

Systematic Review: The Challenges and Approaches in The Teaching of English Literature in Enhancing English Proficiency

Faiza Rostam Affendi & Azlina Abdul Aziz

Faculty of Education Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Email: faizarostam95@gmail.com, azlina1@ukm.edu.my

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v9-i1/7136>

DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v9-i1/7136

Published Online: 12 March 2020

Abstract

Literature is used as a teaching and learning tool all over the world for its many wonderful potentials. For centuries, Malaysia has been implementing the use of literature as a tool in enhancing the English proficiency of the students. However, it is found that the implementation of literature in improving English proficiency is ineffective. This paper presents a systematic review of pertinent published research on the teaching of English literature in enhancing English proficiency particularly on the challenges and teaching approaches for the past one decade from year 2009 to 2019. The findings highlight on the problems faced by students and teachers in dealing with English literature as well as the teaching approaches implemented by teachers. The limitation of past studies and recommendation for future research were also discussed.

Keywords: English Literature, English Proficiency, Challenges, Teaching Approaches, ESL Classroom

Introduction

Literature has been acknowledged globally for its power in enhancing English proficiency. In Malaysia, one of the many initiatives that has been done by the government to strengthen the English language among its citizen is the implementation of literature in the school syllabus since two decades ago. Nevertheless, the implementation of literature in the syllabus to help students to enhance their English proficiency is seemed to be inoperative as based on a proficiency index done by a global organisation in Sweden, Education First (EF EPI), out of 72 countries, Malaysia is ranked 12th in when it comes to English skills ("English proficiency still a big problem", 2017). Similarly, Aziz (2018) reported in The New Straits Times that a survey on English proficiency ranking for non-native speakers done by the same organisation that specialises in academic degrees, cultural exchange, educational travel and language training showed that Malaysia went to 22nd place from being 13th in the previous year. These surveys revealed that Malaysia is still lacking citizens that are proficient in English and it raises the question on the effectiveness of English Literature in enhancing English proficiency. This systematic literature review aims to present a synthesis of empirical evidence from related studies found over the years on the teaching of English literature in enhancing English proficiency particularly on the challenges and teaching approaches of English literature to

fellow researchers and educators so that method of instructions can be improvised and further research in this field of study can be conducted. Thus, this paper will focus on two research objectives as follow:

To identify the challenges that teachers and students encountered in learning English literature?

To identify the teaching approaches that are used to teach English literature?

Literature Review

English Literature in Malaysia

The purpose of education according to Malaysian National Education Philosophy is to produce individuals that are intellectually, spiritually and emotionally competent. In line with the National Education Philosophy, the purpose of English literature is to enhance English proficiency among the students while developing sensitivity and awareness among the students (Centre of Development of Curriculum, 2000). Two decades ago, the Malaysian Ministry of Education incorporated Literature in the syllabus of English subject in schools. The first cycle which was from the year 2000 to 2010, the novels used in the syllabus were found to be unexciting and unappealing to the targeted students (Ghani et al., 2007). Also, The Educational Blueprint accentuates that in order to promote English language learning, literature is considered one of the tools and resources to elevate the language learning process. There are different aims of English language learning for different levels. As for primary, the main focus is on receptive and productive skills. On the other hand, on secondary level, the aim is to make sure students can communicate effectively, read and respond to literary texts, to be able to enjoy the texts and present confidently (Kaur & Mahmor, 2014). Literature subject in Malaysia has gone through a couple of changes and despite all the changes, its position and role are still doubtful.

Approaches in Teaching English Literature

Mok (2008) emphasised the importance of teachers' approaches in teaching and learning process as the approaches play crucial role in aiding the students. In relation to teaching literature, there are several approaches that can be utilised by teachers which include the information-based approach, moral-philosophical approach, paraphrastic approach, personal response approach and language-based approach.

According to Carter (1988), information-based approach is a method of teaching the knowledge about literature. This approach is teacher-centred as it requires the students to study the characteristics of literary movements and historical background of the text in which demands the input to come from the teacher (Lazar, 1993). Activities in this approach includes explanation and lectures from the teacher and according to Carter and McRae (1996), this approach caters to prepare students for examinations. Next, moral-philosophical approach requires the students to focus on the moral values of the literary text in which they are required to reflect on their readings (Lazar, 1993). Apart from that, moral-philosophical approach affirms the worthiness of philosophical and moral consideration of the reading process (Talif, 1995).

