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## Lecturers' Perception on the Implementation of Approaches to Teaching Literature in EFL Classrooms

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### Abstract

*The selection of appropriate approach(es) to teaching literature in EFL classrooms becomes a necessity that they can result in good performance of the students, both in their critical thinking aspect and their language proficiency. The problem appears when the lecturer does not implement a suitable approach to literary analysis when teaching literature to the EFL students. These problems led to the student's inability to perform as expected. The present study examines how lecturers perceive the implementation of approaches to teaching literature in EFL classrooms and their relations to improving the students' reflective writing skills as the manifestation of the student's responses to the literary works. Among the approaches studied were the Language-based approach, the Reader-Response approach, and the Philosophical approach. The study was carried out on six lecturers teaching the Literary Criticism course in the EFL classrooms at the university level. A questionnaire was distributed to the lecturers teaching this course at a university in Semarang, Indonesia, containing eight-question items regarding how they perceive the literary approaches and how effective they used them in improving the students' reflective writing skills, in encouraging the students to think critically about the events in literary works and in relating the readings to some aspects of their own lives. The study revealed that each literary analysis approach in teaching literature has its benefits and characteristics. The*

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*study results also showed that each approach has its strengths and weaknesses that differ from one another.*

**Keywords:** Approaches to teaching literature, language-based approach, literary works, reader-response approach, philosophical approach.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Among the controversies concerning the importance of using literature in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms is that some experts believed literature in language classrooms plays an essential role in teaching and learning the English language to EFL students. [Aghagolzadeh and Tajabadi \(2012\)](#) synthesized some benefits of using literature in language classrooms. They summed up that literature could provide the medium for language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) to improve.

According to the authors, the importance of teaching literature in the language classrooms covered literature as language enrichment, literature as valuable, authentic materials, literature as personal involvement, and literature as cultural enrichment. Scholars under the same concern echoed these reasons. A previous study emphasized the authentic materials provided by literature as a valuable source for learning the language since they present the reality of language ([Daskalovska & Dimova, 2012](#)). As an authentic text, literature employed language activities that were important for advanced language learners to be exposed to a wide variety of literary texts, which eventually exposed them to cultural enrichment and personal involvement.

[Lazar \(1993\)](#) suggested other advantages of using literature in language classrooms by pointing out that literature is motivating, exposing students to complex themes and unexpected use of language. He also provided students access to other cultures by stimulating their language acquisition and language awareness, developing the students' interpretative abilities, and aiding them to stimulate their imagination. [Widyahening and Wardhani \(2016\)](#) believed that literary appreciation could grow the critical mind's understanding, appreciation, and sensitivity to the literary work.

Currently, teaching literature at the English Department in one private university in West Java has not been satisfying. The cause of this problem has been the poor performance of the students in understanding literary works and their inability to make benefits of it in terms of language skill proficiency. Literature provides many ways for language learners to enhance their critical thinking skills and linguistic proficiency. However, the student's poor performance may be triggered by the lecturers' inability to find the proper approach to literary analysis in teaching literature.

Lecturers of literary courses can implement certain approaches to literary analysis when teaching literature for EFL students. [Van \(2009\)](#) suggested six approaches to literary analysis that can be used with the EFL students. The approaches were New Criticism, Structuralism, Stylistic, Reader-Response, Language-based, and Critical Literacy approaches. Following Van's elaboration, [Fauziah \(2016\)](#) explained some approaches to teaching literature, such as the Language-based approach, Reader-Response approach, and Information-based approach. Other approaches were the Language model, the Language Growth, and the Personal Growth model developed by [Carter and Long \(1991, as cited in Mustakim et al., 2014\)](#).

Consequently, the present research dealt with how lecturers perceived the approaches to literary analysis in teaching literature. It also sought each approach's strengths and weaknesses according to the lecturers' experiences of teaching literature in the language classrooms. Previous research results showed that lecturers implemented different approaches when teaching literature to EFL students (Fauziah, 2016; Kinasih, 2020; Varita, 2017). Fauziah (2016) presented the implementation of integration of the models of literary approaches to teaching literature, namely the Language-based approach, the Reader-Response approach, and the Information-based Approach. Then, Kinasih (2020) explained the Reader-Response approach. Meanwhile, Varita (2017) researched the implementation of the Literature Circle approach to teaching literature. Therefore, the current study aimed to describe the lecturers' perception towards implementing the approaches to teaching literature in EFL classrooms and the strengths and weaknesses of each approach in teaching literature to EFL students. The approaches discussed in the present study focused on the Language-based approach, the Reader-Response approach, and the Philosophical approach to teaching literature. The former two approaches are based on the review that was carried out by Van (2009). Meanwhile, the latter is another approach to teaching literature used when teaching literature to EFL students (Fauziah, 2016). Previous related studies referred to in this article showed that most were concerned with only a single approach to teaching literature, meanwhile this study focused on more than one approach used by the lecturers who taught literature in the English language classrooms at the university level.

