically respond to picturebooks being taught in an introduction to children’s literature course?  
   b) What aspects of social and cultural experiences influence their responses to children’s literature picturebooks? | Interviews  
Reflective log  
Video & audiotapes  
Preservice teachers artifacts  
(assignments, journals of response, learning) | Preliminary coding  
Preliminary coding  
Transcription/preliminary coding | Preliminary coding  
Memo writing/  
Monthly Report to dissertation committee  
Coding (categorizing, theme searching): making connections/looking for patterns  
Displaying data/visual representations: graphs and charts |
Appendix F: Basic Profile and Reading History and Survey

Basic Profile and Reading History and Survey

a) Basic Profile

1. Name: ______________________________

2. Gender: a) Female     b) Male

3. Ethnicity: _________ City of origin/Province: __________/__________

4. How many brothers and sisters do you have? ______

5. How old were you when you were able to read

6. Do you like to read? a) Yes    b) No

7. What kind of reading materials do you read most often (e.g., newspapers, short stories, etc)?

8. Have you ever studied literature before? _____ If you have, when was it?

9. Do you read literature in your (university) program?

10. Have you involved in a reading club?
b) Reading History

1. If you had to guess...
   How many books would you say you own? ____
   How many books would you say are in your house? ____
   How many books would you say you have read in the last twelve months? ____

2. How did you learn to read?

3. Why do people read? List as many reasons as you can think of.

4. What does someone have to do in order to be a good reader?

5. What kind of books do you like to read?

6. How do you decide which books you will read?
7. Who are your favorite authors?

8. Have you ever reread a book? 
   If so, can you list the titles?

9. How often do you read at home?

10. In general, how do you feel about reading?

Appendix G: Interviews

### a. Beginning (first interview)—focused life history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Key focus</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>To find out participants’ early experience related to reading and literature before coming to a teacher preparation program (<em>life history</em>)</td>
<td>Family Friends School Storytelling</td>
<td>• Tell me about the first time how you learned reading&lt;br&gt;• Who taught you to read? Any memorable reading experiences?&lt;br&gt;• How were you as a reader compared to your siblings or peers?&lt;br&gt;• In what age were you interested in reading? Name kinds of text that interested you&lt;br&gt;• Tell me about your favorite stories (that you heard, watched, or read)&lt;br&gt;• Did you have any favorite characters from stories you heard, watched, or read?&lt;br&gt;• In schools, what kinds of text did your teachers typically read it to you&lt;br&gt;• What kind of books did you read with your friends?&lt;br&gt;• Why do people read literature? Do you think it’s important to read literature?&lt;br&gt;• How important do you think to study about literature?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### b. Middle (second interview)—The details of experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Key focus</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>To find out details about participants’ present experience</td>
<td>Family Fears Student Organization/ clubs Roommates University instructors</td>
<td>• What is your typical day as a student teacher, from the time you’re up until you sleep&lt;br&gt;• When do you have time to read? Do you read for pleasure?&lt;br&gt;• What kind of text do you read now?&lt;br&gt;• Do you read text that people/reviewers recommend to you?&lt;br&gt;• Do you share books you read to others (e.g., retelling the story, lending the books)?&lt;br&gt;• What do you need to make sense of a story/book?&lt;br&gt;• What do you learn in this course?&lt;br&gt;• What is your favorite course activity? Why?&lt;br&gt;• Any books assigned in this course you disliked?&lt;br&gt;• Why do people read literature? Do you think it’s important to read literature?&lt;br&gt;• How important do you think to study about literature?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### c. End (third interview)—Reflection on the meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Key focus</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| End       | To find out participants’ reflection on the meaning of their experience | The course Classmates Course instructor | • What have you learned from the course?  
• Given what you have observed and participated in this course, what do you learn about reading and literature?  
• Was the course relevant to your teaching?  
• How do you see the course would help you prepared as a teacher?  
• What factors that helped you learning the most from the course? Assignments, instructor, course reading (literature and text)  
• Why do people read literature? Do you think it’s important to read literature?  
• How important do you think to study about literature? |
Appendix H: Sample of Analytical Memo

Tati Durriyah
1st Analytical Memo

Analytical Memo

In my research proposal, I have planned to write a monthly memo— as a means to report my research progress to my committee. But, I did not begin my memo until after the fifth meeting. Initially I had a hard time to write up my memos. I had a vague understanding about writing memos and couldn’t quite make a distinction with other research tasks, e.g., what is the difference between memoing, reflecting, and noting? Furthermore, after further reading about the matter, I learned that there are different kind of memoing: analytical, theoretical, methodological, to name a few. Each will serve best depending on the research purposes. I decided to write an analytical memo for I thought it would give me a room to flexibly code emerging data and not too much concerned with theoretical framework. In this sense I attempt to make sense data from the ground up (grounded research).

As I thought about this activity, I referred to my research questions that are centered on a) picturebooks aesthetic responses, and b) the responses to the course and instruction being taught. Here’re my typical data analysis procedures:

- As soon as I finished teaching, I transferred the videos, audio, and pictures, to my computer and online storage, organizing them according to dates taken.
- I then made fieldnotes, detailing observable activities occurred during a 100 minutes session.
- I also made an after teaching reflection describing what I felt, noticed, and wondered, that are not documented in the recording equipment.
- I read students’ weekly journals and highlighted those deemed relevant to research questions, in this case: responses to picturebooks and the course instruction related to picturebooks.

Week 1: Our Stories and Histories of Reading

Topic: Introduction and sharing stories from childhood, books, and other forms of story. In the first meeting, I focused on sharing stories, especially on our reading histories. I briefly introduced myself—alumni of the university and a doctoral candidate at OSU. I explained about the course, an introduction to children’s literature picturebook, which happened to be a research site for my dissertation project. I let them know that I would
Tati Durriyah
1st Analytical Memo

use this course as an opportunity to share what I had learnt in the US. I began telling them a story and invited students to do the same. Two students share theirs. I told them that reading books is another way to know and share stories. In a powerpoint, I showed them slides on my reading history, books or text that I read, during the periods of elementary, adolescence, and college. Prior, I asked them to take notes any connection that had with the story. Some students made connection with books I read in elementary and adolescence years. I asked them to write a reflection about the session due next week. Here’s an analytical memo from the focal students’ journals—I excluded those who simply recalling and summarizing class.

In a response to the point that I made about the importance of sharing stories and reading books, students said that reading activity offers them an experience (of exploring other’s life), something to learn; motivation, or simply; an antidote to overcome personal timidity.

One male student explains that reading stories is more than simply for an entertainment. He said, readers, like him, can “feel the stories like what the author feel and we involve inside the story.” Furthermore, reading stories also enables him to shares the life experience of others that otherwise he will not get from his own life.

Similarly, a female student views reading stories as an opportunity to explore many worldviews. But she doesn’t really explain what the statement means for her.

Other female student said reading also means to “learn other people’s life” that can help her to decide what’s good and bad for her life. We “imitate the positive thing and leave the negative” aside. Overall these students do not really elaborate their statements.

In a more concrete manner, one student recalls his experience of immersing into a horror book to overcome his timidity of ghosts. He admits: “After reading it, I found that actually it was not scary. Since then, I never feel any extreme fear about horror anymore like I used to.”