On the other hand, paraphrastic approach is all about the understanding the meaning of the text on the surface. Talif (1995) believed that this approach is ideal for beginners of the target language. One of the ways that teachers can implement this approach is by paraphrasing the

sentences to a simple language to suit the students' level of proficiency. Apart from that, this approach can act as a stepping stone in preparing the students in dealing with authentic texts. After that, the personal-response approach emphasises on students' perceptions and opinions of the literary text they are dealing with. Vacca and Vacca (2005), mentioned that this approach motivates students to make connection between the text and their personal experiences. Students' responses are personal as they are formed based on students' own opinions of the text.

Lastly, the language-based approach. This approach concerns on how language is being used in literary materials (Carter, 1988). Basically, it aids students to focus on how the language is used. Also, this approach views the text as the main resource that caters for language practice instead of studying literature to acquire facts and information (Lazar, 1993). In other words, the figurative language used is way important compared to the information the author was trying to convey.

Teachers' Roles in 21st Century Classroom

The roles of teachers in classrooms have progressed from teacher-centered to student-centered and now we welcome the development of 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) in the education sector. With the development of 4IR in the education sector, second language education can be expecting a revolutionised pedagogical system. Among them would be the usage of the ever-evolving technology. "Instructors need to relearn and equip themselves with the digital tools to meet the learning preference of the Gen Z students" (Hussin, 2018).

In this 21st Century, the roles of teachers are gradually changing as students themselves are evolving. "They welcome challenges and enjoy group discussion and highly interactive learning environment" (Hussin, 2018). This is where 4IR in the education sector takes place. It is predicted how an average classroom will look like in the next 5 to 7 years. It includes, changes in the classroom layout, inclusion of virtual and augmented reality, flexible assignments or assessments and lastly the usage of Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) and other online learning options. In short, teachers need to be able to keep up with the 4IR education revolution by updating their methodologies to meet the evolving learning preference of students (Hussin, 2018).

21st Century Literature Classroom

In this current digital age, technology is constantly being upgraded and with the power of the Internet, information can be channeled all over the world. Thus, knowledge is always updated as it can be shared and accessed at all times. Nevertheless, for the past years, technology advances and the media have certainly made students read fewer books. Instead, they are more involved in watching television, online chatting and are extremely engrossed with activities involving the social media (Florence et al., 2017). Since students are more inclined to the usage of technology especially social media, teachers need to adapt with this situation by integrating technology in their lesson. Also, the education system needs to prepare these students to adjust to social and technological changes that are occurring (Noor, 2011). With all the technology advances, teachers and students have tons of materials that can be accessed online so the excuse of lack of materials available to help them with their literature learning should not be used. Students must be the main priority when it comes to innovation in education. For years, education system has been trying to improve teaching delivery when

the real problem that needs to be addressed is improvement in learning because at the end of the day, the sole purpose of education is to educate the learners (Serdyukov, 2017).

In addition to that, according to Serdyukov (2017), teachers need to improve their efficiency and quality of teaching and learning. Any teaching approaches should focus on enhancing students' attitudes towards learning, their work ethic, their development of diverse learning skills and creating a productive learning environment. Apart from that, we are in the era where we utilise technology in teaching and learning but the teachers' technology competencies are still questionable. Hence, it is crucial for teachers to make sure they are up to date with all the changes. Generally, language courses should be able to adapt to the technological changes in teaching methodology (Hussin, 2018).

Methodology

In order to achieve the goals of this study, 18 papers related to teaching and learning of English Literature for the past one decade were collected from various sources to be analysed. According to Khan et al. (2003), there are five steps in conducting a systematic review. The first step is framing the research questions. Researcher has to be clear with the problems that are being addressed by forming structured and unambiguous research questions at the very beginning. Next, identifying relevant work. It is crucial to do an extensive search for studies and multiple sources must be included. In this systematic review, the researcher has opted to search for articles through the Scopus and Google Scholar database. Most of the articles shortlisted were published in Scopus indexed journals. In searching for relevant articles, the researcher used several terms such as: (problems in teaching literature OR challenges in literature lesson) and (teaching approaches in literature classroom OR literature teaching method). Apart from that, several filters such as "open access", "articles only" and "publications from year 2009 to 2019" were applied during the searching process. In the case the researcher comes across an article that really suits the study, the researcher proceeds to click "related articles" to find articles that are relevant to the study. The third step is to assess the quality of the studies conducted by past researchers and make sure that they are relevant. To make sure the articles are relevant in answering the research questions, the researcher only opted for studies that are done in the context of literature classroom. After that, the second last step in systematic review is to summarise the evidence and the researcher has done this by collecting the relevant data and tabulate it. Lastly, after all four steps are executed, the last step is to interpret the findings. The findings will be discussed in the next section.