The present study was carried out to find answers to the following problems:

1. What are the lecturers' perceptions of implementing the literary approaches in teaching literature in the EFL classrooms?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to teaching literature in the EFL classrooms?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Approaches to Literary Analysis**

Many approaches can be used in analyzing literary works, depending on what one wants to emphasize his/her analysis on. Various approaches can be utilized to study a literary work. A specific approach is used to read, analyze, evaluate, interpret, and judge a certain literary work. Some of the approaches to literary analysis are Feminist criticism, Marxist Criticism, Psychological Criticism, Formalist Criticism, and Reader-Response Criticism (Guerin, 2005). In the context of the approaches to literary analysis to be used in the language classrooms, Van (2009) reviewed six frequently discussed approaches to literary analysis. He elaborated the six approaches as 1) New Criticism, 2) Structuralism, 3) Stylistic, 4) Reader-Response, 5) Language-based, and 6) Critical Literacy.

Hence, this research only focused on three approaches, in which two were taken from Van (2009) and Fauziah (2016). They are the Language-based Approach (LBA), Reader-Response Approach (RRA), and Philosophical Approach (PA). They are further elaborated in the next sub-sections.

### 2.1.1 Language-based Approach (LBA)

Van (2009) pointed out that the Language-based Approach (LBA) emphasized the awareness of the language of literature since this is a fundamental stage for EFL students. The LBA provided various language instruction activities, such as brainstorming, rewriting, and vocabulary and comprehension building. Experts in the LBA believe that teaching literature to EFL students is emphasized in integrating literature and language in classroom teaching. This view is based on the consideration that the LBA can provide both literature and language in the teaching of literature.

Another research indicating the integration of literature and language was carried out by Carter and Long (1991). They proposed that the language-based teaching pedagogy by integrating literature and language can develop the students' literary understanding and appreciation capacities. Accordingly, literature can improve the students' proficiency in both language aspects and the appreciation aspect. Language learning and literary study are interdependent. This means that using literature to EFL students can improve both the language proficiency and the interpretative ability of a literary text.

According to Lazar (1993), one of the Language-based literature teaching pedagogy assumptions was that studying the language of literary works can help integrate language and understanding more closely. Yimwilai (2015) also suggests that the Language-based model for teaching literature can help EFL students enhance their knowledge of English as the target language for EFL learners.

### 2.1.2 Reader-Response Approach (RRA)

Rosenblatt (1978, in Iskhak et al., 2020) developed the transactional theory, which became the root for the Reader-Response approach (RRA). She explained that reading and writing share a necessary involvement with the text. The transaction referred to the relationship in which reading and writing conditions intertwined in a mutually constituted situation.

The roles of the readers, the text, and the social/cultural context had an impact on the transaction between the text and the readers (Iskhak, 2015). From that view, he organized five main theoretical perspectives of Reader-response as follows: the textual, experiential, psychological, social, and cultural perspectives. Beach's (1993) view on the roles of the readers, the text, and the social/cultural context supported Rosenblatt's (1993) Transactional Theory as elaborated by Adeani et al. (2020, p. 139), stating that "the interrelationship between reading and writing the literary works are by Rosenblatt's Transactional theory, which said that reading and writing is involved with the text, as Beach suggested". Febriani (2019) gave a similar thought of Reader-Response as an approach to literary analysis where she believed that the RRA encouraged the students to think critically about the literary works.

It can be concluded that the RRA is a literary teaching approach in which the readers can give responses to literary works. The approach is emphasized on the importance of the readers' role in interpreting the text. Through Reader-response, the students can give various interpretations to a literary text.

