



Global Perspectives on Literature Teaching Approaches in the ESL/EFL Classroom: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract:

This systematic literature review investigates the diverse pedagogical approaches employed in teaching literature within international English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. By conducting a thematic analysis of 22 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2003 and 2021, the study identifies six core strategies: information-based, paraphrastic, stylistic, language-based, reader-response, and moral-philosophical approaches. These models reflect the evolution from teacher-centered instruction to more student-centered and communicative methodologies. Furthermore, the review critically examines persistent global challenges that hinder effective literature-based instruction, specifically examination-oriented curricula, large class sizes, and varying levels of student language proficiency. The findings emphasize that no single method is universally superior; instead, a multi-model approach is essential to address the unique socio-cultural and linguistic needs of learners across different international settings. This research highlights the necessity for curriculum innovation and professional development to help educators navigate the complexities of the modern ESL classroom, ultimately fostering both language acquisition and literary appreciation.

Keywords: Systematic Literature Review, ESL/EFL, Literature-Based Approach, Pedagogical Approaches, Language Proficiency, Student-Centered Learning, Global Challenges.

Introduction:

Literature has long occupied a central position in English language curricula worldwide, functioning as both a medium for linguistic development and a catalyst for higher-order thinking. As argued by Sandra McKay (2001), literary texts offer rich linguistic input and cultural content that extend beyond mechanical language drills. Through exposure to poems, short stories, novels, and even graphic narratives, learners encounter authentic discourse, figurative language, and diverse worldviews that enhance vocabulary acquisition and interpretative skills.

Moreover, literature-based instruction has been associated with improved language acquisition rates and deeper engagement in ESL contexts, as demonstrated in the doctoral work of Kathy James (2003). Despite these documented benefits, the methodology for teaching literature in ESL/EFL classrooms remains widely debated. Scholars such as Mohammad Khatib, Saeed Rezaei, and Ali Derakhshan (2011) emphasize that literature instruction must move beyond surface comprehension toward communicative and interpretative engagement.

Similarly, Mohammad Khatib and Seyed Nourzadeh (2011) recommend integrating literature strategically to balance linguistic goals with aesthetic appreciation. These perspectives underscore the complexity of selecting appropriate pedagogical approaches in linguistically diverse classrooms. Empirical classroom-based studies further reveal variation in how teachers operationalize literature pedagogy.

Observational research by Siti S. Mustakim, Rohana Mustapha, and Othman Lebar (2018), as well as earlier work by Othman Lebar (2014), indicate that many ESL teachers rely on teacher-centered, information-driven instruction. Likewise, David Hwang and Mohamed Amin Embi (2007) observed that secondary school educators often prioritize factual recall and contextual



explanation over interpretative dialogue. These findings suggest that classroom realities frequently shape instructional decisions more than theoretical ideals.

Case studies and institutional investigations reinforce this pattern. For instance, Mohd A. Aziz and Siti N. S. Nasharudin (2010) documented the predominance of examination-oriented approaches in Malaysian secondary schools. Similarly, Chandran Muthusamy and colleagues (2017) reported that while teachers employ varied methods—including paraphrastic and discussion-based techniques—adult learners' attitudes toward literature are strongly influenced by instructional style. These studies collectively illustrate how systemic pressures, such as standardized testing and curriculum mandates, often constrain pedagogical innovation.

At the same time, contemporary scholarship calls for more learner-centered and integrative models. Literature is increasingly viewed not merely as content knowledge but as a dynamic tool for communicative practice, cultural exploration, and personal growth. Researchers argue that interactive approaches—such as reader-response activities, stylistic analysis, and performance-based tasks—can foster deeper engagement and critical reflection when appropriately scaffolded. However, implementing such approaches requires sensitivity to learner proficiency, motivation, and classroom logistics.