Results & Discussion

After the data from all 18 studies were tabulated, a total of two systematic review tables were formed. In order to answer the first research question, eight past studies were shortlisted. Two articles were published in the year 2009, one was published in 2012, 2014 and 2015 respectively and the other three were published in 2017. On the other hand, ten articles were shortlisted to answer the second research question. Two articles were from the year 2010, 2014 and 2015 respectively and similarly, one article published in the year 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively. All the articles selected were studies done for the past one decade. All the data collected in the studies are summarised in Table 1 and 2 as follows:

Author & Year	Research Purpose	Methodology	Findings
Ghazali, Setia, Muthusamy & Jusoff (2009)	To discuss students' attitudes towards the texts used in literature classroom, the challenges faced in reading these texts and the type of texts students prefer to read.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed method • Questionnaire • Interview • 110 students from two schools (urban and rural) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have positive attitudes towards short stories. • Students have negative attitude towards poetry. • Students find reading novels to be unenjoyable. • Students prefer collaborative work.
Vethamani & Nair (2009)	To identify students' perception on the types of literary genre they enjoy reading and students' views on the types of activities they enjoy and found useful in the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative method • Questionnaire • 110 secondary school students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students prefer short stories that are interesting and enjoyable to read. • As for poetry, students prefer those with simpler language and good moral values. • Novels with themes that are related and fascinating to students are preferable as it makes them want to read the text.
Isa & Mahmud (2012)	To identify the problems encountered by students and teachers in comprehension of literary text used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed method • Questionnaire • Interview • 422 students and 6 teachers from Perak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have positive view in learning literature but reading literary text is not preferable. • The various language styles and the linguistic literary devices used in poems make it difficult for students to engage with the text. • Teachers agreed that texts used are foreign and too difficult for students in rural and sub-urban schools.
Kaur & Mahmor (2014)	To examine the role and the position of the English Literature component in the current Malaysian English curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English literature in Malaysia has been through inconsistent changes for the past years. • A suitable and appropriate literature text selection is very much needed to fulfil the objective of English literature in enhancing English proficiency.

<p>Othman, Shah, Karim, Yusof, Din, Ramli & Salleh (2015)</p>	<p>To examine students' perceptions and challenges in the learning English literature.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed method • Questionnaire • Interview • Observation • Journal writing • 50 Form 5 students from Hulu Langat, Selangor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have positive attitude towards literature text used and they are satisfied with the teaching approaches used by the teachers. • Students show interest in the idea of using technology in learning literature. • However, there were students that faced problems in literature lesson in which they find it difficult to understand the teacher's explanation.
<p>Omar (2017)</p>	<p>To identify the challenges and advantages of teaching English literature and teaching approaches implemented by teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical research 	<p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have limited knowledge on the literary materials. • Texts are contextually and culturally foreign to the students. • Teachers are too focused in teaching the students for examination purposes. <p>Approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content-based approach • Language-based approach • Personal-response approach • Moral philosophical approach • Paraphrastic approach

Sanub & Yunus (2017)	To identify the changes made in the selection of literary text from year 2007 and 2016.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interview • 25 English teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context of literary texts used in upper forms English literature component in the year 2007 and 2016 were foreign and unfamiliar to the students. • In 2016, it is found that the literary texts used cater to students with high English proficiency and to those in urban schools which is unfair to those with lower English proficiency. • Teachers in both studies agreed that the language structure of the literary texts for both years were more suitable to students with high English proficiency.
Naser & Aziz (2017)	To examine students' perception of the text selection in the literature component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study • Semi-structured interview • Students and teachers from a secondary school in Kedah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students show negative perception on the materials used. • Students had difficulties in comprehending the meaning of the text used. • Students prefer texts that are related to them.

Table 1:
Problems Encountered In English Literature Lesson

Author & Year	Research Purpose	Methodology	Findings
Rashid, Vethamani & Rahman (2010)	To identify the approaches and strategies employed by teachers in teaching the literature component to less proficient students in Forms 1 and 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed method • Questionnaire, classroom observation and semi-structured interview • Students and teachers from 18 rural schools in Kelantan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information-based Approach • Moral-philosophical Approach • Paraphrastic Approach • Personal-response Approach • Language-based Approach • Teacher-centred