### 2.1.3 Philosophical Approach (PA)

The Philosophical Approach (PA) emphasized finding moral values that are contained in literary works. [Rachmawati et al. \(2020\)](#) wrote that the PA was related to the philosophical belief that would affect the moral value and how someone would act. Teaching literature to EFL students by implementing the moral/philosophical approach means encouraging them to believe that the larger part of literature is to teach morality. Also, encouraging the students to use this approach is beneficial in that it probes philosophical issues contained in a literary work. Consequently, teaching literature to EFL students by implementing the moral-philosophical approach could mean teaching them to see literary works of literature as authentic materials to learn about values and philosophical issues.

This approach also has several significances similar to LBA and RRA. Previous research mentioned some benefits of the moral-philosophical approach in teaching literature to EFL students. Firstly, it enhances students' thinking skills, and secondly, it improves the students' foreign language proficiency, especially the productive skills through asking and answering some philosophical questions ([Dabbagh & Noshadi, 2016](#)). They highlighted that philosophy-based language teaching encouraged students to think critically and creatively about the world around them.

## 3. METHODS

The study aims to describe six lecturers' perceptions towards the implementation of the approaches to teaching literature in the EFL classrooms and describe the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching approaches used by the lecturers to teach Literary Criticism courses in the EFL classrooms. Each of them had taught the courses by using three approaches of LBA, RRA, and PA. This was among the reasons why the researchers found it interesting to investigate their perceptions of the use of these literary approaches based on their own experiences. Besides, the researchers also intended to find out the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to literary analysis.

In conducting this study, the researchers employed a qualitative research design. [Fraenkel et al. \(2012\)](#) explained that a qualitative method emphasizes describing a particular activity, situation, field, behavior of people in-depth and in a particular way. Therefore, an open-ended questionnaire was distributed to six lecturers teaching the Literary Criticism course to EFL students at a university in Semarang, Indonesia. They have earlier given their consent to be the participants of this study. Furthermore, due to the pandemic, the questionnaire was administered through Google Form. The questions asked to them were:

1. What approaches are you currently using in teaching literature to the EFL students?
2. Do you encourage the EFL students to manifest their interpretation and interaction with the literary works in written form such as reflective writing/reflection?
3. Do you think the approaches that you are currently using give any significance in improving the students' reflective writing skills?
4. How are the approaches effective in improving the students' reflective writing skills?
5. Have you used other approaches besides these three approaches to teaching literature to the EFL students?

6. How do you perceive the currently used approaches to teaching literature to EFL students?
7. What are the strengths of each approach that you use for teaching literature?
8. What are the weaknesses of each approach that you use for teaching literature?

The participants were given the freedom to answer the questions in the open-ended questionnaire in their own words (Popping, 2015). Their answers were then sought for patterns, further coded, and linked to conceptual categories. Themes were identified and each of them presented the results of this study. The lecturer participants in this study were coded as L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, and L6, respectively.

## **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of the questionnaire distributed to the lecturers revealed some findings. The findings are elaborated in the next subsections that are divided to answer each research question of this study.

### **4.1 The Lecturers' Perceptions of Implementing Literary Analysis Approaches to in Teaching Literature**

#### *4.1.1 Kinds of approaches used to teach literature in the EFL classroom*

The lecturers' responses concerning the implementation of the approach to teaching literature to the EFL students have revealed some points. Firstly, some lecturers were implementing one single approach when teaching literature to EFL students. Some others combined more than one approach. L1 implemented the RRA to teaching literature, L2 and L3 lecturers implemented the LBA, L4, and L5 combined more than one approach to teaching literature, and finally, L6 only implemented the PA to teaching literature.

The RRA was explained by the teachers to offer both teachers and students to be actively engaged in the literary works. It facilitated the students' critical thinking activities since it encouraged them to draw on their personal experiences, opinions, and feelings in their interpretation of literature. Febriani et al. (2020) believed that by using the Reader-Response approach, the students of literature class were capable of expressing more than only their personal feelings, but they also began to give critical thinking upon the given literary texts. She added that discussion questions in the RRA gave the students the idea of how to express their ideas and thought on a piece of paper. Related to this view, Iskhak et al. (2017) agreed that the Reader-Response theory offered reading-writing activities.

Concerning the implementation of the RRA to reflection writing, reflection facilitates the writer-readers to record their interaction and interpretation of literary works. Adeani et al. (2020) explain that the reader's reflective thinking towards a literary text could be manifested in reflection. The purpose of this activity included considering the process of learning, reviewing something, building theory from observations, engaging in personal self-development, and empowering oneself as an individual (Adeani et al., 2020).

