

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**FORMEANING RESPONSE
APPROACH IN THE TEACHING OF
POETRY: A CASE STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

Many previous studies show students' lack of interest and comprehension when learning poetry, and various approaches to teaching poetry have been introduced to solve this problem. Among the approaches are the Stylistics and the Reader Response Approach. The Formeaning Response Approach is an approach introduced by Harlan Kellem in 2009 to overcome the contradiction that exists between the advocates of Stylistics and Reader Response Approach. Kellem suggested that both the approaches should be intergrated. Kellem believes that using the Formeaning Response approach does not only make students understand poems, it will also allow them to enjoy their learning process. He believes that when both stylistic aspects and students response are being paid attention to, students will not only be able to understand and the linguistic aspects of the poems, but they will also be interested in learning poetry. Since Kellem's study only suggested the classroom activities to be used in lessons but no evidence of students' experience using the approach, the current study aims to study students' experiences using the classroom activities suggested in the Formeaning Response approach. This study opts to use the case study method, and 29 students from Faculty of Creative Multimedia are chosen as the respondents. Researcher's reflective journals, students' reflective journals, and interviews are used to collect data. Data collected are then analysed using the case study data analysis proposed by Houghton et al. (2015). The study concludes that by using the Formeaning Response approach, students experience (i) an elevated interest in poetry lessons, (ii)collaborative learning via group work conducted. Other than that, this study reveals that the Formeaning Response Approach can contribute tothe Malaysian higher education students' learning of poetry because the approach: (i) provides opportunity for them to understand poems and literary devices, (ii) offers an avenue for students to enhance their language proficiency, (iii) allows students to be creative. Finally, this study also divulges that the Formeaning Response Approach is able to change students' attitude towards poetry. Therefore, the findings of the current study correspond with the notion that Harlan Kellem suggested that integrating both the Stylistics and Reader Response Approach can result in positive learning experience in students. The researcher suggests further studies to be conducted, especially quantitative studies, to investigate the effectiveness of the approach to further increase the Formeaning Response approach's credibility.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Literature in ESL

Literature has always been perceived as an important aspect in English language teaching and learning. Carter and Long (1991) identified the two reasons of using literature and termed them as literature for study and literature as a resource.

The first reason, literature for study, entails reading literature within a pedagogical institution, and it is done to obtain qualification, such as obtaining a degree or passing a subject, in literature studies. Literature for study involves analysing literary texts, learning about the historical and cultural aspects of the text, understanding the author's background and recognizing the literary terms. On the other hand, the second reason, literature as a resource, illustrates a "less academic" approach to the reading of literature. Reading literature becomes the medium that allows students to develop self-awareness of their surrounding and also provides opportunity for their linguistic abilities to expand (Carter & Long, 1991).

The two reasons identified by Carter and Long (1991) are also the reasons why literature was initially incorporated in the Malaysian curriculum. Subramanian (2003) stated that literature was introduced in KBSM with the main objective of improving students' English language proficiency. In addition, it also aims to increase their interest in reading and contributes to students' personal development, character building, and thinking skills (literature as a resource). It is also specified that the introduction of literature targets at enabling students to enjoy reading and will eventually help develop understanding of other societies, cultures, values, and traditions (literature for study). The relevance of teaching literature is also emphasised by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MoE) as it acclaimed the role of English literature component that is integrated in English language classroom as being able to engage students with text and enhance their English language proficiency through intercultural reading, as well as understand and appreciate Malaysian local cultures that are represented in the English literature component (MoE, 2011). In Malaysian schools, literature is taught via short stories, novels, poems and drama (Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah KSSM, 2003).