

Improving English Proficiency Skills through Literary Works

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ABSTRACT

This study explores learning through literary works contribute on the English proficiency and learning improvement of students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS). Literature, including novels, short stories, poetry, and drama, serves as an effective medium for enhancing students' vocabulary, grammar comprehension, and overall language skills. Using a qualitative research approach, the study examines students' experiences in engaging with literary texts and analyzes how these engagements contribute to their motivation and linguistic development. The findings indicate that reading literary works significantly enriches students' vocabulary, strengthens their understanding of grammar, and improves their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Additionally, literary engagement fosters critical thinking and cultural awareness, making language learning more immersive and enjoyable. The research also highlights the benefits of integrating literature with other learning methods to create a more holistic approach to language acquisition. In conclusion, the study emphasizes the importance of incorporating literary works into English language curricula to enhance students' proficiency and academic growth.

Keywords: Literary works, English proficiency, Qualitative research, Language learning, Vocabulary

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INTRODUCTION

Learning English can generally be done in various ways, one of which is by reading English literary works. (Klarer, 2004) states that in many cases, literature refers to the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorized as literature in the more exact sense of the word. Literary works can include novels, poetry, and short stories. Generally, students can learn English by reading textbooks and theoretical books that present manual guidelines, which often share similar or even repetitive concepts. While this method of learning is effective, reading literary works, which are not yet widely used by students, can actually provide a different experience and understanding when learning English. For instance, imagine a student finishing an English novel, which is a literary work. A novel may consist of hundreds of pages, and each chapter might contain thousands of words. Thus, students can discover a richer and more diverse source of vocabulary. Fajriyah (Inayatul, 2013) explains that vocabulary is one of the components of the English language that plays an important role in understanding reading material and expressing all ideas in written or spoken form. A strong vocabulary enables individuals to comprehend texts more effectively and articulate their thoughts clearly, whether in writing or speaking. This highlights the significance of vocabulary development in language learning and communication skills. (Wardani, 2015) states that vocabulary is a crucial aspect of language, as it appears in every language skill, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The more extensive a student's vocabulary collection, the better their English proficiency will be.

Learning English using literary works is not only enjoyable but also an effective way to enhance students' motivation to learn, as literature uses language that is more flexible and

easier to understand, while students are actively engaging in learning by doing. The Learning by Doing method was introduced by John Dewey. John explained that in the learning process, people must experience what they are learning or engage in actions and be placed in real-life situations (Dewey, as cited in Sunami, 2014). Hamalik (in Anis Santi Sunami, 2014) states that if learning activities are directed toward individuals being able to work or perform tasks in specific fields, learning will become more effective. When students read direct quotes or conversations in literary works, such as novels or drama texts, they can directly understand and observe how English is used in real conversations. This is different from when students read textbooks or theoretical books that only provide guidelines, which may differ from their actual use in daily life.

Literary works play a significant role in enhancing students' learning and English proficiency, offering a rich medium for language acquisition and critical thinking development. There are two primary ways to engage with literary works: reading the original texts and watching their film adaptations. Reading literary texts allows students to deeply explore the nuances of language, literary devices, and cultural contexts, fostering a profound understanding of English vocabulary and grammar. On the other hand, watching film adaptations provides a visual and auditory experience that complements textual analysis, making complex narratives more accessible and relatable. According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) language acquisition is more effective when learners are exposed to comprehensible input that engages their interest, and films often serve as a dynamic tool to achieve this. Furthermore, researcher Janice Radway emphasizes the importance of diverse mediums in literary engagement, suggesting that multiple formats can deepen comprehension and appreciation of literary themes. For students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS), integrating these two approaches not only improves language skills but also cultivates an appreciation for the artistic and cultural value of literature. By combining reading and viewing, learners can bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application, making literature a powerful resource for academic and personal growth. As suggest, reading texts provides a deeper level of (Cook et al., 1989; Bruner, 1996) engagement with language, making it the more impactful method for enhancing language skills. Therefore, this article emphasizes the importance of reading as a tool for academic and linguistic growth.