The second approach to teaching literature is the LBA. This approach in teaching EFL students highlighted the use of literary texts to improve the students' English

proficiency, such as improving vocabulary, pronunciation, speaking, and reading. Supporting this view, Choudhary (2016) explained that it emphasized the awareness of the language of literature and that it was the basic stage for language learners and facilitated the students' responses and experiences with literary works. The activities in the LBA included brainstorming, rewriting, and incorporating reading. By using the LBA, the students were encouraged to develop language skills through interaction, collaboration, discussion, and collective learning (Choudhary, 2016).

Another approach used by the lecturer participants in this current study is the PA to teaching literature. Critics of the PA believed that the purpose of teaching literature is to teach morality and to examine philosophical issues contained in literary works. According to Rachmawati et al. (2020), the philosophical belief became the fundamental that one had chosen to decide what was right and was not right that would impact someone's moral value.

#### *4.1.2 The lecturers' encouragement and significance for students to manifest interpretation and interaction to literary works in reflective writing essays or reflections*

Based on the responses of the lecturer participants, the finding of the second questionnaire item revealed that a majority of the lecturers encouraged their students to manifest their responses to literary works in reflective writing essays or reflections. The different answers of the lecturers indicated that the proper approach to teaching literature depended on the vision of the teaching of literature in the EFL classrooms. The RRA to teaching literature was used when the lecturers intended to encourage the EFL students to provide critical thinking in writing reflections of responses to literature. In the meantime, the LBA was used when the lecturers intended to improve the writing quality of reflections to literary analysis. Meanwhile, the PA was used when the lecturers encouraged students to dig deeper into the moral value of literary works. The use of more than one approach to teaching literature, in this case, the combination of the RAA and the LBA, is an attempt of the lecturers to benefit more, both in critical thinking skills and in language mastery, in the written reflection of responses to literary works. This is also suggested by Yimwilai (2015) who suggested that literature instructors and educators should consider implementing the integrated approach.

Reflective writing or reflection is one of the ways that the readers can manifest their interpretation of literary works. It is a kind of personal academic writing in which a reader can give his/her thought of a literary work. Using reflection in responding to a literary work gives a big advantage for a reader to convey what he/she is thinking after reading a literary work. Since a reader of a literary work is demanded to think critically upon the work, reflection helps him or her to make a connection between theory and practice, also between his or her knowledge in the past and in the present time (Febriani, 2019). It is also believed that by writing a reflection, a reader gains self-development and deeper learning by looking back at the events reflected in literary works (Febriani, 2019). In the same vein, Gorlewski and Greene (2011) also found that reflections made by the students had demonstrated that they engaged in reflection as they engaged in creative and critical uses of their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the students' engagement in their writings increased since they were encouraged by the process of reflection during the writing process (Gorlewski &

Greene, 2011). The result of the present study reflected that the lecturers had chosen a proper way to manifest the interpretation of literary works in reflective writing.

#### 4.1.3 *The effectiveness of the approaches used to teach literature*

The lecturers' responses to the question regarding their perception of the effectiveness of the approach in improving the students' reflective writing skills revealed that each approach to teaching literature had its positive results in improving the students' reflective writing skills. The following are excerpts of the lecturers' answers to this question.

- (1) After applying the Language-based approach in teaching literature, I can see that this approach is effective in improving the students' reflective writing skills. This approach facilitates the students with many activities that can trigger their skills in writing. By using this approach, the students can do brainstorm, use their background knowledge, and predict a story. (L2)
- (2) Reader-Response approach, to some extent, is effective in improving reflective writing skills. Students are simultaneously demanded to self-manage their reading-writing integration. (L1)
- (3) The approach (Philosophical approach) stimulated students to dig implicit meaning and also endeavor to get moral philosophical in literary works. (L6)
- (4) Yes, besides the Reader-response approach, I also use or mix it with the Language-based approach in teaching literature to EFL students. (L4)

As exemplified in (1), (2), and (3), the lecturer participants believed that the approach to teaching literature they currently used had positive values that could improve the students' reflective writing skills. L1 who taught literature using the RRA believed that the approach effectively improved their students' reflective writing skills since they were encouraged to simultaneously self-manage their reading and writing integration. Then, L2 and L3, who preferred LBA thought that this approach effectively improved the students' reflective writing skills since it facilitated the students with activities that triggered their skills in writing. Meanwhile, L6 who chose PA believed that the approach stimulated the students to explore the meanings beyond and to grasp moral values contained in literary works.

