

Mapping Literature Pedagogy in EFL Classroom: Insights from Indonesian Higher Education

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Abstract. This study investigates how literature pedagogy is implemented in an English as a Foreign Language teacher education context in Indonesia. Although literature is widely recognized for its potential to develop linguistic, cultural, and interpretive competence, practical models and classroom strategies for integrating literature into tertiary EFL instruction remain under-documented. This research therefore aims to map the pedagogical approaches, teaching methods, materials, and assessment practices used in a university course entitled Teaching English through Literature. Using a descriptive qualitative design, the study analyzed course documents, classroom activities, and student reflections. Data were collected through classroom observation, analysis of lesson plans, and review of reflective journals, and were examined using thematic analysis to identify recurring pedagogical patterns. The findings reveal the integration of three major approaches, namely language based, reader response, and task based or communicative approaches. The course emphasized linguistic analysis, interpretation, and practical teaching experience through the use of poetry, short stories, and drama. Assessment included project-based tasks, microteaching activities, and reflective writing. The results suggest that literature pedagogy enhances students' linguistic awareness, interpretive engagement, and creativity in teaching, although challenges remain in terms of limited class time and unequal literary exposure.

Keywords: descriptive qualitative research; EFL classroom; Indonesian higher education; literature pedagogy; teaching approaches

1 Introduction

The teaching of literature has long been recognized as a powerful means of enriching language learning. Within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, literature offers learners exposure to authentic language, imaginative expression, and the cultural realities embedded in different linguistic traditions. In the Indonesian higher education setting, where English continues to occupy an expanding role as a medium of academic and intercultural communication, the inclusion of literature within EFL curricula presents both opportunities

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and challenges. It offers a platform for developing linguistic competence, cultural awareness, and personal reflection three pillars of communicative education in globalized societies.

Historically, literature in Indonesian EFL education has been positioned ambiguously between linguistic and cultural learning. While the Kampus Merdeka and Merdeka Belajar curriculum frameworks promote creative, contextualized teaching, many university syllabi still focus predominantly on linguistic forms and grammar-driven tasks (Agustina, 2019; Suryani & Arifin, 2018). Consequently, the pedagogical potential of literary texts to stimulate empathy, critical thinking, and intercultural sensitivity often remains underdeveloped. Although the theoretical value of literature in EFL education has been widely acknowledged, there remains limited empirical evidence on how literature is actually taught, experienced, and assessed in EFL teacher education contexts. This lack of context-specific understanding represents a significant research gap, as it constrains efforts to align theoretical expectations with classroom practice. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the ways literature is implemented and evaluated in EFL teacher education, thereby contributing new insights into its pedagogical role and effectiveness.

Globally, scholars have argued for the repositioning of literature at the heart of language education. Byram (1997) emphasized that literature can cultivate intercultural communicative competence, enabling learners to interpret meanings across cultural boundaries. (Carter & Long, 1991) further proposed that literary study contributes not only to linguistic enrichment but also to imaginative engagement and social awareness. Later frameworks such as Maley & Bolitho (2015) creative language teaching and Kramsch (1993) cultural perspective on foreign language education reinforced the view that literary experience extends beyond textual analysis to include identity formation and cultural mediation.

However, despite these theoretical advances, classroom-based studies remain limited, particularly in non-Anglophone contexts such as Indonesia. In many cases, literature courses are still perceived as peripheral, serving aesthetic appreciation rather than pedagogical development. Studies by Nurhadi and Rahmawati (2021) and Prasetyono (2023) observed that while teachers acknowledge the value of literature for language learning, they often lack models that integrate linguistic, cultural, and communicative outcomes in a coherent framework. Furthermore, the dominance of imported literary texts sometimes restricts opportunities to engage with local or regional voices, limiting the relevance of classroom materials to Indonesian learners' lived experiences (Hidayat & Setiawan, 2024; Nurjanah, 2022).

Within this evolving landscape, the concept of literature pedagogy the art and science of teaching literature for both linguistic and humanistic purposes have gained renewed attention. Literature pedagogy bridges the gap between language education and literary studies, focusing on how teachers select, interpret, and mediate texts to achieve cognitive, linguistic, and affective goals. It encompasses diverse methodological traditions, including the language-based approach, which emphasizes stylistic analysis; the reader-response approach, which values personal interpretation and affective engagement; and the task-based or communicative approach, which highlights experiential learning through creative performance and collaborative teaching tasks (Carter, 2010; Gilroy & Parkinson, 1996; Lazar, 1993).

In the Indonesian context, where EFL instruction serves as both a linguistic and cultural enterprise, understanding how literature pedagogy is enacted in practice is critical. Mapping existing pedagogical practices allows educators to see the extent to which literature courses fulfil their multidimensional aims—language development, cultural literacy, and professional teaching competence. Yet, empirical data on the actual implementation of literature pedagogy in Indonesian higher education remain scarce. Most research to date has explored teachers' beliefs or students' attitudes (Arini, 2023)(Suharyono & Rahma, 2021),

rather than systematically examining how literature is used, what texts and methods are employed, and how these pedagogical choices shape learners' engagement and learning outcomes.

This lack of descriptive evidence constrains curriculum innovation. Without a clear map of existing practices, it becomes difficult for policymakers and teacher educators to design courses that effectively integrate literary learning into EFL teacher preparation. It is within this context that the present study situates itself.