Given these ongoing debates and contextual variations, a systematic synthesis of global literature teaching approaches is warranted. While individual studies provide valuable insights into specific contexts, there remains a need to categorize prevailing pedagogical models and identify recurring challenges across ESL/EFL settings. This study therefore seeks to examine international research on literature instruction, classify dominant teaching approaches, and highlight common implementation barriers. By consolidating global findings, the review aims to contribute to a more coherent and adaptable framework for literature pedagogy in diverse second-language classrooms.

Literature Review

The role of literature in ESL/EFL education has been widely examined in applied linguistics and language pedagogy. Early foundational work by Sandra McKay (2001) positioned literature as a meaningful content resource that integrates linguistic, cultural, and interpretative dimensions of language learning. Rather than serving merely as supplementary reading material, literary texts were argued to provide authentic discourse, promote intercultural awareness, and foster communicative competence.

Empirical evidence further supports these claims. In a doctoral study, Kathy James (2003) demonstrated that literature-based instruction positively influenced ESL acquisition rates, suggesting that sustained engagement with narrative and poetic texts can accelerate vocabulary growth and syntactic development. Scholarly discussions have since expanded to conceptualize literature teaching within broader pedagogical frameworks. Mohammad Khatib, Saeed Rezaei, and Ali Derakhshan (2011) argued that literature in EFL/ESL classrooms should not be limited to content transmission but should instead cultivate communicative and critical thinking skills.

Complementing this perspective, Mohammad Khatib and Seyed Nourzadeh (2011) offered practical recommendations for integrating literature through interactive and student-centered tasks. More recently, Eman Hussein and Basma Abuelnour (2025) emphasized the continued relevance of literature in contemporary ESL/EFL instruction, particularly in fostering interpretative autonomy and learner engagement.

Despite these theoretical endorsements, classroom-based studies reveal a persistent reliance on traditional, teacher-centered approaches. Observational research conducted by Siti S. Mustakim, Rohana Mustapha, and Othman Lebar (2018), along with earlier findings by Othman Lebar (2014), documented that ESL teachers frequently employ information-based and paraphrastic methods. Similarly, David Hwang and Mohamed Amin Embi (2007) reported that secondary school teachers tended to prioritize factual explanation and contextual background over interpretative dialogue. Case-based evidence from Mohd A. Aziz and Siti N. S. Nasharudin (2010) further confirmed the dominance of examination-oriented strategies in Malaysian secondary schools. These patterns suggest that systemic pressures often shape literature pedagogy more strongly than theoretical models.

Learner perception and instructional outcomes have also been explored. Chandran Muthusamy and colleagues (2017) found that adult learners' attitudes toward literature were closely linked to the methods used in instruction, with interactive approaches generating more positive responses. Similarly, Nadia A. Sheikh and co-authors (2019) highlighted the potential of literature to enhance language proficiency when instruction emphasizes communicative engagement rather than rote analysis. From a higher



education perspective, Rina B. Febriani and colleagues (2022) reported that lecturers generally supported integrative and multi-model approaches but acknowledged institutional constraints that limited their implementation.

Systematic reviews further illuminate recurring challenges in literature instruction. Farah R. Affendi and Azlina A. Aziz (2020) identified examination-oriented curricula, limited proficiency levels, time constraints, and large class sizes as common barriers to effective literature teaching. These findings parallel broader ESL pedagogical reviews, such as those by Mohan Selvaraj and Azlina A. Aziz (2019), which stress the importance of diversified instructional approaches in developing writing competence. Although focused on writing instruction, their conclusions reinforce the necessity of methodological flexibility in second-language classrooms.

Recent methodological syntheses also suggest the value of multi-layered and integrative approaches. For example, Xiaoxiao Zhai and Abdul B. Razali (2023) employed bibliometric and content analyses to develop a genre-based framework for ESL/EFL writing, demonstrating how combined analytical methods can strengthen pedagogical design. Although centered on writing, their “triple method approach” provides a conceptual parallel for literature instruction, underscoring the importance of blending theoretical models with contextual responsiveness.