L1 further found the RRA allowed him to encourage students to strengthen their critical thinking. Accordingly, Woodruff and Griffin (2017) noted that the RRA met the needs of the students since it did not require the students to prove their interpretation by only writing summaries or answering questions, rather, they were encouraged to explain their experience by recording their thoughts about a text including their explanation of their feelings, their analysis and evaluation, and their recommendation to a friend, etc. The effectiveness of implementing the RRA in teaching literature was also suggested by Chou (2015), who considered the Reader-Response theory to be effective in engaging the students with their reading and responding to literature, thus enabling higher-level comprehension.

L2 and L3 suggested that the LBA is more appropriate and effective to be used when teaching literature to EFL students. This consideration was based on their purpose of literature teaching, which was to improve the students' English proficiency through reading literary works. This view is supported by Choudhary (2016) who concurred that the LBA facilitated the students' responses and experiences with

literature. It also improved a variety of language activities such as brainstorming to activate background knowledge, rewriting the text, vocabulary building, and comprehension, forming an opinion, and engaging in debates (Choudhary, 2016).

L6 suggested that the use of PA to teach literature to EFL students emphasized teaching moral and philosophical issues through literature. He believed that teaching literature through literary works helped teach the students moral values and philosophical issues. This view is supported by Rashid et al. (2010) who corresponded that this moral philosophical approach to teaching literature focused on discovering moral values while reading a particular literary text.

Finally, in (4), L4, similar to L5, preferred to use both RRA and LBA in their literature classes. This was because using and mixing both appropriately, it could make the students more active in their reading and writing activities. Here, the students were not only taught to increase their literary skills, but also their critical thinking at the same time. This was done, for example, through group work, where they could learn from each other when sharing their reader response towards a literary work.

#### *4.1.4 The use of other approaches to teaching literature*

Based on the responses of the lecturer participants, the finding of the fifth questionnaire item revealed that other than the currently implemented approach to teaching literature, the majority of the lecturers have used other approaches to teaching literature in EFL classrooms as well. This was purposed to determine the proper approach to teaching literature so that the students can improve their reflective writing and critical thinking skills.

The following are excerpts of the lecturers' answers to this question.

- (5) I have tried to use literature circles to support response-based to encourage group discussion. In literature circles, students have to interpret the text collaboratively. Each individual has a different job to interpret the text and then together share what they have got. (L4)
- (6) Yes, I have used an information-based approach. (L5)

As exemplified in (5) and (6), the lecturer participants had managed to implement other approaches to teaching literature when teaching in EFL classrooms. These approaches were the literature circle approach and the information-based approach to teaching literature. Their reasons to use other approaches at times were to avoid students' boredom. Furthermore, the literature circle approach (Hsu, 2004) could also help students' socialization and cooperation in class (i.e., from group work or discussion) and peer learning. Meanwhile, the information-based approach was more teacher-centered and demanded a lot of the teacher's input in providing students with various contents of literary texts, such as historical, political, cultural, and social backgrounds (Sii & Chen, 2016).

#### *4.1.5 The lecturers' perceptions on the currently used approaches to teaching literature*

The lecturers' responses to the question regarding their perception of the currently used approaches to teaching literature to the EFL students revealed that they

shared a similar opinion about the three approaches to teaching literature that they implemented in the literature classroom.

The following are excerpts of the lecturers' answers to this question.

- (7) The chosen current approach to teaching literature or literary criticism is inevitably fruitful and influential to my students' courage and engagements as well as motivation in reading literary works. Consequently, they also tend to be convenient to respond to the literary works they have read.
- (8) These approaches that I have seen work well recently in my teaching activities e.g., reader response and language-based. Students can involve their personal opinions, feelings, and background knowledge to create meanings of the text. It helps students' reading comprehension by giving a response to what they read.
- (9) This approach may be pretty good because it does not only focus on learning literature but creates awareness of language use in the classroom as well. Literature is a medium for students to express their personal opinions, feelings, and emotions. So, through this, students will understand the context thoroughly and understand the use of language better. In addition, students can be encouraged to connect their vocabulary with other aspects of the language.

As exemplified in (7), (8), and (9), it can be seen that the lecturers have positive perceptions of the currently used approach to teaching literature in EFL classrooms. The reasons varied depending on the goal of each approach that they chose to use. L1 who implemented the RRA believed that this approach to teaching literature is beneficial and influential to encourage the students' engagement and motivation in reading literary works. This view reflected previous research which stated that this approach provided an opportunity for the students' active involvement and full engagement in reading a text and class discussion on it (Khatib, 2011).