Building upon the researcher's prior works on language, culture, and meaning, this study extends an established line of inquiry into the pedagogical application of literature. Earlier research on conversational implicature in film (Sofeny, 2016) examined how meaning operates through language use and cooperative principles, offering early insight into pragmatic and interpretive dimensions of communication. More recently, a collaborative study on cultural content in EFL textbooks (Ula et al., 2025) explored how linguistic and cultural messages are represented in teaching materials, highlighting the need for culturally balanced and contextually grounded content. Both studies informed the conceptual grounding of the present research, which shifts from textual and discourse analysis to classroom pedagogy, focusing on how literature is mobilized as a medium of language instruction and teacher education.

Thus, this study aims to contribute empirical clarity to a persistent gap in the field: the absence of systematic documentation of literature pedagogy in Indonesian EFL higher education. It does so by providing a detailed mapping of teaching approaches, course focuses, materials, methods, and assessments used in a representative literature-based course.

Despite increasing scholarly attention to the role of literature in language education, pedagogical practices in EFL classrooms often remain fragmented. In the Indonesian higher education context, literature courses are typically offered as supporting subjects rather than integral components of language teacher education programs. They are often limited to two or three credits, as reflected in the Teaching English through Literature course that formed the focus of this study. This limitation constrains the depth of textual exploration, critical discussion, and pedagogical application that such courses might otherwise achieve. Moreover, differences in students' prior exposure to literary texts, linguistic proficiency, and cultural background further complicate classroom engagement. These issues point to a broader pedagogical concern: how can literature be taught effectively to serve both linguistic and humanistic objectives within an EFL framework?

The paucity of empirical research documenting how literature pedagogy is designed, implemented, and assessed in Indonesian higher education is striking. Previous investigations have tended to concentrate on conceptual arguments or theoretical advocacy for using literature in language teaching (Sari, 2020; Wulandari & Anam, 2022), with limited systematic inquiry into classroom practice. Few studies have mapped the pedagogical landscape by examining specific courses, their methodological orientations, and the materials used to foster linguistic, cultural, and interpretive skills among prospective teachers. This absence of empirical mapping not only obscures our understanding of current pedagogical trends but also hampers evidence-based curriculum development.

Consequently, this research seeks to address the following core question: How is literature pedagogy conceptualized and implemented in Indonesian EFL higher education?

To answer this question, the study explores three specific dimensions:

1. The pedagogical approaches and teaching methods employed in literature-based EFL courses.
2. The kinds of literary texts and cultural materials selected for instruction, and how they relate to language and cultural objectives.
3. The forms of assessment and reflective practice used to evaluate students' linguistic and pedagogical competencies.

The study employs a descriptive qualitative design to document classroom practices within a Teaching English through Literature course. Data were gathered through syllabus analysis, observation, and documentation of teaching activities, followed by thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns in pedagogical design, instructional focus, and assessment strategies. Through this mapping process, the study provides a structured overview of how literature functions as a tool for language enrichment, cultural engagement, and teacher professional development in a real institutional context.

Three major findings emerged from the analysis. First, the course applied a blended model of language-based, reader-response, and task-based approaches, reflecting a pragmatic attempt to balance linguistic accuracy with creative and interpretive engagement. Second, the selection of texts from canonical Western works to Indonesian and modern plays demonstrated an effort to promote cultural inclusivity, though time constraints limited deeper comparative discussion. Third, while microteaching and reflective journals encouraged experiential learning, the absence of quantitative assessment or longitudinal tracking limited the measurement of pedagogical growth. These findings collectively reveal both the potential and the constraints of literature pedagogy within Indonesian higher education, suggesting the need for broader curriculum innovation and research collaboration.

The significance of this research lies in its dual contribution to theory and practice. Theoretically, it enriches the emerging discourse on literature pedagogy in non-native English contexts by offering empirical evidence from Indonesia a region underrepresented in global EFL literature studies. Practically, the study provides a descriptive model that can inform teacher educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers seeking to integrate literature more effectively into language education. By mapping the existing practices, this research opens a pathway for future innovations that harmonize linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical goals.

Ultimately, the study advocates for a more holistic integration of literature in EFL teacher education one that transcends the traditional dichotomy between language learning and literary appreciation. Literature, when taught through informed and reflective pedagogy, can become a transformative medium that connects language with imagination, empathy, and intercultural understanding.

In light of these considerations, the following section reviews relevant theoretical and empirical works on literature pedagogy, focusing on its definitions, principles, and dominant approaches in EFL education, as well as identifying existing research gaps in the Indonesian context.

2 Method

The study aimed to document and interpret the approaches, teaching methods, instructional focuses, materials, and assessment practices used within the literature-based EFL course. The intention was not to test a hypothesis but to generate an empirically grounded map of literature pedagogy as implemented in a specific institutional context.

2.1 Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to map the pedagogical practices employed in the Teaching English through Literature course offered in an English Education Department at a state university in Indonesia. The research was conducted over one academic semester (approximately four months) during the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The qualitative descriptive approach was chosen because it allows for a detailed portrayal of naturally occurring classroom phenomena without manipulating variables. As

Sandelowski (2000) notes, descriptive qualitative research is suitable for obtaining straight descriptions of experiences and practices, focusing on “what” and “how” rather than “why.”

2.2 Participant/ Population and Sample

The research was conducted in the English Education Department of a public university in South Sumatra, Indonesia, which offers a four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme. Within the department’s curriculum, the Teaching English through Literature course is offered in the seventh semester as a compulsory subject. The course carries two credit hours (2 SKS) and functions as a bridge between linguistic knowledge and pedagogical practice, focusing on how literature can be used to teach English in secondary schools.