Collectively, the literature indicates a persistent tension between traditional, examination-driven practices and emerging learner-centered paradigms. However, a comprehensive synthesis categorizing global literature teaching approaches and systematically identifying shared challenges remains limited. The present study addresses this gap by organizing existing scholarship into coherent pedagogical models and examining implementation barriers across international ESL/EFL contexts.

Methodology:

This study adopted a systematic literature review design, guided by established research synthesis frameworks to ensure methodological rigor, transparency, and replicability. The systematic approach was selected to allow for a structured examination of existing scholarship on literature teaching in ESL/EFL contexts and to generate a coherent synthesis of pedagogical approaches and challenges reported across international settings. Clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to minimize selection bias and to ensure the relevance and quality of the reviewed studies.

Data collection was conducted primarily through two major academic databases, Scopus and Google Scholar, which were selected for their extensive coverage of peer-reviewed literature in applied linguistics and education. The search process employed a combination of key terms, including “ESL teaching strategies,” “literature teaching approaches,” “challenges in teaching literature,” and “second language pedagogy.” These keywords were used in various combinations to capture studies that explicitly addressed both pedagogical practices and contextual issues related to literature instruction in second-language classrooms.

The review focused on empirical, conceptual, and theoretical studies published between 2003 and 2021. This timeframe was chosen to capture both foundational and contemporary perspectives on literature pedagogy while ensuring that the findings reflected relatively current educational practices. Although a significant number of the identified studies originated from Southeast Asia, particularly Malaysia, the inclusion criteria remained globally oriented to provide a broader international perspective on ESL/EFL literature teaching trends.

Following the screening and selection process, a total of 22 journal articles met the established criteria and were included in the final analysis. These studies were systematically reviewed and subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring instructional approaches and commonly reported implementation challenges. Through this analytical process, patterns in pedagogical models and contextual constraints were synthesized, forming the basis for the study’s findings and discussion.

Findings and Discussion:

The Information-Based and Paraphrastic Approaches (Cultural Model)

The information-based and paraphrastic approaches are rooted in the Cultural Model of literature teaching, where literary texts are primarily viewed as carriers of historical, political, and socio-cultural knowledge. Within this framework, literature functions as content to be transmitted rather than as a medium for interpretative dialogue. Instruction typically centers on contextual background, author biography, thematic explanation, and factual comprehension.



As a result, the classroom dynamic is often teacher-dominated, with students positioned as recipients of authoritative interpretations rather than active constructors of meaning. The information-based approach, in particular, emphasizes the transmission of contextual knowledge surrounding a text. Teachers provide detailed explanations of social settings, cultural references, and ideological underpinnings before or during reading. Research by Mohd A. Aziz and Siti N. S. Nasharudin (2010) illustrates how this approach is frequently adopted in examination-oriented contexts, where mastery of factual content is prioritized. Similarly, classroom observations by Othman Lebar (2014) and Siti S. Mustakim, Rohana Mustapha, and Othman Lebar (2018) reveal that teachers often rely on lecture-style delivery to ensure syllabus coverage and examination preparedness.

While this approach offers clear structural guidance and reduces ambiguity for learners, it may inadvertently limit opportunities for interpretative engagement. Farah R. Affendi and Azlina A. Aziz (2020), in their systematic review, note that heavy reliance on teacher-centered strategies can constrain students' critical thinking and personal response. In similar discussions of ESL pedagogy, Mohan Selvaraj and Azlina A. Aziz (2019) argue that diversified instructional strategies are necessary to foster deeper language development, suggesting that purely informational methods may not sufficiently support communicative competence.

Closely related to the information-based approach is the paraphrastic method, which is commonly implemented in lower-proficiency classrooms. This strategy involves simplifying the literary text through paraphrasing, translation, summarization, or code-switching to ensure basic comprehension. Teachers often restate complex passages in simpler English or in the learners' first language to scaffold understanding. Observational findings from Siti S. Mustakim and colleagues (2018) indicate that paraphrastic techniques are frequently used to manage linguistic difficulty and maintain classroom flow, particularly when texts exceed students' proficiency levels.