The researcher interested in studying the topic of learning using literary works, which is actually effective and beneficial for learning English but is not commonly used in teaching and is only utilized as a reference or supplement. Generally, English students have an intermediate level of English proficiency. (Richards and Schmidt, 2010) define English language proficiency as the ability to use English fluently and accurately in various communicative situations, both formal and informal. This ability includes skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. English language proficiency as the ability to use English effectively in various domains, such as academic, professional, and social settings (Pearson, 2013). This level of proficiency includes mastery of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and an understanding of cultural and sociolinguistic contexts. The levels of English language proficiency are Beginner, Elementary, Intermediate, Upper Intermediate, Advanced, and Proficient. By reading literary works, it is expected that students will acquire a more extensive and refined vocabulary to enrich their linguistic diversity, thus improving their proficiency level. This vocabulary can be useful for students in the future, both for communication and for writing academic papers in English.

This study explores the role of literary works in English language learning by examining how students engage with literature to develop their proficiency. At the core of this research are two key questions: (1) How do students learn English through literary works? and (2) How do literary works contribute to English learning improvement and students' English proficiency skills? By addressing these questions, the study aims to assess the impact of literary works on students' learning progress and investigate whether reading literary texts enhances their language skills. Ultimately, this research seeks to provide

insights for educators and curriculum developers on the effectiveness of integrating literary works into English language education to foster a more engaging and enriching learning experience.

Literature Review

To ensure that the research remains focused on existing problems, avoids duplication, and contributes to research novelty, conducting a literature review of previous studies on similar themes is essential. Based on this approach, the researcher identifies several relevant studies. Research by (Intan Nia Salsabila, and Saralena Manik, 2024) how literature might improve students' English language proficiency. They employ quantitative techniques. They employ quantitative techniques. The findings demonstrate that reading literature while learning English has a major positive effect on language proficiency. The research is related to the author's study on how literature can improve students' English proficiency; however, the author focuses on studying how reading literary works affects students' learning improvement as well as their English proficiency.

Learning more about studying with literatur works as the main medium enables students to engage in learning by doing. Reading conversations in novels, texts in dramas, or dialogues between characters in films is considered learning by doing, as students directly learn how English is practiced in real use. In a study by (Melia Erba Robani, Fia Anisa Rachim, Amelia Febriani, and Ega Rizqi Fitri A, 2021) show about the method of learning by doing in optimizing the quality of learning of junior high school students. This will help students to develop active learning skills in the learning process. The type of research used is a type of qualitative research. The design of the study design was compiled by researchers using literature studies. This research focuses more on the general 'learning by doing' approach in a broad context of learning, author research that uses literature as a medium for learning is more specific in examining how literature can be an effective tool in active learning, especially in language acquisition.

Furthermore, The research by Ni Kadek Sri Widiastuti and Vera (2023) This study focuses on investigating the impact of integrating literary works to improve students' critical thinking in English class with the aim of discovering how teachers could use literary works in the class and how integrating literary works could improve students' critical thinking. Besides, it also addresses students' perceptions of the literary works used in the class to improve their critical thinking. The result shows all of the students observed gave a positive response by stating that literary works analysis helps them when giving opinions and judgment more critically. The research is related to the author's study because focus on the use of literary works to enhance critical thinking, while the author investigates the impact of using literary works to learning improvent students' and English language proficiency.

METHOD

This study will adopt a qualitative method to explore how reading literary works affects students' motivation to learn and their English proficiency skills. Qualitative research relates to ideas, perceptions, opinions or beliefs of the person being studied and all of them cannot be measured by numbers. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social human problem. Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. It focuses on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and relies on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their every day lives. This design is appropriate because it allows for a rich, in-depth examination of students' experiences and attitudes, which are crucial for understanding the impact of literary engagement on motivation and language skills.

Objects and Subjects of Research

The subject of the study is 20 students at University Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS). These students are the focus as the research examines how their engagement with literary works affects their English proficiency and overall academic growth. By analyzing the students' experiences and outcomes, the study seeks to understand the impact of literature on their cognitive abilities, critical thinking, and language skills development.

The object of the study is the literary works that students are exposed to within their academic setting. These literary texts and audio-visual, ranging from novels, short stories, poems, film and drana, are used as tools to improve students' language proficiency, enhance their vocabulary, and promote deeper understanding of the English language. The research explores how these literary works serve as a medium for learning, fostering both linguistic and intellectual development in students, and contributing to their overall improvement in learning outcomes.