Sivapalan & Wan Ahmad (2010)	To examine Malaysian upper secondary students' preferences of the use of web-based multimedia applications for the learning of literature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey research • Questionnaire • Interview • Upper secondary students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students give positive feedbacks on the usage of multimedia in literature lessons. • Students prefer using the web-based multimedia approach compared to teacher-centred approach.
Yunus & Suliman (2014)	To explore teachers and students' usage of ICT in Literature lesson and their attitudes towards ICT in teaching and learning of Literature component.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed method • Questionnaire • Semi-structured interview • 58 students and 33 English teachers in a rural area of Sarawak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory level on the usage on ICT in Literature lessons. • However, both students and teachers have positive attitudes towards the integration of ICT in learning literature.
Mustakim, Mustapha & Lebar (2014)	To identify the approaches employed by teachers in teaching Contemporary Children's Literature Program to upper primary school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative method • Classroom observation • Interview • 5 ESL teachers in Kuala Selangor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers favoured information-based approach and paraphrastic approach. • Language used in literary texts is difficult for weak students. • Students level of proficiency was one of the challenges faced by teachers.
Ramlan (2015)	To identify the teaching approaches that English language teachers use when teaching literature in class and the reasons behind the selection of approaches used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative method • Questionnaire • 149 secondary school English teachers in Johor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher-centred approach is used more compared to students-centred approach.

Yimwilai (2015)	To study the effectiveness of the integrated approach in EFL classrooms and how it related to students' achievements, critical thinking skills and attitudes toward reading literature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action research • Integrated approach was integrated in literature lessons. • Questionnaire • 78 students majoring in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement on critical thinking skills. • Attitudes towards reading literature is higher when integrated approach is applied.
Ling & Eng (2016)	To investigate the types of literature teaching approaches preferably employed by Form 4 and Form 5 teachers who taught English literature in Sarawak.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed method • Questionnaire • Interview • 43 Tesl teachers 	<p>Teachers prefer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information-based approach • Moral-philosophical approach • Paraphrastic approach <p>Least usage of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal response approach • Language-based approach • Stylistic approach
Muthusamy, Salleh, Michael, Arumugam & Thayalan (2017)	To examine adult learners' attitude towards approaches used in teaching and learning literature in a tertiary ESL classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed method • Questionnaire • Interview • 30 trainee Tesl teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents disagreed with autonomous learning. • The best way to learn literature is through collaborative learning.

Yeoh, Yunus & Abdul Aziz (2018)	To explore Malaysian ESL trainee teachers' selection of approaches and activities in teaching literature, factors behind the selection and their confidence in teaching the component.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative case study • Semi-structured interview • 5 UKM Tesl trainee teachers 	<p>Approaches & Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content-based Approach • Information-based Approach • Personal Enrichment Approach • Student-centred activities • Teacher-centred activities <p>Factors Influencing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' proficiency • ICT facilities • Time allocated for each lesson • Students' cultural background • Students' motivation • Text difficulty <p>Respondents feel fairly confident in teaching literature</p>
Suliman, Yunus & Nor (2019)	To examine suitable activities to be conducted in a literature lesson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative method • Questionnaire • Interview • 271 Tesl teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paraphrastic approach • Information-based approach • Personal-response approach

Table 2: Teaching Approaches Implemented In English Literature Classroom

Challenges with English Literature

Text Selection

For the past several years, there have been some inconsistent changes made to English literature in Malaysia (Kaur & Mahmor, 2014; Sanub & Yunus, 2017). Regardless the situation, the text selection for literature must be appropriate and suitable for students in order to fulfil one of the objectives of the implementation of English literature which is to enhance students' English proficiency. Besides, the reason why the text selections need to suit students is to encourage positive perception towards literature among students (Othman et al., 2015)

Context and Themes

One of the problems associated with the text selection of the literary materials used in the class is the context and themes presented in the texts. Several studies on students' perception of the text selection discovered that students have negative attitudes towards the text used in literature classroom (Isa & Mahmud, 2012; Ghazali et al., 2009; Naser & Aziz, 2017). Specifically, a study by Ghazali et al. (2009) that was done on 110 secondary school students from two types of schools which are rural and town area found that students from social background have negative view on poetry and novels. The main reason why the students find reading these two types of literary texts to be unenjoyable is because they find the issues and

themes presented were uninteresting and the novels have dreary storyline that is not relatable to them. To be specific, students find the novels too draggy and the plot and characters were too complicated for them to fathom.

