**CHALLENGES IN TEACHING LITERATURE IN AN EFL CONTEXT (A CASE STUDY OF INDONESIAN STUDENTS)**

**Jaufillaili\*, Via Noviani, Turini Erawati**

Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati, Indonesia

jaufillaili@ugj.ac.id\*

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| **Abstract**  The significance of literature in language learning has grown considerably. This is particularly true in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), where it is recognized as a valuable tool for enhancing English skills. Nonetheless, the focus on teaching English literature for its intrinsic value rather than solely as a means for language acquisition is limited, especially in Indonesia. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the teaching of English literature to EFL students in Indonesian high schools. Specifically, the study aims to investigate the criteria employed by English literature teachers in selecting literary works, identify challenges faced by teachers when instructing EFL students in English literature, and examine the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges. The research entails a case study involving a teacher instructing two distinct English lessons at a senior high school in Indonesia. The findings reveal the following: Firstly, the primary considerations for selecting literary texts include factors such as length, language complexity, canonical status, and the author's cultural background. Secondly, challenges encountered encompass reading habits, English proficiency, and the availability of resources. Consequently, this research underscores the potential for further exploration within the realm of teaching English literature to EFL students in Indonesia, with the pursuit of effective instructional models being a noteworthy avenue for future investigation.  **Keywords:** English Literature, EFL, Indonesian educational context |

**INTRODUCTION**

Literature does, in fact, play a significant role in the teaching and learning of the English language, particularly among non-native English speakers enrolled in ESL or EFL programs. The ability of literature to improve students' cultural awareness, an important facet of language learning, is also well acknowledged (Carter & Long, 1991). As a result, a significant amount of study has been done on using literature to teach ESL and EFL students. In general, studies have shown that literature significantly aids in the development of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in addition to the four language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Elklic, ErGgen, Kayintu, & Karaca, 2011; Floris, 2004; Khatib, Rezaei, & Derakhshan, 2011; Maley, 1989; McKay, 1982; Riverol, 1991; Turker, 1991; Yeasmin & Azad, 2011).

Language is an essential tool for interpersonal communication since it allows people to share ideas, feelings, and knowledge with others. Due to its role as an international language, English occupies a prominent position among the languages spoken worldwide. As a result, many people decide to study English. In order to familiarize readers with the motivations and principles guiding language educators in their use and choice of literary content, the use of literary texts within foreign language classrooms is highlighted, along with the primary criteria for selecting appropriate literary materials. Additionally, English literature provides students with a way to become familiar with a variety of aspects, including features of English culture in addition to the language itself. English is where examples of English culture are embodied.

The integration of literary study into the curriculum is not commonly handled as a cohesive component in the field of language instruction. On the other hand, educators and academics believe that language and literature are closely related and open to integration. Students have the chance to improve their language and communication abilities thanks to this mixed approach (Choudhary, 2016). However, there hasn't been much focus on teaching English literature to non-native English speakers (ESL/EFL) in the context of language learning. In essence, English literature isn't just used as a tool, trick, or strategy to improve one's proficiency with the language. There has been a lot of progress made in the study of high school literary teaching techniques. Examples include comparisons of integrated and language-focused methodologies (Aziz & Syed, 2010), as well as investigations of information-driven and moral-philosophical approaches.

Noddings (1995) defined learning as the process of gaining information within a particular subject or skill domain through activities like studying, hands-on experience, or teaching. On the other hand, the Indonesian high school curriculum places a strong emphasis on activities that combine language and literature for language learning (Depdiknas, 2008). Notably, the study of English literature has just been added to the Indonesian curriculum, so this research is essential. Implementing the 2013 curricular mandate for teaching and learning literature is a novel phenomenon in Indonesian education. Therefore, teachers who are charged with teaching senior high school students literature texts are motivated to improve their teaching abilities while taking into account the perspectives of the pupils. This strategy makes sure that the educational process is adapted to the requirements and preferences of the pupils while taking place in the classroom.

Through classroom observations and interviews with instructors and students, a number of notable difficulties related to the instruction and acquisition of literature in Indonesian EFL senior high schools have been identified. These issues can be divided into three categories: reading preferences, English language skills, and resource accessibility. All instructors concur that pupils don't start out with a voracious desire for reading and don't develop a reading habit. Additionally, a sizeable majority of pupils had only read a little amount of Indonesian literature, demonstrating a general lack of interest in reading. As a result, it happens frequently for some students to show up to class unprepared after skipping the required reading or chapter. During his tenure, Chesterman (1983) also noticed a similar problem with reading habits.

**METHOD**

Conducting interviews is an essential component of research since it makes it easier to gather useful data (Hatch, 2002, p. 107). The purpose of this study is to investigate the justifications and teaching strategies for using literature in English classrooms. As a result, connecting with teachers who, based on their substantial teaching experience, could share insights into their opinions on incorporating literature into English instruction was a crucial element of our research.

The primary method of gathering information will involve interviewing English literature teachers, according to the preliminary study of the teaching of English literature at a senior high school in Cirebon. As Hatch argues (Hatch, 2002, p. 48–52), qualitative researchers aim to understand the perspectives of their participants or information sources. Through qualitative interviews with teachers, the empirical data for this study was acquired. The senior high school in grade 11 with an enrollment of about 27 students has been selected as the subject of this investigation. I chose this particular institution since I was already familiar with it through a practical training placement (PLP) there.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study was carried out in a Cirebon senior high school. A senior high school in Cirebon's grade 11 was the subject of the authors’ investigation. The data consisted of two different types: observation and interview. Since our goal was to investigate the preparation tactics used by English literature students, I decided to use an anthropological observational method. Student groups provide a distinctive range of resources to the classroom that they have accumulated and acquired via a variety of educational experiences. My research focuses on the common backdrop of observing people's daily routines, including the equipment they employ for diverse tasks. This aspect of seeing individuals and how they use technologies fits with the main objective of my research.