Data Source

The data for this research will be collected from students at University Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS) who have completed courses that require them to engage with literary works. These courses include Extensive Reading, Introduction to Literature, Poetry, Fiction, Drama, and Literary Appreciation, all of which provide students with exposure to various literary texts and analytical approaches. The study will take 7th semester students, as they have already undergone extensive coursework related to literature, allowing for a more in-depth evaluation of how literary engagement has influenced their learning improvement and English proficiency.

The selected students fall within the middle to upper levels of English proficiency, meaning they have a solid foundation in the language but are still in the process of refining their advanced skills. By assessing their experiences and progress, this study aims to determine the extent to which literature contributes to their cognitive and linguistic development. The findings will help illustrate how literary engagement enhances students' analytical thinking, comprehension, and overall mastery of English.

Data Collection Technique

The data collection instrument includes open-ended interview questions designed to explore the participants' experiences and perceptions. The interview questions focus on several key areas, including the frequency and type of English literary works they learned. The perceived impact of literary works on their English language skills, such as speaking, listening, reading comprehension, and writing abilities. Their perception for English literature and how it influences their overall learning process.

Open ended questions in this study aims to capture a detailed and nuanced understanding of the students' experiences. This qualitative approach allows for the collection of rich, descriptive data that highlights the personal and contextual factors influencing the relationship between reading literary works and the development of English proficiency skills.

Data Analysis

Miles and Huberman (1994) offer a comprehensive qualitative data analysis framework that emphasizes a systematic approach to understanding and interpreting data. Their perspective on qualitative research is grounded in the idea that data analysis is not just about categorizing or sorting information but involves reducing, organizing, and displaying data to facilitate meaningful insights. They argue that qualitative research is inherently dynamic and iterative, requiring continuous refinement of categories and themes as new data emerges. According to them, qualitative data analysis should follow three primary steps: data reduction, which involves simplifying and focusing data; data display, which

helps to organize the information in a clear and accessible way; and conclusion drawing/verification, where researchers generate insights and verify the accuracy of their interpretations. They view the process as flexible and fluid, encouraging researchers to engage with data interactively, refining themes as they move through the analysis. This approach allows for a deep and nuanced understanding of complex phenomena, focusing on patterns and relationships that emerge from the data itself.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Students learn English through literary works through Reading Literary Works and Watch Movie

The analysis of the interviews conducted with 20 students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS) revealed several key findings regarding the impact of literary works on their learning improvement and English proficiency skills. The interview results revealed that there are two type of literary works studied by students written works such as novels and poetry, also audio-visual media such as films or dramas. Most students learn english trough literary works by reading novels and watching films. These two approaches offer distinct experiences, with reading novels providing an in depth exploration of the storyline and linguistic style, while watching films or dramas offers visualization that facilitates comprehension and enhances interest in the literary works.

Student N says :

"I really love Harry Potter, both in its novel form and in the film adaptations. Reading the novels allows me to understand the storyline in more detail, while watching the films helps activate my visual imagination. Considering that some courses require me to analyze novels or films, I will choose Harry Potter as the literary work to study."

Student I says :

"I read novels quite frequently. Usually, I read novels or fan fiction. I also enjoy watching foreign films. When I have free time, I spend it reading or watching dramas. I remember reading a fantasy novel that was really challenging for me because it had many unfamiliar vocabulary words. Considering the story was good, I kept reading while learning a lot of new vocabulary."

Student J says :

" I prefer learning English by watching movies because the visualization is engaging and more communicative to support listening and speaking skills. It shows how people practice English in conversation, like in daily interactions."

The students tend to choose to read literary works in the form of novels. Reading novels provides students with the opportunity to engage in an in-depth exploration of the storyline, character development, and the language style used by the author. Novels typically offer rich language use, with various vocabulary and complex sentence structures, which can enhance reading comprehension as well as vocabulary acquisition.

In addition to reading, many students use audiovisual media, such as films and dramas, to improve their English skills. Watching films and dramas provides a visual experience that enriches language understanding, especially in terms of listening comprehension and recognizing social and cultural contexts that are often not found in written texts. The dialogues in films or dramas are often closer to everyday conversation, helping students understand more natural and informal ways of speaking. This also helps them recognize variations in accents, intonation, and verbal expressions, which enhance their speaking and listening skills.