Apart from that, the text used in literature classes are culturally and contextually foreign to students (Isa & Mahmud, 2012; Omar, 2017; Sanub & Yunus, 2017). Findings from Sanub and Yunus's (2017) study on literary text used in English literature in the year 2007 and 2016 found that for both years, the texts used in English literature lessons for upper forms were unfamiliar to the students despite changes were made on the text selection. From the study, it is evident that the implementation of English literature to rectify the proficiency issue is ineffective because the students themselves deal with problems related to the materials used in literature lessons. Similarly, Naser and Aziz's (2017) study on both teachers and students discovered that students prefer materials that they can relate to so that they would not have a hard time comprehending the meaning of the literary text. Also, the students are more concern with the messages and moral values that the texts were trying to convey.

Vethamani and Nair (2009) highlighted the importance of implementing materials that are relatable to the students as it can motivate the students to read the materials. It is important to consider students' needs when selecting literary materials and make sure the themes and issues that the text is trying to convey must reflect the issues that are relevant to students. This is to give them the opportunity to voice out their opinion while expressing them via the target language. It can be implied from Vethamani and Nair's (2009) study that the text selection can either interfere with students' literacy learning positively or negatively. Kaur and Mahmud (2014) also emphasised on functional literary text for students in terms of the cultural aspects and language used by the author. With the right literary texts, literature will not only serve as a tool in enhancing English, it also will serve as a bridge to educate its readers on vast amount of heritage and culture. Thus, a need analysis on the type of materials preferred by the students need to be administered before deciding on which materials to be used in literature lessons (Othman et al., 2015). An effective teaching and learning literature component can be achieved through the right implementation of literary texts in the classroom.

Language Style

The other problem linked to the text selection of literary materials is the style of language used in the texts. Students have difficulties with the language used in the texts that they are dealing with (Isa & Mahmud, 2012; Ghazali et al., 2009; Mustakim et al., 2014; Sanub & Yunus, 2017; Vethamani & Nair, 2009). Two studies by Ghazali et al. (2009) and Vethamani and Nair (2009) found that students enjoy reading and studying the short stories because they are short and the language used by the author is easy to grasp. On the other hand, students dislike learning poetry because the language used is very difficult so they find it unenjoyable (Isa & Mahmud, 2012; Ghazali et al., 2009).

All of the studies above were done on students from the rural area with low English proficiency which makes it harder for the students to learn texts with difficult language style. All in all, the language used in the text should be on the same level with students' proficiency in order to avoid the students from losing interest in leaning the text. Besides, the style of

language in the texts selected must cater to all students despite their level of English proficiency.

Teachers Methods of Teaching

Another problem with English literature identified from this systematic review is the teachers' method of teaching. Students faced difficulties in literature lesson in which they find it hard to fully understand the teacher's explanation on the literary text (Othman et al., 2015). This problem is linked to teachers' own weaknesses in teaching literature. This is supported by Omar (2017) in which he mentioned that some teachers' knowledge on literary materials are limited. Students are more likely to have positive attitude towards literature if the right teaching approaches were implemented. Thus, teachers must be creative in applying engaging teaching styles that are able to motivate the students to learn literature (Othman et al., 2015).

Furthermore, several studies revealed that teachers' methods of teaching are heavily influenced by the examination (Ghazali et al., 2009; Naser & Aziz, 2017; Omar, 2017). Teachers tend to prioritise and focus on teaching the students for examination purposes. Since the teachers are too concerned on how well their students will perform in their examination, the materials that they developed for teaching literature are exam-oriented (Naser & Aziz, 2017). Also, according to Ghazali et al. (2009), Malaysian education system is known for its examination-oriented approach so that is the reason why teachers focus on explaining the literary components for the sake of examination.

A study by Yeoh et al. (2018) disclosed that English trainee teachers are in need of more training in teaching literature as they are still lacking confidence and pedagogical training. Nevertheless, in-service teachers are no better as some of them are still conservative and hesitant to apply new and advanced teaching approaches (Lin & Eng, 2016). These teachers are still using the same method of teaching because they are lacking of exposure on teaching approaches that are student-centred. In conclusion, teachers have to be aware that their teaching approaches affect students' achievement and their perception towards literature and with the right teaching approaches, students can be impacted positively (Yimwilai, 2015).

Teaching Approaches Implemented in Literature Lessons

Based on the data tabulated from all the studies, there are five main teaching approaches that are implemented in English literature classroom. These approaches are information-based approach, moral-philosophical approach, paraphrastic approach, language-based approach and personal-response approach.

Yimwilai's (2015) study on integrated approach highlighted the effectiveness of integrated approach in teaching literature as this approach promotes critical thinking skill among the students and it is crucial for students to be able to think critically in learning literature. Besides, this study proved that integrated approach works better than conventional method and more importantly, it can be applied to students who have different level of English proficiency.