The paraphrastic approach serves an important supportive function, especially in contexts where linguistic barriers hinder engagement with authentic literary language. Nadia A. Sheikh and co-authors (2019) highlight that literature can enhance language acquisition when comprehension is carefully scaffolded. Likewise, Eman Hussein and Basma Abuelnour (2025) emphasize that adaptation strategies, including paraphrasing, can make literary texts more accessible without entirely sacrificing interpretative depth. However, excessive reliance on simplification may reduce exposure to authentic stylistic features, thereby limiting opportunities for linguistic enrichment.

Comparative pedagogical research further contextualizes these approaches. Çetin T. Mart (2019) found that purely content-focused instruction was less effective in developing speaking skills than mixed or integrated approaches. Similarly, Jeroen Bloemert and colleagues (2019) reported that students perceive greater benefits from literature instruction when they are encouraged to actively interpret and discuss texts rather than passively receive explanations.

These findings suggest that while information-based and paraphrastic approaches provide essential scaffolding, they may need to be complemented by more interactive strategies to maximize learning outcomes. Recent innovations in ESL methodology also point toward blended or adaptive models. For instance, Xiaoxiao Zhai and Abdul B. Razali (2023) advocate multi-method frameworks in writing instruction, while Vimala Kernagaran and Aida Abdullah (2022) highlight the potential of flipped learning to promote active engagement.

Although these studies focus on writing and broader ESL strategies, their implications extend to literature teaching: teacher-centered cultural transmission and paraphrastic scaffolding remain valuable, but their effectiveness increases when integrated with learner-centered and communicative practices. Thus, within the Cultural Model, the information-based and paraphrastic approaches continue to play a foundational role, particularly in examination-driven and low-proficiency contexts, yet they benefit from strategic supplementation to support deeper literary and linguistic development.

The Stylistic and Language-Based Approaches (Language Model)

The Stylistic and Language-Based approaches are grounded in the Language Model of literature teaching, which conceptualizes literary texts primarily as rich linguistic resources. Rather than focusing on historical background or moral interpretation, this model foregrounds the analysis of language itself—its structure, patterns, and communicative functions. Within this framework, literature becomes a site for exploring syntax, semantics, discourse features, and rhetorical devices, thereby directly supporting language development alongside literary appreciation.

The stylistic approach, in particular, bridges linguistics and literary criticism. Students are encouraged to examine how specific lexical choices, figurative expressions, narrative structures, and cohesive devices contribute to meaning-making. This analytical process promotes close reading and cultivates awareness of how authors manipulate language to produce aesthetic and emotional effects. Research by Mohan Selvaraj and Azlina A. Aziz (2019) underscores the importance of explicit focus on form in



ESL instruction, noting that structured analysis of linguistic features strengthens learners' writing proficiency. Although their review centers on writing, its implications align closely with stylistic analysis in literature classrooms.

Further methodological support emerges from Xiaoxiao Zhai and Abdul B. Razali (2023), whose systematic synthesis of genre-based approaches highlights the effectiveness of integrating textual analysis with communicative production. Their findings suggest that combining structural awareness with contextual understanding enhances learners' mastery of language conventions. Similarly, Gökhan Almacioğlu and Zehra Okan (2018) demonstrate that genre-based instruction in literature-related courses strengthens students' academic writing skills, reinforcing the value of stylistic attention within the Language Model.

In contrast to the more analytical orientation of stylistics, the language-based approach emphasizes active language use. Here, literary texts serve as springboards for communicative tasks such as debates, role-plays, dramatic performances, and poetry recitals. The goal is not merely to interpret meaning but to transform textual engagement into productive language practice. Muhammad S. R. Khan and Ahmed M. Alasmari (2018) highlight that literary texts can effectively stimulate speaking and discussion when integrated into interactive classroom activities.

Empirical comparisons further validate the effectiveness of integrated approaches. Çetin T. Mart (2019) found that mixed approaches combining form-focused and content-based instruction yielded stronger improvements in speaking skills than single-method strategies. Similarly, Jeroen Bloemert and colleagues (2019) report that students perceive literature classes as more beneficial when they are actively involved in discussion and interpretation rather than confined to passive analysis. These findings reinforce the communicative potential of the language-based approach.