The population of this study comprised all students enrolled in the Teaching English through Literature course in the 2024/2025 academic year. The total number of students was 38, consisting of 8 male and 30 female students aged between 20 and 22 years. All participants were pre-service teachers majoring in English Education. The class was facilitated by one lecturer, Dr Hj. Irmayani, S.S., M.Pd., who has more than fifteen years of experience teaching English and literature.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the research participants, as the goal was to obtain rich, relevant information rather than statistical generalisation. The selected sample included the entire class of 38 students and their lecturer, ensuring a complete view of the course’s teaching–learning process.

2.3 Instrument/ Data collection

Data were collected through three primary sources: (1) document analysis, (2) classroom observation, and (3) assessment artefacts (including lesson plans, reflective journals, and microteaching reports). This triangulated method ensured that data reflected multiple dimensions of the pedagogical process design, implementation, and evaluation.

Document analysis focused on the course syllabus, weekly lesson plans, and teaching materials used throughout the semester. These documents were examined to identify the pedagogical frameworks, learning objectives, and selected literary texts. The texts included poetry (e.g., Robert Frost’s *The Road Not Taken*, Maya Angelou’s *Still I Rise*, and W.S. Rendra’s *Sajak Anak Muda*), short stories (O. Henry’s *The Gift of the Magi*, Roald Dahl’s *Lamb to the Slaughter*, Siti Nurbaya’s *Cultural Conflict and Duty*), and drama (Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest*, D.M. Larson’s *Flowers in the Desert*, Putu Wijaya’s *Aduh*).

Classroom observations were conducted throughout 14 weekly sessions (two hours per meeting). A total of 38 participants took part in the study. Throughout the data collection period, the researcher attended all classroom meetings as a non-participant observer to minimise disruption to classroom dynamics. Observation focused on teaching approaches, student engagement, interactional patterns, and classroom discourse. Field notes were systematically recorded in each session, capturing the flow of instruction, pedagogical techniques, and instances of student participation.

Assessment artefacts were collected to analyse how learning outcomes were evaluated. These included individual text analyses, group projects, lesson plans, and microteaching recordings. The reflective journals written by students at the end of the semester were collected from all participants and served as a key source of data on their perceptions of literature-based teaching and their self-assessed learning progress. The journals were selected because they provided firsthand accounts of students’ learning experiences throughout the course. They were analyzed using thematic analysis, with entries coded and categorized to

identify recurring themes, patterns, and perspectives related to the implementation and perceived impact of literature-based instruction.

The data collection process followed a clearly defined timeline:

1. Weeks 1–2: Preliminary review of the course syllabus and planning of observation schedule.
2. Weeks 3–14: Continuous classroom observations, concurrent with the collection of instructional materials and assignments.
3. Week 15: Compilation of student artefacts, reflective journals, and evaluation rubrics.
4. Weeks 16–18: Data organisation and coding for analysis.

2.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006). This method was chosen because it allows researchers to identify, analyse, and interpret recurring patterns within qualitative data. The analysis involved six iterative stages:

1. Familiarisation with data – all field notes, documents, and student artefacts were read repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dataset.
2. Initial coding – descriptive codes were assigned to segments of data related to teaching approaches, learning activities, and assessment forms.
3. Theme development – codes were grouped into broader categories, such as “approach integration,” “student engagement,” and “assessment for reflection.”
4. Theme review – the consistency and representativeness of each theme were evaluated.
5. Theme definition – themes were named and clearly defined to capture their essence.
6. Interpretation – final themes were synthesised into an integrated narrative describing how literature pedagogy operated within the course.

Data from different sources (documents, observations, and artefacts) were cross-checked for consistency. This process not only enhanced analytical rigour but also provided a triangulated view of the pedagogical phenomena under investigation.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

This section presents the results obtained from the mapping of the Teaching English through Literature course in an English Education Department in Indonesia. The findings are organised around the main components of the study: (1) teaching approaches and their frequency of use, (2) course focus and text utilisation, (3) teaching methods and classroom activities, (4) assessment structure and outcomes, and (5) observed challenges and learning responses. Data were derived from classroom observations, document analysis, and the review of students’ artefacts including lesson plans, microteaching performance, and reflective journals.

3.1.1 *Teaching Approaches Implemented*

Throughout the 14-week semester, three primary approaches were applied in a structured and alternating pattern: the Language-Based Approach (LBA), the Reader-Response Approach (RRA), and the Task-Based or Communicative Approach (TBA).

The Language-Based Approach was used predominantly in the early phase of the semester to strengthen students’ understanding of linguistic features in literary texts. The

Reader-Response Approach was emphasized in the middle phase to encourage interpretation and personal engagement. Finally, the Task-Based Approach dominated the later phase, focusing on the practical application of literature in teaching.

Table 1 below presents the schedule and proportion of these approaches across the semester.

Table 1. Distribution of Teaching Approaches Across 14 Weeks

Approach Type	Weeks Applied	Core Focus	Estimated Frequency (%)
Language-Based Approach (LBA)	2, 4, 7, 9	Linguistic and stylistic analysis	29
Reader-Response Approach (RRA)	3, 5, 8, 10, 14	Interpretation, engagement, reflection	36
Task-Based/Communicative Approach (TBA)	6, 11, 12, 13, 15	Practical teaching, creativity, teamwork	35
Total	14 weeks	—	100

Classroom observations confirmed that the three approaches were consistently integrated. The lecturer’s instructional pattern followed a spiral model, where linguistic exploration was gradually transformed into interpretive discussion and finally into applied teaching design. For example, in Week 5, after students analyzed Maya Angelou’s *Still I Rise* through word repetition and figurative meaning (LBA), they were invited in Week 8 to discuss the emotional and social implications of empowerment expressed in the poem (RRA). By Week 12, they developed a mini lesson plan using the same poem for secondary-level teaching (TBA).