Approaches Preferred by Teachers

Studies by Rashid et al. (2010) and Ling and Eng (2016) exposed that the three main approaches that language teachers prefer are the information-based approach, moral-philosophical approach and paraphrastic approach. On the other hand, Mustakim et al. (2014) discovered that another teaching approach that is favoured by language teachers is the paraphrastic approach. In contrary, Suliman's et al. (2019) study in examining the suitable activities to be implemented in the classroom discovered that the three main approaches favoured by English teachers are paraphrastic approach, information-based approach and personal-response approach.

The reason why information-based approach is favoured by teachers is because their priority is to make students gain enough literary information so that their understanding on the subject matter can be developed (Ling & Eng 2016; Mustakim et al., 2014; Rashid et al., 2010). As stated by Carter and McRae (1996), this approach is beneficial in preparing students for examination. Since the teachers interviewed in all the studies are teaching low proficiency students, this could be the main reason why information-based approach was implemented. However, the disadvantage of this approach is that teachers are spoon-feeding the students with information and this impedes the students from giving their own inputs.

In addition to that, when the students have low English proficiency, paraphrastic approach is favourable by the teachers as they get to help the students understand the text by using simple words and terms as according to Talif (1995), this approach is ideal for beginners of the target language. In other words, in order to aid the students in comprehending the text, teachers have to paraphrase the sentences used in the text.

Rashid et al. (2010) and Ling and Eng (2016) revealed that the teachers in their studies favoured moral-philosophical approach. It can be said that moral-philosophical approach is implemented in the classroom for its benefits of inculcating moral values among students in which in line with one of the objectives of the English curriculum (Rashid et al., 2010).

Only findings from one study which is Suliman et al. (2019) discovered that the teachers chose personal-response approach as one of their favoured approaches. Personal-response approach is in favour by the teachers in this study is because this approach motivates and encourages the students to make connection between the literature text and their personal life. Apart from that, it shapes the students to be less passive and more expressive in voicing out their opinions. Hence, personal-response approach should be implemented more in English literature classroom so that the students are able to think and make personal connection with the text instead of depending on the teachers to spoon-feed them.

Least Preferred Approaches

Out of the ten studies conducted on teaching approaches implemented by English teachers, two studies revealed that the two main approaches that are least preferred by teachers are the language-based approach and personal-response approach. Rashid et al. (2010) and Ling and Eng (2016) studies on students and teachers from rural schools in Kelantan and Sarawak respectively found that teachers prefer to spoon-feed the students during literature lessons as they feel like the students are not capable of giving out input as they have low English proficiency level. Therefore, these teachers avoid using the personal-response approach as

this approach requires the students to connect with the text and give their own opinions. Similarly, language-based approach is least preferred as it would be too much for the students as this approach is meant to explicitly build the other four language skills. It can be concluded that the main contributing factor on why these two approaches are the least favoured approach is because the teachers are dealing with students with low English proficiency.

Teacher-centred and Student-centred Approach

This study also discovered that between teacher-centred approach and student-centred approach, English teachers prefer to implement teacher-centred approach in teaching literature. According to a study by Ramlan (2015) that was done on English teachers, the respondents agreed that they implement teacher-centred approach in their literature classroom because they believe it is the best approach to use since their students have low English proficiency level and to them, student-centred approach is only suitable to be implemented in high proficiency classes.

On the other hand, Muthusamy et al. (2017) and Yeoh et al. (2018) discovered that trainee teachers believed in teaching multiple approaches instead of focusing on one approach. Muthusamy et al. (2017) highlighted that the best way to learn literature is through collaborative learning as students get to learn by sharing ideas and opinion during discussion. Also, various teaching approaches must be implemented in teaching literature in which various activities must be done in class to make sure the lessons are not mundane. In addition to that, trainee teachers use a combination of approaches in teaching literature compared to in-service teachers in which they prefer to implement teacher-centred activities (Yeoh et al., 2018). Nevertheless, this study done on trainee teacher revealed that trainee teachers are still lacking pedagogical training and they need more training in teaching literature component. Thus, current TESL courses in Malaysia must be improved.

Integration of Technology in Literature Classrooms

Studies on the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in literature classroom were done by Sivapalan and Wan Ahmad (2010) and Yunus and Suliman (2014). Both studies discovered positive impacts on the usage of technology in literature classroom.