L2 and L3 who implemented the LBA believed that the approach to teaching literature worked as expected in the classroom. According to them, based on their responses in the open-ended questionnaire, they saw that the students could involve their personal opinions, feelings, and background knowledge to create meanings of the text in their essays. This belief is supported by previous research that stated that LBA instruction provides meaningful interpretation and evaluation of the text; and its implementation can guide students on the specific piece of literature based on their levels of proficiency, lexical, and discourse knowledge (Dhillon et al., 2014).

As for the PA, L6 believed that this moral approach is appropriate in teaching literature because it did not only focus on learning literature, but also created the awareness of the language used in the classroom. Through this approach, the lecturer could teach morality and values in life through literary works. Supporting this view, Al Sabiri and Kaymakamoğlu (2019) explained that this approach is aimed at finding moral qualities in a literary work and requiring advanced critical thinking skills. This means that teaching literature using this approach is quite challenging compared to other approaches.

## 4.2 The Lecturers' Strengths and Weaknesses of the Teaching Approaches to Teaching Literature

### 4.2.1 *The lecturers' perceptions of the strengths of the used approaches*

The lecturers' responses to this question revealed that there were significant strengths of each approach to teaching literature to the EFL students.

The following are excerpts of the lecturers' answers to this question.

- (10) RRA is not only able to improve our ability in literary works but also be able to improve language skills. Because this approach integrates literature study with the mastery of language by facilitating the students' responses and experience through literature. (L1)
- (11) The current approach (i.e., LBA) offers us (literature/reading teacher/educators) many pedagogical merits to empower students' active involvement in the classroom teaching-learning process. They are demanded to self-direct their learning and be responsible for the achievement. (L2)
- (12) The combination of both approaches (i.e., RRA and LBA) enables me to provide full force to get my students to think critically and at the same time, improve their language awareness and use in the classroom. (L4)
- (13) This approach (i.e., PA) is effective to stimulate students to dive into intended meaning and get philosophical morals in literary works. (L6)

The lecturers' responses to the question regarding their perception showed the benefits of each approach to teaching literature to the EFL students. According to L2, the strength of the LBA was that it allowed students to improve their ability in understanding literary works and language skills since it integrated literature study with the mastery of language. The strength of the RRA, as proposed by L1, lies in its pedagogical merits in empowering the students' active involvement in the classroom teaching-learning process. L6 added that the strength of the PA lies in its ability to encourage the students to get the intended meaning and the moral lesson contained in the literary works.

The RRA is an approach that is emphasized on the improvement of the students' critical thinking through reading literary works. The readers are encouraged to be able to interpret a story through multiple interpretations of a text using textual evidence and support (but must justify their multiple interpretations of a text using textual evidence and support (Woodruff & Griffin, 2017), as well as express their thoughts, feelings, and their relation of the text to their own life (Leung, 2002; Woodruff & Griffin, 2017). In fact, there are several advantages of using this approach to teach literature to EFL students. Among the advantages, it allows the readers to interpret a literary text in various ways, it also gives the readers to bring personality traits, the past and the present experiences to the text, it can also encourage the students to look beyond the stated meanings and dig a deeper meaning of the text, it allows the readers to see different perspectives of others, and it also focuses on the readers' response to the text (Febriani, 2019; Leung, 2002; Woodruff & Griffin, 2017). It can be concluded that the strengths of the RRA lie in the students' active involvement and critical thinking that is highly required to interpret the meaning contained in a literary work. Moreover, the RRA is also found to foster the students' involvement with the literary text, raising the

students' awareness of the importance of critical reading, and increasing the students' participation when encountering literary texts (Spirovska, 2019).

The LBA, on the other hand, is emphasized on encouraging the students' improvement of English proficiency through literary works (Van, 2009). L2, L3, L4, and L5 who implemented the LBA when teaching literature to the EFL students stated that the approach offered many educational advantages to empower the students' active participation in the classroom in the teaching and learning process, and they were further demanded to self-direct their learning. Learning literature offers various advantages to the learners including improving reflective and purposeful learning as well as exposing them to cultural awareness and critical thinking (Hamid et al., 2020).