3.1.2 Course Focus and Literary Texts Used

The course addressed three main foci: linguistic development, interpretive understanding, and pedagogical application. Each literary genre poetry, short story, and drama served a specific function in achieving these foci.

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of literary texts used, their associated skills, and frequency of classroom use.

Table 2. Literary Genres, Texts, and Pedagogical Functions

Genre	Text Examples	Focus Skills	Frequency of Use (Sessions)
Poetry	The Road Not Taken (Robert Frost); Still I Rise (Maya Angelou); Sajak Anak Muda (W.S. Rendra)	Pronunciation, stress, vocabulary, figurative language, cultural imagery	5
Short Stories	The Gift of the Magi (O. Henry); Lamb to the Slaughter (Roald Dahl); Siti Nurbaya (Cultural Conflict and Duty)	Reading comprehension, narrative structure, moral reflection	5
Drama	The Importance of Being Earnest (Oscar Wilde); Flowers in the Desert (D.M. Larson); Aduh (Putu Wijaya)	Speaking, listening, teamwork, cultural understanding	4

Poetry lessons were often shorter but linguistically intensive. Students were observed repeating lines to practise rhythm and intonation, highlighting the sound–meaning relationship in English poetry. Short stories were used to explore narrative structure and cultural themes. Students demonstrated comprehension through summarising plots and analysing character motivation. Drama was reserved for the final part of the semester; it

required collaborative performance and embodied language use. Students acted out selected scenes in groups of five or six, enabling them to integrate pronunciation, expression, and cultural interpretation simultaneously.

A visual representation of the proportional emphasis among these three genres is shown in Fig 1.

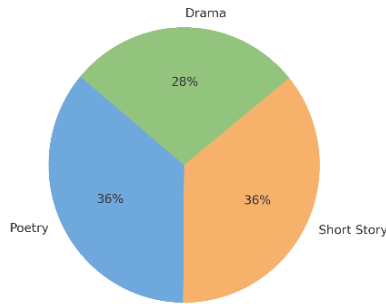


Fig 1. Proportion of Literary Genres Used in Teaching

Figure legend: The figure demonstrates that poetry and short stories received equal emphasis, while drama accounted for approximately one quarter of total instructional time.

3.1.3 Teaching Methods and Classroom Activities

The lecturer employed four primary instructional methods: lecture and guided discussion, group work/text analysis, task-based learning, and microteaching practice.

- Lecture and Guided Discussion were employed in the opening sessions of each literary unit to introduce theoretical concepts, stylistic features, and cultural background. The lectures were short (approximately 30 minutes), followed by student-led discussions on the assigned text.
- Group Work and Text Analysis occurred weekly. Students collaborated in small groups (4–5 members) to analyze literary elements such as tone, theme, and symbolism. During these sessions, the lecturer circulated among groups to offer linguistic clarification and interpretive prompts.
- Task-Based Learning was implemented primarily during the middle and late weeks. Students designed classroom activities inspired by the literary texts, for example, creating vocabulary games or role-play scripts based on *Lamb to the Slaughter*.
- Microteaching Practice took place in the final three meetings. Each student presented a 10–15-minute mini-lesson using a selected literary text. Lessons were video-recorded for evaluation.

Observation notes indicated active student participation in 85% of the sessions. Group discussions generated spontaneous interaction in English, though some code-switching to Bahasa Indonesia occurred during complex interpretive debates. The lecturer frequently acted as facilitator rather than lecturer, guiding students to connect literary meaning with pedagogical design.

3.1.4 Assessment Components and Student Performance

Five types of assessment were employed in the course: class participation, text analysis tasks, lesson plan projects, microteaching performance, and reflective journals.

Table 3 summarizes the weight of each assessment component and the mean performance

scores of students (n = 38).

Table 3. Assessment Components and Average Scores

Assessment Type	Description	Weight (%)	Mean Score (out of 100)
Class Participation	Engagement in discussions and attendance	10	88
Text Analysis Tasks	Individual/group literary analysis	20	85
Lesson Plan Design	Literature-based lesson planning	25	82
Microteaching	Performance in simulated teaching	30	79
Reflective Journal	Critical self-reflection on learning	15	87
Overall Mean	—	100	84.2

The results indicated strong engagement and satisfactory performance across all components. The highest mean scores were recorded for participation and reflective journals, showing active involvement and self-awareness among students. The lowest average was recorded in microteaching, primarily due to time management issues and limited experience integrating literary texts into classroom practice. Nevertheless, the overall mean of 84.2 indicated successful attainment of course objectives.

Analysis of lesson plans revealed that 90% of students were able to design literature-based lessons integrating linguistic and communicative objectives. However, only 65% effectively connected literary analysis to student-centered activities, such as role-play or creative rewriting.

Reflective journal data revealed that most students expressed appreciation for the integration of literature in language teaching. Several students mentioned gaining deeper cultural insights and enhanced vocabulary through literary exposure. A sample of coded journal excerpts is shown below.

“Before this course, I thought poetry was only for reading, not for teaching. Now I realize it can be used to practice pronunciation and emotion in English.”

— S12/JR/Week14

“Designing a lesson from a short story was challenging but enjoyable. It made me think how to teach moral values through English activities.”