Sivapalan and Wan Ahmad (2010) did a survey research on upper secondary school students to examine their preference and thoughts on the usage of web-based multimedia applications in the learning of literature. The findings found that the students give positive feedbacks on the implementation of multimedia in literature lessons. The students believed that with the use of web-based multimedia, it was way easier for them to acquire information on the poems compared to the teacher and they could understand the poems better. Also, the information provided by the web-based multimedia were more helpful and effective than the ones provided by the teacher and textbooks used. Another reason why the students prefer this method compared to teacher-centred approach in which the teacher 'spoon-feed' the students throughout the lesson is because students love it when new teaching approaches are implemented in the lesson. In other words, teachers have to stop spoon-feeding the students with information. Instead, language teachers have to assist the students throughout the learning process.

The other study done by Yunus and Suliman (2014) on the usage of ICT in literature among rural students in Sarawak and their attitudes towards it discovered that the usage of ICT in literature lessons is on satisfactory level. Despite the average usage, the students and teachers have positive attitudes towards the integration of ICT in literature lessons. Findings also discovered that the students were easily distracted by social media every time they were trying to learn literature on the computer. This is why Yunus and Suliman (2014) highlighted the importance of teachers improvising their teaching approaches such as using social media to encourage and motivate students to learn as they already have positive attitudes towards literature.

From these two studies, it can be concluded that teachers have to start implementing the usage of technology in literature lessons as students find it interesting to learn through this medium. When the students develop an interest towards learning literature, their motivation to learn literature will be increased. Besides, students should be given the opportunity to experience literature lessons that they genuinely enjoy as studies by Othman et al., (2015) and Isa and Mahmud (2012) found that students already have positive attitude towards literature. Thus, teachers have to keep updating themselves with current changes and implement new teaching approaches that integrate technology in order to cater to the tech-savvy generation and to keep them interested as mentioned by Hussin (2018).

Conclusion

Based on the systematic review, it can be concluded that the main problems and challenges with English literature in Malaysia are the text selection in which they are contextually and culturally foreign to students and the language used was too difficult also the teachers method of instruction in literature lessons is questionable. A careful process of selection of literary materials must be done so that texts used are suitable to the students. The reason why the text selections need to be suitable for the students is because if the students could not understand the texts, it defeats the purpose of learning literature to enhance English proficiency.

In terms of teachers' method of instruction, English teachers have to improve on their literature teaching skill as it is important for students to be able to understand the lesson since teachers are the main resource for them in learning English literature. In addition to that, teachers have to stop focusing on teaching the students for the sake of examination and get rid of the belief that performing in examination is what matters most. Also, teachers have to improve literature lessons by implementing various teaching approaches while taking into consideration of students' differences. Not to forget, the implementation of technology in the classroom will be very essential as teachers nowadays are dealing with tech-savvy generation that enjoy everything that is related to technology.

All in all, it can be concluded that the curriculum developer and educators must do a thorough analysis on the text selection before implementing it as the text section matters in learning English literature to enhance English proficiency. Also, the method of instructions applied by teachers in teaching English literature need to be improved and cater to students' needs. With all these changes made, the teaching of English literature in Malaysia can be enhanced thus, contributing to students' English proficiency.

Limitation & Recommendation

In conducting this systematic review, one limitation of the study was identified. Majority of the studies done on teaching of English literature in enhancing English proficiency was conducted on low proficiency students living in sub-urban and rural area.

As for the recommendation to future researchers, it is recommended to them to consider doing a research on students with high English proficiency or even with teachers that are dealing with high proficiency students. Also, studies on the differences between low proficiency students and high proficiency students are necessary in order for educators to better meet students' needs because at the end of the day, every students deserve the same chance on learning literature and experience the benefits it offers.