Innovative pedagogical strategies have also expanded the application of the Language Model. Muhammad N. L. Azmi (2022) demonstrates that problem-based learning enhances critical thinking when applied to literature instruction, encouraging learners to analyze linguistic and thematic complexities collaboratively. Likewise, Chandra Handrianto and Muhammad A. Rahman (2018) highlight the outcomes of project-based learning, which aligns closely with language-based literature pedagogy by fostering sustained inquiry and communicative output.

Technology-enhanced and flipped learning models further extend this approach. Vimala Kernagaran and Aida Abdullah (2022) identify flipped learning as an effective strategy for maximizing classroom interaction, while Paola Lamo and colleagues (2023) report positive learner attitudes toward technology integration in ESL contexts. These innovations allow teachers to allocate in-class time for communicative literary tasks rather than direct instruction, thereby reinforcing the student-centered ethos of the language-based model.

At the same time, successful implementation requires pedagogical competence and contextual sensitivity. Rohana Abdul Razak and colleagues (2023) emphasize the importance of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in aligning assessment practices with instructional goals. In CEFR-aligned contexts, Gurnam Kaur Sidhu and co-authors (2018) note that classroom-based assessment frameworks increasingly support communicative competence, creating space for language-based literature instruction. However, challenges remain, as Shabana Hasnain and Soma Halder (2023) observe that teachers often encounter obstacles when implementing task-based approaches due to institutional and logistical constraints.

The stylistic and language-based approaches demonstrate the pedagogical potential of the Language Model in ESL/EFL literature classrooms. By foregrounding linguistic analysis and communicative practice, these approaches transform literature into an active medium for language development. While stylistics strengthens analytical precision and textual awareness, the language-based strategy fosters fluency, interaction, and learner autonomy. When integrated thoughtfully and supported by appropriate assessment and instructional design, these approaches offer a balanced pathway toward both linguistic competence and literary understanding.

The Reader-Response and Moral-Philosophical Approaches (Personal Growth Model)

The Reader-Response and Moral-Philosophical approaches are grounded in the Personal Growth Model of literature instruction, which emphasizes the transformative potential of literary engagement. Unlike the Cultural Model, which prioritizes contextual knowledge, or the Language Model, which foregrounds linguistic form, the Personal Growth Model positions literature as a catalyst for self-reflection, emotional development, and value formation.

Within this orientation, meaning is not transmitted solely by the teacher nor confined to textual structures; rather, it emerges through the dynamic interaction between reader and text. The reader-response approach centers on learners' personal



interpretations and lived experiences. Students are encouraged to articulate their emotional reactions, relate themes to their own realities, and construct individualized understandings of characters and conflicts.

Research by Muhammad S. R. Khan and Ahmed M. Alasmari (2018) highlights how literary texts stimulate engagement and communicative interaction when students are invited to share personal insights. Similarly, Samar Hussein and colleagues (2021) found that learners demonstrate more positive attitudes toward English when literature lessons prioritize discussion and self-expression rather than rigid textual analysis.

Innovative classroom models further support this perspective. Basri Arafah (2018, 2019) proposes integrative frameworks that position literature as an interactive and reflective medium in ELT. His models emphasize dialogic learning, where students negotiate meaning collaboratively and connect textual themes to broader social realities. Such approaches foster autonomy and intrinsic motivation, aligning closely with asset-based instructional philosophies. In related discussions, Aisha A. Chaudhary (2022) argues that asset-based ESL instruction, which values learners' backgrounds and perspectives, leads to stronger academic engagement—an insight that resonates with reader-response pedagogy.