The interview questions were designed to obtain in-depth information on the students' preparation procedures before to participating in literature seminars or discussions. The researchers can get perspective and understanding by looking into someone's daily life through qualitative interviews (Kvale, Brinkmann, Anderssen, & Rygge, 2009, p. 43). I chose to conduct the interview using a semi-structured technique, which involves a dialogue that is steered by a predetermined set of questions and methodology. In contrast to a conventional question-and-answer interview approach, I wanted to encourage more discourse. This decision was influenced by two main research questions that helped shape the "conversation" interview's course and made it easier to gather data for later analysis.

Muhammad Ilyas Ismail claims that observation is a focused way of data collecting that is more particular than other strategies in the book "Learning Evaluation: Fundamental Concepts, Principles, Techniques, and Procedures" (2020). A thorough justification is given in the paper "Classroom Action Research" (2021) by Pratiwi Bernadetta Purba and coworkers, which illustrates how observation, in a larger sense, serves the objective of gathering data to address various developing difficulties. Observation is done with the intention of drawing conclusions about the subject under study, in addition to its role in data collecting. Additionally, a depiction of an object and all of its related elements within the framework of the research is included in the goal of observation.

The next section presents and discusses the study's results. I decided that monitoring the teacher's environment could provide a chance to get new insights while attempting to identify discrepancies between the responses given in my surveys and the actual experiences of the participants in my research. This can entail talking to students who are willing to participate in interviews. Numerous studies have cast doubt on the validity of questionnaires for a variety of reasons, some of which are related to how respondents read and react to the questions. The possibility of discrepancies between the responses and the actual happenings exists because my questionnaire has no clear-cut right or wrong answers. Such discrepancies may, but are not always, the result of a respondent's willful deception.

The author's observational data came from watching the students' classroom actions as they studied English literature. At a senior high school in Cirebon, the observation was conducted in just one grade 11 class. To collect the sample for the following set of data, the observation is required. To categorize the kids based on their classroom participation, an observation sheet is required. The five components of the observation sheet are: the students' interest in and focus on learning; their zeal for completing their assigned learning tasks; their accountability for completing those tasks; their enjoyment of working on the teacher's assignment; and the responses they exhibit to the teacher's stimuli.

Esterberg, referenced in Sugiyono (2015: 72), claims that an interview is a two-person gathering where information or ideas are shared through the process of asking questions and getting responses. This discussion is meant to end with a conclusion or significance regarding a particular issue. Structured interviews, according to Corbetta (2003), are interviews in which the same questions are asked of every participant in the same order and with the same wording. This interviewing strategy made it easier to give questions to each participant consistently. The benefit of this approach is that it gives the researcher complete control over the interview's topic and structure.

My interview guide incorporated observations from observational experiences in an effort to as closely resemble a real dialogue as feasible. The discrepancy between ideal and manifest conduct was noted, as emphasized by Blomberg (1993), when individuals represent one thing while acting differently. Manifest behavior refers to actual behaviour, whereas ideal behavior includes activities that are regarded appropriate by the community. It is conceivable that people might unconsciously or intentionally reply in a way that is more in line with the ideal, perhaps to appease the interviewer or follow social conventions. I set out to identify it if such a phenomenon could be seen in the responses to the questionnaires on reading preferences and course intentions. My goal was to create an interviewing manual.

The development of an interview guide was the following stage. As was already said, the main goal of an interview guide is to guarantee thorough coverage of all topics connected to the research questions while also ensuring that the insights offered by the participants help to answering the research questions. I resorted to known methodology in accordance with the guiding principles of this research strategy and realized that the first duty was to break down the broad research issue into many thematic subareas (Johannessen et al., 2006, p. 139).

The writer's interview data came from one that was performed following an observation. The teacher and students who could struggle with teaching and understanding English literature were the subjects of the interview. Seven questions make up the interview: six are directed at the instructor and discuss the internal and external challenges of teaching literature, and one is directed at the students and discusses the challenges and difficulties of studying literature.

The instructor talked about the difficulties she encountered when instructing students in English literature. It demonstrated that she had few difficulties teaching students about English literature. Because, in her opinion, the difficulties the teacher had were only brought about by the pupils' desire to learn about themes related to English literature that they found appealing. The most crucial factor was the teacher's understanding of the various literary teaching methods and the target audiences for each method. It has an impact on the choice of instructional materials, in-class instruction, and assessment of student work. The training materials were modified to the respondents' level of English ability because they were young learners who participated in this study. She needs to be able to satisfy art because teaching English literature is an art.

**CONCLUSION**

Overall, the senior high school students' experiences with learning literature are low in terms of student, teaching, and pedagogical obstacles but moderate in terms of literary text challenges. If the literary works are not appropriate for the pupils' age and interests, they become confused. Therefore, when choosing the course materials, these two must be given careful consideration. Additionally, the students' admission that they felt more separated than ever presents a challenge for the professors. On the other hand, the teacher had several difficulties when it came to the students and the literary texts. On the basis of the conclusions, the following recommendations are made: The literary selections to be used in the lesson plan must advance the literary text.

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