— S25/JR/Week15

“Microteaching helped me to be confident. I felt nervous, but the performance showed how literature makes students think and speak differently.”

— S33/JR/Week15

3.1.5 Classroom Engagement and Observed Learning Behaviors

Classroom observations documented varying levels of student engagement corresponding to the teaching approach employed. During Language-Based sessions, engagement was moderate, with students focusing primarily on linguistic accuracy. During Reader-Response sessions, engagement increased markedly, with frequent laughter, debate, and personal sharing. Task-Based sessions generated the highest participation levels, as students actively designed creative teaching tasks and performed them before peers.

The lecturer’s facilitation style was found to be a key determinant of engagement. When clear modelling was provided, students demonstrated higher interpretive confidence and produced richer analytical comments. In sessions where modelling was minimal, participation occasionally declined, and students tended to revert to literal comprehension rather than analytical reflection.

Table 4 summarizes the observed engagement trends across approach types.

Table 4. Levels of Student Engagement by Teaching Approach

Approach Type	Typical Student Behaviour	Engagement Level (Average, %)
Language-Based Approach	Analytical focus; limited spontaneous talk	72
Reader-Response Approach	Active interpretation, emotional sharing	88
Task-Based Approach	High creativity, teamwork, performance enthusiasm	91
Average Engagement Rate	—	83.6

The data indicated that activities emphasizing interaction and creativity produced the most active participation. Engagement was highest during collaborative or performance-based tasks and lowest during analytical linguistic activities.

3.1.6 Observed Challenges

Although the course achieved its objectives, several challenges emerged during implementation. These challenges were documented both through observation and reflective journals.

1. Time Constraints – The 2-credit structure limited the amount of time available for in-depth literary exploration. Complex texts such as *The Importance of Being Earnest* could not be fully analysed within a single session.
2. Unequal Literary Backgrounds – Some students had limited prior exposure to English literary works, resulting in slower comprehension of figurative language and cultural context.
3. Difficulty Linking Analysis to Pedagogy – Several students initially struggled to transform literary interpretation into teachable activities. Without sufficient modelling, they tended to reproduce standard reading comprehension tasks instead of creative communicative lessons.
4. Dependence on Lecturer Facilitation – The effectiveness of RRA and TBA sessions depended heavily on how the lecturer scaffolded interpretation and task design. When guidance was reduced, uncertainty among students increased.

Despite these challenges, classroom dynamics remained positive, and student motivation remained consistently high throughout the semester.

3.1.7 Summary of Key Findings

The results of this study can be summarized as follows:

1. The Teaching English through Literature course implemented three complementary pedagogical approaches Language-Based, Reader-Response, and Task-Based in nearly equal proportions.
2. The course effectively integrated three literary genres (poetry, short story, drama), each contributing to different language and pedagogical skills.
3. Student engagement was highest in task-based and reader-response activities, where creativity and interpretation were encouraged.
4. The overall performance average (84.2%) indicated successful attainment of learning objectives, with microteaching identified as the most challenging component.
5. Time limitations, uneven literary background, and dependence on lecturer modelling were the principal challenges observed.

These findings provide an empirical overview of how literature pedagogy was enacted within an Indonesian EFL context, highlighting patterns of practice and the alignment

between pedagogical intention and classroom reality.

3.2 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to map the pedagogical approaches employed in the Teaching English through Literature course at an Indonesian higher education institution and to interpret their implications for literature pedagogy within the broader EFL context. The findings corroborate previous studies that highlight the value of literature-based instruction in promoting language development, critical thinking, and learner engagement in EFL settings. At the same time, this study extends existing research by demonstrating how these pedagogical approaches are implemented within an Indonesian teacher education context, providing context-specific insights into the challenges and opportunities of integrating literature into EFL instruction. The course adopted an integrated framework combining the Language-Based Approach (LBA), Reader-Response Approach (RRA), and Task-Based/Communicative Approach (TBA), aligning literary engagement with linguistic, interpretive, and pedagogical competencies. The findings reveal not only the pedagogical affordances of these approaches but also contextual challenges that continue to shape the practice of literature teaching in Indonesian higher education. This discussion critically interprets these findings in relation to existing theories and empirical studies, highlighting how they advance the understanding of literature pedagogy in EFL contexts and indicating pathways for future pedagogical innovation.

3.2.1 *Integrating Language and Literature: Reaffirming the Language-Based Approach*

The prominent use of the Language-Based Approach (LBA) in the course, particularly during the early and middle weeks, demonstrates the ongoing relevance of linguistic awareness in literature pedagogy for EFL learners. As Carter & Long (1991) and Lazar (2008) have long argued, literary texts can serve as rich linguistic input, providing authentic exposure to lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic features that rarely appear in contrived textbook dialogues. The present study reaffirmed this by showing that activities such as analysing rhythm, figurative language, and stylistic devices in poems helped students connect literary aesthetics with language function.

This finding resonates with Paran (2008) argument that literature serves as a powerful context for language development when pedagogically mediated through explicit attention to form and meaning. Moreover, Babae & Yahya (2014) observe that the LBA fosters both linguistic competence and interpretive skills by encouraging close reading and textual analysis. In the Indonesian context, similar outcomes were reported by Fitriani & Mukhaiyar (2020), who found that students in literature-integrated EFL courses improved in vocabulary retention and grammatical awareness when guided to notice patterns in literary language. Thus, the consistent application of LBA principles in this study contributed to learners' linguistic confidence while maintaining an aesthetic dimension of engagement.