References

- Aziz, H. (2018). Malaysia drops 9 spots in English proficiency ranking for non-native speakers. *New Straits Times*. <https://www.nst.com.my/education>
- Carter, R. (1988). The integration of language and literature in the English curriculum: A narrative on narratives. *Literature and Language*, 3-7.
- Carter, R., and McRae, J. (1996). *Language, literature and the learner*. London:Longman.
- Centre of Development of Curriculum. 2000. *KBSM syllabus for secondary schools*. Malaysia: Ministry of Education.
- English proficiency still a big problem for many M'sian grads. (2017). *The Star*.
- Florence, F. O., Adesola, O. A., Alaba, H. B., & Adewumi, O. M. (2017). A Survey on the Reading Habits among Colleges of Education Students in the Information Age. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(8).
- Ghani, A. A., Bakar, A. M., Salim, S., & Shukor, M. M. (2007). Implementation of the English language literature component for secondary schools: An impact study. *Jurnal Penyelidikan Pendidikan*, 9, 121-141.
- Ghazali, S. N., Setia, R., Muthusamy, C., & Jusoff, K. (2009). ESL Students' Attitude towards Texts and Teaching Methods Used in Literature Classes. *English language teaching*, 2(4), 51-56.
- Hussin, A. A. (2018). Education 4.0 made simple: Ideas for teaching. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 6(3), 92-98.
- Isa, N. H., & Mahmud, C. T. (2012). Literary texts for Malaysian secondary schools: Needs versus policy. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(7), 76-86.
- Kaur, P., & Mahmor, N. A. (2014). Examining the role of the English literature component in the Malaysian English curriculum. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 134, 119-124.
- Khan, K. S., Kunz, R., Kleijnen, J., & Antes, G. (2003). Five steps to conducting a systematic review. *Journal of the royal society of medicine*, 96(3), 118-121.
- Lazar, G. (1993). *Literature and language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ling, S., & Eng, C. S. (2016). Types of English literature teaching approaches preferred by teachers in secondary schools in Miri, Sarawak. *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics*.
- Mok, S. S. (2013). *Educational psychology & pedagogy: Learner and learning environment*. Penerbitan Multimedia.

- Mustakim, S. S., Mustapha, R., & Lebar, O. (2014). Teacher's Approaches in Teaching Literature: Observations of ESL Classroom. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 2(4), 35-44.
- Muthusamy, C., Salleh, S. M., Michael, A. S., Arumugam, A. S., & Thayalan, X. (2017). Methods used in teaching and learning of literature in the ESL classroom and adult learners' attitude. *Journal of Applied Linguistic and Language Research*, 4(2), 17-25.
- Naser, S. H. M., & Aziz, A. A. (2017). Students' perceptions of the text selection in the literature component. In *National Pre-University Seminar 2017 (NpreUS2017)* (pp. 226-236).
- Noor, N. M. (2011). Reading habits and preferences of EFL post graduates: A case study. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1-9.
- Omar, Y. (2017). The Inclusion of Literature Components in Malaysian English Papers: the Challenges and Pros in Teaching and Learning. *Al-Ta lim Journal*, 24(3), 174-186.
- Othman, N. I., Shah, P. M., Karim, A. A., Yusof, A., Din, R., Ramli, N. A., & Salleh, N. S. M. (2015). Personalizing learning of English literature: Perceptions and challenges. *Journal of Personalized Learning*, 1(1), 104-112.
- Ramlan, N. (2015). Teaching approaches employed by secondary school English teachers when teaching literature component in English.
- Rashid, R. A., Vethamani, M. E., & Rahman, S. B. A. (2010). Approaches Employed by Teachers in Teaching Literature to Less Proficient Students in Form 1 and Form 2. *English Language Teaching*, 3(4), 87-99.
- Sanub, O., & Yunus, M. M. (2017, May). English literary texts used in form four and five English literature component 'revisit'. In *International Conference on Education (ICE2) 2018: Education and Innovation in Science in the Digital Era* (pp. 688-694).
- Serdyukov, P. (2017). Innovation in education: what works, what doesn't, and what to do about it?. *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching & Learning*
- Sivapalan, S., Ahmad, W, F. (2010). A web-based multimedia approach to literature in Malaysian secondary schools: learners' preferences. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(3).
- Suliman, A., Yunus, M. M., & Nor, M. Y. M. (2019). Scrutinising the preferences in literature approaches and activities: From the lenses of ESL teachers. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature*®, 25(2).
- Talif, R. (1995). Teaching literature in ESL: The Malaysian context. *Penerbit Universiti Pertanian Malaysia*.
- Vacca, R. T., & Vacca, J. A. L. (1981). *Content area reading*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Vethamani, M. E., & Nair, P. (2009). Literacy development through the incorporation of literature in language education for Malaysian secondary school students. *Indonesian JELT*, 5(2), 72-86.
- Yeoh, A. J. A., Yunus, M., & Abdul Aziz, A. (2018). ESL trainee teachers' approaches and activities in teaching literature: Usage, factors and confidence. *Asian EFL Journal*, 20(4), 77-93.
- Yimwilai, S. (2015). An Integrated Approach to Teaching Literature in an EFL Classroom. *English Language Teaching*, 8(2), 14-21.
- Yunus, M. M., & Suliman, A. (2014). Information & Communication Technology (ICT) tools in teaching and learning literature component in Malaysian secondary schools. *Asian Social Science*, 10(7), 136.