In the meantime, the PA to teaching literature is emphasized on teaching morality and probing philosophical questions. As explained by Rachmawati, et al. (2020), this approach is an approach that relates mainly to philosophical belief in seeing the truth or false, or right or wrong. Based on the result of this study, L6 believed that this approach is effective to stimulate students to gain philosophical moral values in literary works. Therefore, it is believed that one of the advantages of this approach is that it affects moral values and how readers act upon a literary work (Guerin, 2005).

#### *4.2.2 The lecturers' perceptions of the weaknesses of the used approaches*

The following excerpts reflected the lecturers' responses on the weaknesses of their used approaches in teaching English literature in the class.

- (14) The weaknesses of LBA are that it takes a long time for students who are weak in English when asked to understand a literary text. In the process of understanding the reading, the weaker students must translate it first. So, the reading material must be adjusted to the ability of students in class. Another weakness is their ability to analyze a text that is also an obstacle because it requires good English to explain it. (L3)
- (15) The RRA practically or operationally takes time and needs very much energy to manage. The teacher sometimes (hardly) has a tough 'time allotment' to assess each students' participation. (L5)
- (16) In PA, the students with low reading skills had difficulty in following this approach. (L6)

The lecturers' responses to the question regarding their perceptions on the weaknesses of the approaches revealed several drawbacks from each approach. First of all, the LBA demands a good proficiency in the English language. Therefore, when used to teach students who lacked English proficiency, there would be bigger obstacles. Concerning reflection writing, this was time-consuming since the students would start by translating the literary work first before being able to make a critical reflection of the text. Next, the RRA was time-consuming. Meanwhile, the PA was problematic to students who lacked reading skills; this made them challenging to follow the procedures of this approach.

Following the lecturer's response, Woodruff and Griffin (2017) also projected several disadvantages to the RAA. First, there is no emphasis on analyzing the text closely, and second, there are broad possible interpretations of a literary text. Other limitations in the RAA include: 1) the overlooked of the author's intended meaning, 2) readers' narrow responses, 3) the subjectivity of the readers' interpretation which

leads to the teachers' difficulties in determining the acceptable and unacceptable answers of the students (Woodruff & Griffin, 2017).

In the LBA, which is considered a student-oriented approach, the teacher encourages the students to improve their linguistic proficiency through literature. This approach divided the students' activities into some stages of activities. Therefore, one of the lecturer's perceptions of the implementation of the LBA showed that the approach was time-consuming, especially when taught to the students who were weak in English mastery. This happened because the students needed to translate the assigned literary work first before they were finally able to interpret the meaning of the literary works. Furthermore, finding an appropriate text to teach is also a concern, especially when there are groups of students who are not at the same reading level in the class (Renner, 2018).

The lecturer implementing the moral-philosophical approach emphasized its purpose in teaching morality and probing philosophical issues. It is revealed that one of the disadvantages of using the philosophical approach in teaching literature to EFL students was that the students with low reading skills found it difficult to interpret literary works by using this approach. This view is strengthened by Rashid et al. (2010) that in terms of teachers' perspectives on the teaching of literature to less proficient students, there were only a few respondents that responded positively to it. They asserted that this happened because the students found literature lessons less interesting and dull (Rashid et al., 2010).

## 5. CONCLUSION

The present study has elaborated on six lecturers' perceptions towards the implementation of the approaches to literary analysis in teaching literature in the EFL classrooms and the strengths and the weaknesses of the teaching approaches used by the lecturers to teach Literary Criticism course in the EFL classrooms. Based on the findings and the discussion of the study, some points are concluded. One of the points was that the lecturers had different perceptions on the proper approach to teaching this course to the EFL students. L1 implemented the Reader-response approach to teaching literature, L2 and L3 lecturers implemented the Language-based approach, L4 and L5 combined more than one approach to teaching literature, and finally, L6 only implemented the philosophical approach to teaching literature. Their chosen approaches were based on their perceptions of the significance, effectiveness, needs, and also weaknesses of each approach that it offers to the lecturers and students themselves. They took these perceptions based on how the students echoed their critical thinking skills in their essays or reflective writing.

The empirical results reported herein should be considered in light of some limitations. Further research is recommended to explore other literary analysis approaches, such as the New Criticism approach, Stylistic approach, or Critical Literacy approach, as they may have different impacts when implemented in the language classrooms, especially to EFL students. It is also suggested to expand the participants to other levels of education (i.e., high school students) who are also taught literature in their English class. By doing so, more comprehensive results can be obtained.

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