However, the reliance on LBA alone risks reducing literary experience to linguistic decoding, as cautioned by Maley (2020). The balance achieved in this course where LBA was complemented by RRA and TBA mitigated such risks by extending analysis into interpretation and creative expression. The integration reflects what Ghosn (2021) terms a "literary-linguistic synergy," wherein language instruction and literary appreciation reinforce one another. Therefore, this study affirms the necessity of combining linguistic focus with interpretive and communicative outcomes to realise the full pedagogical potential of literature in the EFL classroom.

3.2.2 Reader Response and Personal Engagement: Deepening Interpretation

The Reader-Response Approach (RRA) emerged as a vital component in fostering students' interpretive depth and personal engagement. By encouraging learners to express their feelings, reflections, and perspectives on literary texts, RRA created a dialogic space where meaning was co-constructed rather than transmitted. The classroom observations revealed that when students engaged with poems like Maya Angelou's "Still I Rise" or short stories such as O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi", they drew parallels between the characters' struggles and their own cultural or emotional experiences. This confirms Rosenblatt (1995) transactional theory, where literary meaning arises from the dynamic interaction between reader and text.

Internationally, Benton & Fox (2017) and Kramsch (2018) highlight that such reader-centred approaches enhance critical literacy and intercultural empathy, especially when learners bring local cultural lenses into dialogue with global narratives. In Indonesian settings, reported similar effects, noting that reader-response tasks encouraged students to articulate their own voices and negotiate identity in English. The current study strengthens these findings by demonstrating that personal engagement not only heightened interpretive insight but also built students' confidence in articulating opinions in English—an outcome consistent with Hanauer (2020) emphasis on literature as a space for emotional and linguistic investment.

Nonetheless, some students initially struggled with RRA tasks due to limited prior exposure to literary interpretation or uncertainty about expressing subjective viewpoints. This aligns with Faisal & Rahman (2019) observation that EFL learners often perceive literature as having fixed meanings endorsed by the teacher. The course's success, therefore, depended on the lecturer's scaffolding modelling interpretive strategies and validating multiple readings. Such facilitation is essential in shifting learners from product-oriented to process-oriented understandings of literature. As Widdowson (2019) suggests, literature pedagogy in EFL contexts must empower students to "own" the text linguistically and imaginatively. Hence, the RRA component in this study provided an indispensable bridge between linguistic analysis and personal growth.

3.2.3 Communicative and Task-Based Practices: Bridging Analysis and Performance

The Task-Based/Communicative Approach (TBA), implemented during the later weeks of the semester, transformed literary engagement into performative and collaborative learning experiences. Students designed lesson plans, participated in microteaching, and enacted scenes from plays such as Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" and Putu Wijaya's "Aduh". These tasks situated literature within practical language use and pedagogical creativity, bridging the gap between theoretical analysis and teaching performance.

The significance of TBA in literature pedagogy has been widely documented. Ellis (2018) and Willis & Lockyer Willis (2020) argue that task-based learning promotes meaningful language use and learner autonomy, while Tomlinson and Masuhara (2018) suggest that tasks built around literary texts encourage deep processing and retention. The findings from this study corroborate these views: students reported that microteaching with literary materials enhanced their communicative fluency, confidence, and teamwork skills. Moreover, designing lesson plans based on poems or short stories encouraged them to recontextualise literary meaning for pedagogical purposes, a process that mirrors authentic teaching preparation.

In the Indonesian EFL context, Kurniawan & Wulandari (2021) and Rahman (2023) have

shown that task-based literature activities foster critical thinking and collaborative learning, but also depend heavily on teacher guidance. The present study confirmed this dependency: without clear modelling, some students struggled to connect literary interpretation to classroom application. This reinforces Nation and Macalister's (2021) claim that successful task-based instruction requires explicit procedural frameworks and feedback loops. The lecturer's role in facilitating reflective debriefings and providing formative feedback was thus pivotal in consolidating learning outcomes.

Overall, the use of TBA expanded the scope of literature pedagogy from comprehension to production, from solitary interpretation to collective performance. It operationalised the view that literature teaching is not merely about "reading texts" but about "doing things with texts" (Duff and Maley, 2019). By embedding literary tasks within communicative and pedagogical goals, the course positioned literature as a living, performative medium for language learning.

3.2.4 Pedagogical Challenges and Contextual Constraints

Despite its achievements, the course also revealed several challenges inherent in implementing literature pedagogy in Indonesian higher education. The first major constraint was temporal: as a two-credit course, it offered limited time for deep literary exploration or extended teaching practice. This limitation echoes Sari and Suwandi's (2020) observation that literature courses in Indonesian EFL programmes are often marginalised within the curriculum, treated as supplementary rather than core components. The short duration restricted students' opportunities to internalise complex literary concepts and refine their pedagogical materials, suggesting a structural issue in curriculum design.

A second challenge lay in students' varied linguistic and literary backgrounds. Some had minimal prior exposure to canonical English texts or struggled with figurative language, particularly in poetry. Such difficulties align with Nasrullah & Weda (2021), who found that EFL learners in Indonesia often experience "linguistic anxiety" when confronting unfamiliar cultural references in literature. The lecturer's mediation was therefore crucial in scaffolding comprehension through pre-reading discussions and guided interpretation. The course's inclusion of local texts (e.g., W.S. Rendra and Putu Wijaya) mitigated cultural distance, supporting Kramsch's (2018) call for "transcultural literary pedagogy" that blends global and local voices.