Learning Literary Works through Recommendations and Self-Selection

According students, there is a noticeable difference in the impact of learning through literary works recommended by lecturers compared to those they choose themselves.

Student F says :

"The novels recommended by the lecturer are more complex and do not match the genre we want. In contrast, the novels we choose ourselves can be read according to our preferred genre and interests."

Student I Says :

"Not much difference. However, the ones I choose myself feel more enthusiastic. When I choose, I genuinely want to understand, so I study it. Meanwhile, what the lecturer assigns can sometimes be uninteresting or boring, so I only read it briefly and then forget it after I'm done"

Student k Says :

"Usually, the recommendations from the lecturer are only general literary works or for educational purposes and are not specific or suited to the students interest."

Literary works recommended by lecturers are often perceived as more complex and challenging to understand, as they are typically selected with specific academic learning objectives in mind. Additionally, lecturer recommended works tend to be more general in nature and may not always align with students' interests, making them less engaging or motivating for students to explore and understand in depth. On the other hand, literary works chosen by students on their own initiative are more aligned with their interests and preferred genres. This alignment fosters a greater sense of involvement and enthusiasm in students, encouraging them to engage more deeply with the material. Their interest in content that matches their personal preferences also drives them to delve further, both in terms of understanding the narrative and exploring the language used. As a result, self selected literary works not only provide a more enjoyable reading experience but also significantly support the enhancement of students' learning improvement.

Literary works contribute to english learning improvement and their english proficiency skills.

The following is data on the English language skills of students who feel their proficiency has improved after studying literary works.

Table 1. Data on the English language skills of students who feel their proficiency has improved after studying literary works.

English Skill	Improvement	No Improvement
Reading	18	2
Writing	16	4
Speaking	20	-
Listening	17	3

Reading Skill

Studying literary works has a significant impact on students English language proficiency skills. The following are the results of interviews with students regarding the development of their reading skills after engaging with literary works :

Student K says :

"Reading literary works enhances my reading skills because it enriches my vocabulary, improves my understanding of context, and trains my ability to analyze language styles and implied meanings."

Student N says :

"Studying literary works in text form improves reading skills to be more fluent because it familiarizes me with English vocabulary and its pronunciation."

The data emphasizes the positive impact of literary works on students' English language skills, particularly in reading. Out of 20 students, 18 reported significant improvement in their reading abilities, highlighting the benefits of engaging with literary texts. Exposure to these materials enhances comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and

familiarity with complex sentence structures, all of which contribute to stronger reading proficiency. This suggests that consistent and prolonged engagement with literary works plays a crucial role in improving reading skills, reinforcing the importance of extensive reading in language development.

Writing Skill

Writing skills also demonstrated noticeable improvement, with 16 students attributing their progress to studying literary works. The following are the results of interviews with students regarding the development of their writing skills after engaging with literary works:

Student R says :

"Literary works, especially in the field of English, teach the correct sentence structure because we can learn directly from native speakers. Thus, my writing skills improve slightly due to the assistance of English vocabulary and its pronunciation."

Student A says :

"Reading literary works continuously makes me familiar with and understand the word structures used. It also adds variations of words and new affixes that can be utilized."

These findings suggest that exposure to diverse literary works plays a crucial role in enhancing students' English proficiency, particularly in writing and vocabulary development. This improvement suggests that exposure to diverse writing styles, sentence structures, and thematic elements in literature provides effective models for students to emulate, thereby enhancing their ability to craft coherent and expressive written responses.

Speaking Skill

Speaking skills showed the most pronounced impact, with all 20 students reporting positive changes in this area. The following are the results of interviews with students regarding the development of their speaking skills after engaging with literary works :

Student N says :

"Although the impact may be small, we can practice becoming more fluent when applied in daily life"

Student L says :

"Regarding speaking skills, I feel that they have improved, but it mainly affects word arrangement or adding words to my vocabulary."

Student I says :

"By frequently listening, especially in movies or dramas, there are distinctive conversations or monologues that, upon closer examination, can be imitated. It's great for practice."

