

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

Indeed, literature plays a crucial role in the teaching and learning of the English language, especially among non-native English speakers enrolled in ESL (English as a Second Language) or EFL (English as a Foreign Language) programs. Literature is also recognized for its potential to enhance students' cultural awareness, a crucial component of language learning (Carter & Long, 1991). Consequently, a substantial body of research has been dedicated to employing literature as a teaching tool for ESL and EFL students. Generally, research has indicated that literature significantly facilitates the development of the four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), along with vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Elklic, ErGgen, Kayintu, & Karaca, 2011; Floris, 2004; Khatib, Rezaei, & Derakhshan, 2011; Maley, 1989; McKay, 1982; Riverol, 1991; Turker, 1991; Yeasmin & Azad, 2010). Furthermore, multiple studies have focused on distinct methodologies for teaching English through literature, such as literary analysis (Van, 2009), task-based learning (Khatib et al., 2011), and integrated learning (Healy, 2010; Zyngier, 1994), among others.

Language serves as a vital instrument for interpersonal communication, enabling individuals to convey thoughts, emotions, and information to others. Among the languages spoken worldwide, English holds a prominent position due to its status as an international language. This leads to many individuals choosing to learn English. The utilization of literary texts within foreign language classrooms is underlined, along with the primary criteria for selecting appropriate literary materials, with the aim of acquainting readers with the motivations and guidelines guiding language educators in their use and choice of literary content. Moreover, English literature serves as a means to acquaint students with various

dimensions, not solely confined to the language itself but also encompassing aspects of English culture. Instances of English culture find their embodiment in English literary works. While this connection is readily apparent in the study of Shakespeare and writers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it holds true for other periods of English literature as well. Through the study of literature, students can explore allusions and references to diverse facets of English culture, gaining insight into the context and meanings behind renowned quotations and phrases. Engaging with literature extends beyond the confines of English traditions, encompassing a broader spectrum, including the study of ancient Greek drama and literature from other contexts, like American literature. Additionally, literature provides an alternative to the pervasive influence of "television culture," offering a counterbalance to its immediacy and often superficial nature.

Regarding the realm of language education, the incorporation of literary study into the curriculum is not frequently approached as a unified component. Contrarily, educators and scholars perceive language and literature as intimately interconnected and amenable to integration. This blended approach affords students the opportunity to enhance their language and communication skills (Choudhary, 2016). Nevertheless, the instruction of English literature to non-native English speakers (ESL/EFL) within the context of language acquisition has garnered limited attention. In essence, English literature isn't merely treated as a tool, technique, or method for honing English language skills. Research into methodologies for teaching literature at the high school level has gained considerable traction. Examples include comparative analyses of language-focused and integrated approaches (Aziz & Nasharudin, 2008), explorations of information-driven and moral-philosophical techniques (Rashid, Vethamani, and Rahman, 2010), as well as investigations into paraphrastic, information-based, and moral-philosophical methods (Hwang

& Embi, 2007). Literature encompasses various genres, such as poetry, short fiction, drama, and novels.

According to Noddings (1995), learning involves acquiring knowledge within a specific subject or skill domain through processes like studying, firsthand experience, or teaching. Conversely, the Indonesian high school curriculum emphasizes a combination of language and literature activities for language acquisition (Depdiknas, 2008). Notably, the study of literature in English is a recent addition to the Indonesian curriculum, making this investigation crucial. In the context of Indonesia, implementing the curriculum's 2013 mandate for teaching and learning literature represents a new development. Consequently, educators responsible for instructing literature texts to senior high school students are driven to enhance their teaching skills, taking into account the students' perspectives. This approach ensures that the learning process is tailored to meet the students' needs and preferences within the classroom setting. Ultimately, this approach is anticipated to not only enhance students' comprehension of literary texts but also positively impact their examination results.

Several noteworthy challenges associated with the instruction and acquisition of literature in Indonesian EFL senior high schools have been unveiled through classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students. These challenges can be categorized into three main areas: reading preferences, proficiency in the English language, and availability of resources. All educators unanimously agree that, initially, students lack a fervent appetite for reading and fail to cultivate a reading habit. Furthermore, a significant proportion of students have had limited exposure to Indonesian literature, indicating a general lack of enthusiasm for reading. Consequently, it is a common occurrence for certain students to attend classes unprepared, having not engaged with the prescribed material or chapter. Chesterman (1983) also identified a similar issue concerning reading habits during his tenure teaching English literature in

Indonesia. Similarly, Padurean (2015) observed that many teachers "perceive the language employed in literary works as excessively intricate and challenging, thereby not assisting students in acquiring grammatical and lexical structures applicable to their daily lives."

B. Scope and Limitation

This research focuses on the examination of the instruction of English literature to EFL students in Indonesia, with a specific focus on senior high school students in Cirebon. The scope of this study is confined to investigating how teachers manage literature within the classroom setting for optimal effectiveness.

C. Formulation of the Problem

In order to accomplish this objective effectively, two questions have been formulated:

1. What are the barriers faced by the English teacher in teaching literature to senior high school students?
2. What are the challenges faced by students in learning literature?

D. Object of the Study

The subject matter of the investigation can be articulated in the following manner:

1. To find out what are the barriers faced by the English teacher in teaching literature to senior high school students?
2. To know what are the challenges faced by students in learning literature?

E. Significance of the Study

This research highlights the significant role of literature as a primary instrument in English instruction.

The writer emphasizes the importance of using literature in EFL classes. Van (2009) believes that literature is helpful in EFL classes. He claims (*ibid.*) that literature in EFL classes provides background that is comparable to actual life events. By stimulating their imaginations and fostering their critical thinking, it engages students. In addition, through reading conversations and comprehending the text, students get the chance to expand their vocabulary. Healy (2010) asserts that reading literature helps learners become more creative and increases their awareness of the culture of the target language. Healy (2010) lists four good justifications for including literature in EFL lessons.

1. Students generally find the majority of EFL course texts to be uninteresting and un motivating. Students can read enjoyable stories and feel engaged by the use of literature.
2. Students are encouraged to participate in discussions when reading literature by sharing their views, ideas, and emotions with their peers through genuine interactions. When taking part in class activities, they might retell the story and discuss the characters.
3. By having students reflect on the concepts and ideas advanced in the literary works by the authors, teaching literature encourages students to adopt healthier attitudes.
4. Using literature in the EFL classroom encourages students to utilize the language more assertively. In conclusion, literature may prove to be an important component.