A third issue involved the need for sustained teacher facilitation. As noted in the results, the effectiveness of reader-response and task-based phases depended heavily on the lecturer's expertise in modelling, guiding, and providing feedback. This finding corresponds to Richards and Farrell (2022), who emphasise the teacher's role as facilitator, mediator, and co-learner in reflective pedagogical design. When facilitation was less explicit, students tended to revert to superficial analysis or formulaic interpretations. This underscores the importance of professional development for literature instructors, an area still underexplored in Indonesian EFL research (Muttaqin & Pratiwi, 2022).

Lastly, the descriptive qualitative design limited the capacity to measure quantitative learning gains, such as improvements in linguistic proficiency or pedagogical competence. While this study provided rich descriptive insights, future research should incorporate mixed-methods designs to triangulate qualitative observations with quantitative data. Creswell & Guetterman (2020) note that such methodological integration enhances both validity and explanatory power, particularly in educational research contexts.

3.2.5 Implications for Curriculum Design and Teacher Education

The findings of this study hold several implications for literature pedagogy in EFL teacher education. Firstly, the integration of LBA, RRA, and TBA provides a viable model for balancing linguistic, interpretive, and practical dimensions of learning. This triadic model could serve as a framework for designing comprehensive literature courses that address multiple learning domains simultaneously. It aligns with Hall (2018) argument that effective literature pedagogy should engage students as “linguistic analysts, cultural interpreters, and creative practitioners.” The present study demonstrated that when these roles are harmonised, literature becomes both a means and an end of language education.

Secondly, incorporating local literary texts alongside global works enhances cultural relevance and intercultural dialogue. This practice contributes to decolonising EFL curricula, as advocated by Canagarajah (2020) and Kachru (2021), by recognising the legitimacy of local voices in English literary discourse. The inclusion of Indonesian writers such as W.S. Rendra and Putu Wijaya exemplifies how literature pedagogy can celebrate linguistic diversity while fostering global competence.

Thirdly, teacher training programmes should emphasise the pedagogical potential of literature. As Lazar (2008) and Collie and Slater (2019) argue, many EFL teachers lack confidence in teaching literature due to limited methodological preparation. Embedding microteaching and reflective components, as in this course, can bridge the gap between literary study and classroom practice. Furthermore, ongoing professional development through workshops, collaborative research, and reflective teaching communities can sustain teachers’ innovation in literature-based instruction.

3.2.6 Research Limitations and Directions for Future Study

While the present study provides valuable insights, several limitations warrant acknowledgment. The research was limited to a single course with one lecturer and a relatively small cohort of students. As such, its findings cannot be generalised across all Indonesian higher education contexts. Future studies could expand the scope by including multiple institutions or conducting longitudinal tracking to examine sustained impacts on teaching competence.

Additionally, the reliance on qualitative observation and document analysis limited the ability to quantify learning outcomes. Subsequent research could incorporate mixed-methods approaches, employing tools such as pre- and post-tests or linguistic performance rubrics to provide empirical evidence of proficiency gains. Moreover, classroom discourse analysis could further illuminate how interactional dynamics shape interpretive learning in literature-based lessons.

Future studies might also explore digital or multimodal adaptations of literature pedagogy. With the increasing use of online platforms and digital texts, Munday (2023) suggests that virtual literary discussions and multimedia storytelling offer new possibilities for engagement. Investigating how technology-mediated approaches interact with reader-response and task-based principles could open new frontiers in EFL literature teaching.

Finally, comparative studies between Indonesian and other Southeast Asian contexts could reveal regional patterns and divergences in literature pedagogy, contributing to a broader understanding of postcolonial EFL education. As Nayar (2021) notes, mapping pedagogical practices across the Global South helps decentre dominant Western paradigms and foreground local epistemologies.

4 Conclusion

The present study set out to map the pedagogical landscape of literature teaching in an Indonesian EFL higher education context, focusing on the Teaching English through Literature course. The mapping revealed how three major pedagogical orientations the Language-Based Approach (LBA), Reader-Response Approach (RRA), and Task-Based/Communicative Approach (TBA) were operationalised within a single course to foster students' linguistic, interpretive, and pedagogical competencies. The analysis of instructional practices, learning materials, and assessment methods provided a comprehensive portrait of how literature can serve as both medium and method in language education.

Through this exploration, the study addressed a significant gap in the existing body of literature: the paucity of systematic, empirical research that documents how literature pedagogy is practically enacted in Indonesian higher education. While numerous studies have discussed theoretical justifications for teaching literature in EFL settings, few have mapped its pedagogical design, classroom implementation, and assessment mechanisms in a context-specific manner. By providing such empirical grounding, this study contributes a nuanced understanding of how literature pedagogy is being shaped by institutional, cultural, and pedagogical realities in Indonesia.

4.1.1 Summary of Key Findings and Research Contributions

The study's findings confirm that integrating multiple pedagogical approaches allows for a more holistic development of learners. The Language-Based Approach facilitated linguistic sensitivity through close reading and stylistic analysis, reinforcing vocabulary acquisition and grammar awareness. The Reader-Response Approach deepened interpretive understanding and personal engagement, empowering students to construct meaning through affective and cultural connections. Meanwhile, the Task-Based/Communicative Approach transformed literature from a passive object of study into an active, performative experience through lesson planning, microteaching, and collaborative enactment. Together, these approaches cultivated a multidimensional form of literacy one that encompasses language competence, literary appreciation, and pedagogical creativity.