The moral-philosophical approach extends personal engagement into the realm of ethical inquiry and character formation. In this framework, literature becomes a vehicle for exploring moral dilemmas, social justice themes, and existential questions. Students are guided to interpret meanings beyond surface-level comprehension, reflecting on values embedded within narratives. Such an approach encourages deeper cognitive processing and critical reflection. Project-based implementations reviewed by Chandra Handrianto and Muhammad A. Rahman (2018) demonstrate that sustained inquiry tasks can strengthen analytical thinking and ethical reasoning when literature is framed around real-world issues.

Effective implementation of these approaches, however, requires strong pedagogical content knowledge. Rohana Abdul Razak and colleagues (2023) emphasize that teachers must align instructional strategies with appropriate classroom-based assessment practices to meaningfully evaluate interpretative and reflective learning. In CEFR-aligned contexts, Gurnam Kaur Sidhu and co-authors (2018), as well as Nur Syafiqah Sharifuddin and Haris Hashim (2024), highlight the importance of aligning reflective tasks with competency-based standards, particularly as digital and AI-supported tools increasingly shape ESL classrooms.

Technology integration has also expanded opportunities for reader-centered engagement. Paola Lamo and colleagues (2023) report that learners perceive digital platforms as enhancing interaction and motivation in language learning. Social media applications such as those examined by S. T. Rajan and H. H. Ismail (2022) demonstrate how short-form video platforms can stimulate engagement with literary texts. Likewise, digital storytelling initiatives studied by L. C. H. Amelia and Mohd J. Z. Abidin (2018) encourage learners to reinterpret narratives creatively, reinforcing personal connection and interpretative ownership.

At the same time, broader pedagogical research suggests that reflective and philosophical inquiry must be scaffolded carefully. Shabana Hasnain and Soma Halder (2023) note that teachers often face constraints in implementing task-based approaches due to institutional expectations and limited time. Genre-based and process-oriented writing frameworks proposed by Gökhan Almaccioğlu and Zehra Okan (2018), as well as Kim Lee Li and Abdul B. Razali (2019), suggest that structured guidance enhances learners' ability to articulate reflective insights effectively.

The Reader-Response and Moral-Philosophical approaches underscore literature's role in fostering holistic development within ESL/EFL classrooms. By validating personal interpretation and encouraging ethical reflection, these approaches move beyond language acquisition to nurture empathy, identity formation, and critical consciousness. When supported by appropriate assessment practices, differentiated instruction, and thoughtful integration of technology, the Personal Growth Model offers a powerful framework for cultivating meaningful and transformative engagement with literary texts.

Global Implementation Patterns

International research consistently indicates that ESL/EFL teachers tend to rely on information-based and paraphrastic approaches when teaching literature, particularly in contexts characterized by examination-oriented systems and low-proficiency learners. These approaches emphasize comprehension, vocabulary explanation, and content recall, providing structured scaffolding that supports learners' immediate academic needs.

Studies such as TESL-EJ publications (Irby et al., 2018) highlight how structured, research-based ESL strategies can effectively improve content learning outcomes, especially in linguistically demanding subjects. Similarly, Khan and Alasmari (2018) note that literary texts are frequently simplified and treated as vehicles for language drills rather than as aesthetic experiences.



While such teacher-centered models offer accessibility and clarity, they may inadvertently limit opportunities for higher-order thinking and personal engagement. The pressure to align with standardized frameworks, including CEFR-aligned assessment systems (Sidhu et al., 2018; Alih et al., 2021), often reinforces performance-driven instruction. Abdul Razak et al. (2023) further argue that teachers' pedagogical content knowledge significantly shapes how literature is implemented within classroom-based assessment regimes. In highly structured curricular environments, literature may therefore be reduced to measurable outcomes rather than exploratory dialogue.

Conversely, global trends reveal increasing advocacy for language-based and reader-response approaches that position learners as active meaning-makers. Arafah (2018; 2019) proposes innovative models that integrate literature as a communicative and interpretive tool in ELT, encouraging students to connect texts with lived experience. Hussein, Meena, and Ali (2021) similarly report that learners demonstrate more positive attitudes toward English when literature is taught interactively rather than through rote explanation. These approaches promote interpretive autonomy and deeper cultural understanding.