This synthesis of methods reflects the contemporary trend in EFL pedagogy toward integration rather than separation of language and literature. By mapping how these approaches interacted dynamically within an Indonesian university course, the research extends international scholarship (e.g., *Paran, 2016; Maley, 2020; Hanauer, 2020*) into a Southeast Asian context, thereby contributing to the localisation of global pedagogical theory. The findings also corroborate and expand upon previous Indonesian research (e.g., *Yuliani & Mukminin, 2022; Fitriani & Mukhaiyar, 2020*), which has emphasised the potential of literature to enhance language learning but has not systematically documented its classroom implementation.

Beyond mapping approaches, this study also illuminated the structural and affective challenges of teaching literature in EFL contexts. The limited time allocation (two credits), uneven linguistic proficiency among students, and dependence on teacher facilitation emerged as critical constraints. These challenges underscore the importance of rethinking curricular design and teacher preparation, as the effectiveness of literature pedagogy depends as much on contextual support as on methodological soundness. Nevertheless, the course demonstrated that even within such constraints, meaningful engagement with literature is possible when instruction is scaffolded and inclusive of both local and global texts.

4.1.2 Research Novelty and Theoretical Advancement

The novelty of this research lies in its systematic mapping of literature pedagogy within a real institutional setting, offering an empirical model that bridges theoretical discourse and pedagogical practice. Rather than prescribing an ideal method, the study documents how teachers and students negotiate between linguistic, interpretive, and performative aims in a resource-limited but intellectually rich context. This pragmatic, context-sensitive approach marks a departure from prescriptive models often derived from Western academic traditions and situates the study within an Indonesian epistemological framework of adaptation, negotiation, and cultural hybridity.

Theoretically, the study advances the notion of literature pedagogy as an integrated semiotic practice a site where language learning, cultural interpretation, and pedagogical creativity intersect. This conceptualisation aligns with Kramsch's (2018) theory of symbolic competence and Hall (2018) model of multimodal literacy, suggesting that literature can cultivate not only linguistic skills but also deeper semiotic awareness. In the context of Indonesian higher education, this perspective encourages teachers to move beyond literature as content knowledge toward literature as an epistemic and communicative practice a means of making meaning across languages and cultures.

4.1.3 Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for curriculum design, teacher education, and classroom practice in EFL settings.

First, curriculum developers should consider integrating the three approaches (LBA, RRA, TBA) as complementary rather than sequential stages. This triadic model ensures a balanced emphasis on linguistic form, interpretive depth, and communicative application. Course syllabi should be designed to allow iterative movement between analysis, reflection, and production, rather than compartmentalising these domains.

Second, teacher education programmes need to place greater emphasis on methodological training for literature instruction. Many EFL instructors feel underprepared to teach literature due to limited exposure to pedagogical frameworks. Embedding literature pedagogy modules in pre-service and in-service teacher training especially those that incorporate microteaching, reflective journals, and collaborative lesson planning could enhance teachers' confidence and competence.

Third, the integration of local literary works alongside canonical global texts should be maintained and expanded. As this study demonstrated, texts by Indonesian authors such as W.S. Rendra and Putu Wijaya provided accessible cultural entry points for students and reinforced national identity within the global English curriculum. Such inclusion contributes to the decolonisation of EFL pedagogy, fostering intercultural understanding grounded in local epistemologies.

Fourth, institutional support is essential. Allocating more credits or instructional hours for literature-based courses would enable deeper engagement with texts and more extensive pedagogical practice. Additionally, fostering cross-departmental collaboration between literature and language education units can promote a more unified vision of English studies in higher education.

4.1.4 Broader Implications for the Field of EFL Education

At a broader level, this study contributes to the ongoing redefinition of literature's role in EFL education. It challenges the residual dichotomy between language and literature,

proposing instead a *pedagogical ecology* where both coexist symbiotically. This reconceptualisation aligns with global shifts in applied linguistics that view language learning as a cultural and interpretive process rather than a purely structural one. In this framework, literature becomes a site for developing linguistic accuracy, cultural empathy, and imaginative engagement all essential competencies for 21st-century communication.

Moreover, by situating its analysis in the Indonesian context, the study foregrounds contextual pluralism in EFL pedagogy. It demonstrates that effective literature teaching cannot be universally prescribed but must be locally interpreted, adapted, and enacted. This contribution is particularly relevant for scholars seeking to build non-Western models of language education that respect local linguistic realities and pedagogical traditions. The mapping approach used in this study may therefore serve as a methodological template for similar investigations across other regions of the Global South.

4.1.5 Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study provides substantial insights, it also recognises certain limitations that open avenues for further research. The scope was confined to one institution and one lecturer, which may limit transferability to other educational settings. Future studies should adopt multi-site or longitudinal designs to examine how literature pedagogy evolves across different institutional contexts or over longer periods.

Additionally, this study relied primarily on qualitative data. Future research could integrate quantitative or mixed-methods approaches to measure outcomes such as linguistic proficiency, critical thinking development, or pedagogical skill acquisition. Combining classroom observation with pre- and post-tests or student surveys would yield richer, triangulated insights.

Emerging technologies also offer exciting prospects for literature pedagogy. The increasing accessibility of digital texts, online literary platforms, and virtual collaboration tools can redefine how students engage with literature. Studies such as *Munday (2023)* suggest that digital storytelling, podcasts, and online reading circles can extend the reach and relevance of literary engagement. Investigating how these digital modalities interact with traditional approaches could further modernise literature teaching in EFL contexts.

Finally, collaborative research between Indonesian and international scholars could generate comparative insights that contribute to transnational dialogue in literature pedagogy. Such collaboration could highlight both universal pedagogical principles and locally grounded innovations.

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