Project-based and genre-based frameworks also contribute to more student-centered literary engagement. Handrianto and Rahman (2018) emphasize that project-based learning enhances collaboration and authentic language use, while Almacioğlu and Okan (2018) highlight the effectiveness of genre-based instruction in developing structured writing skills. Process-oriented and differentiated strategies (Li & Razali, 2019; Ismail, 2019) further support learners' varied proficiency levels, bridging the gap between creative interpretation and linguistic accuracy. However, these methods demand additional planning time and pedagogical expertise.

The integration of technology has also reshaped global implementation patterns. Digital storytelling applications (Amelia & Abidin, 2018; Har et al., 2019), mobile-assisted language learning (Hasan, 2020), and gamification strategies (Luo, 2023) demonstrate measurable gains in engagement and skill acquisition. Social media platforms such as TikTok have been explored as tools for enhancing literary knowledge and participation (Rajan & Ismail, 2022). Broader evidence-based reviews (Lamo et al., 2023) indicate that technology integration can amplify learner motivation when pedagogically aligned with clear objectives.

More recently, artificial intelligence has emerged as both an opportunity and a challenge in ESL literature classrooms. Systematic reviews on AI in ESL contexts (Sharifuddin & Hashim, 2024) identify benefits in feedback automation and personalization, while Ibrahim (2023) discusses concerns regarding AI-assisted plagiarism and academic integrity. These developments highlight the evolving balance between innovation and regulation in literature pedagogy.

Despite promising innovations, implementation barriers persist. Teachers frequently report constraints related to time, training, and curricular demands, particularly when adopting task-based or student-centered approaches (Hasnain & Halder, 2023). Perception-based syntheses (Shen & Chong, 2023) reveal that learner engagement with feedback and interpretive tasks varies depending on instructional clarity and classroom climate.

Additionally, Chaudhary (2022) underscores the importance of asset-based instructional mindsets in fostering equitable participation. Collectively, global evidence suggests that while traditional, information-based models remain prevalent due to systemic pressures, a gradual shift toward interactive, technology-enhanced, and learner-centered literature pedagogy is underway.

Conclusion:

Teaching literature in international ESL/EFL contexts remains a multifaceted and evolving endeavor that extends beyond the mere transmission of linguistic knowledge. It requires educators to negotiate the interconnected goals of language development, cultural literacy, critical thinking, and personal formation. Literature, when meaningfully integrated, offers learners opportunities not only to expand vocabulary and syntactic awareness but also to engage with diverse worldviews, ethical dilemmas, and human experiences. However, achieving this balance is particularly challenging in systems shaped by examination pressures, rigid curricula, and large class sizes. In such contexts, teacher-led, information-based approaches continue to dominate because they provide structure, efficiency, and measurable outcomes aligned with standardized assessments.

Despite these constraints, international scholarship reflects a gradual but significant shift toward student-centered and communicative pedagogies. Approaches such as reader-response, language-based instruction, project-based learning, and genre-oriented frameworks demonstrate strong potential for fostering deeper engagement and interpretive autonomy. These models reposition learners as active constructors of meaning rather than passive recipients of textual analysis. Yet their success depends



heavily on teacher preparedness, pedagogical content knowledge, and institutional support. Without adequate training and time allocation, even well-designed approaches may fail to achieve their transformative potential.

Ultimately, effective literature instruction in ESL/EFL settings demands reflective practice. Educators must carefully evaluate their learners' linguistic proficiency, sociocultural backgrounds, emotional readiness, and academic goals before selecting appropriate pedagogical strategies. A flexible, context-sensitive approach—rather than adherence to a single method—is essential for sustaining both academic rigor and authentic engagement.

Future research should further investigate how digital technologies, including mobile applications, gamification, and artificial intelligence, can address persistent challenges such as limited instructional time and overcrowded classrooms. Exploring sustainable models of technology integration may offer practical pathways for enhancing accessibility, personalization, and meaningful interaction in global ESL/EFL literature education.

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