From the interview results, it was found that literary works help improve students' speaking skills . This can be attributed to the combination of reading literary texts and engaging with audio visual adaptations such as films or dramas, which expose students to pronunciation, vocabulary, conversational patterns, and natural sentence rhythms that are essential for effective verbal communication.

Listening Skills

Listening skills improved for 17 students. The following are the results of interviews with students regarding the development of their Listening skills after engaging with literary works :

Student S says :

"For listening skills, there has been improvement, but I feel a bit uncertain about listening tests because the audio in films and the listening tests usually feel different."

Student L says :

"When watching, one must listen to what the actors say. Because there are visuals as distractions, it's necessary to focus on listening. Indirectly, we get used to listening in English, which helps improve our listening skills"

The audio-visual format of certain literary works, such as films and dramas, likely plays a significant role in enhancing listening comprehension. These formats provide authentic auditory experiences, allowing students to hear and process spoken English in a variety of contexts. This exposure helps them improve their ability to recognize accents, intonation, and natural speech patterns, making their listening skills more effective and nuanced.

Overall, the data indicates that reading literary works significantly supports both learning improvement and English proficiency development among students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS). The combined use of textual and audio-visual media creates a comprehensive learning experience, with the most notable impact observed in speaking skills, followed by improvements in listening, reading, and writing. These findings highlight the importance of integrating literary works into educational practices to holistically enhance English language skills.

The following table is data on the improvement of students' skills after studying with literary works.

Table 2. Data on the improvement of students' skills after studying with literary works.

Skill	High (<60%)	Middle (50-40%)	Low (>30%)
Reading	14	4	2
Writing	3	12	5
Speaking	4	10	6
Listening	4	9	7

The data highlights that studying literary works significantly improves students' reading skills, with 14 out of 20 students achieving high improvement, showcasing the effectiveness of engaging with written texts like novels and poetry. Writing skills primarily showed middle-level improvement (10 students), indicating that while exposure to diverse writing styles is beneficial, additional practice may be required to achieve higher proficiency. Speaking and listening skills exhibited a more varied distribution, with only 4 students achieving high improvement in each area, while the majority fell into middle or low categories. This suggests that while literary works contribute to language development, integrating complementary resources such as audio-visual materials and interactive activities may enhance speaking and listening proficiency more effectively.

The interview results also revealed that most students feel more confident using English after studying literary works.

Student A says :

"Yes. When I improve my English skills through reading literary works and watching films, I become more confident in using English because I know what I want to say or write."

Student V says :

"Of course, with frequent exposure to English through literary works, my English skills have improved more than just relying on classroom learning or lectures at university."

This result explain they are able to directly learn the habits, style, and culture of the authors, who are mostly native speakers. Through literary works, students not only learn vocabulary and grammar but also understand the nuances of language used in broader

social and cultural contexts. They can see how authors express ideas, emotions, and experiences in various situations, which gives them deeper insights into the natural use of language. Therefore, in addition to improving language skills, literary works also help students feel more connected to the way of speaking and thinking in English, boosting their confidence to communicate more fluently and accurately.

Furthermore, learning through literary works is considered more enjoyable and effective for various reasons. The following are the results of interviews with students considered more enjoyable and effective learning with literary works :

Student says :

"That's right. Regular textbooks often feel boring and rigid. Using literary works as an alternative is great. This new approach is interesting and much more enjoyable."

Student M says :

"Literary works are more enjoyable. There are many unfamiliar elements that feel intriguing and rich in meaning, making them not boring. Additionally, imagination can sometimes offer beauty amidst the harshness of reality."

Learning through literary work is the flexible use of language in literary works, with examples that closely resemble reality, allowing readers to experience how language is used in more natural and expressive contexts. Moreover, literary works not only provide language education but also introduce new cultures that enrich our understanding of the world. Literary works are also more interesting because they are not monotonous or boring, with diverse storylines that can captivate the reader's interest. Through these stories, we can see how the world works, but they are packaged in a more engaging and relaxed narrative. However, it is important to note that this method may not be suitable for everyone, so textbooks should be used as a complement to ensure a balanced and comprehensive learning process.

Discussion

The findings from the interviews conducted with students at University Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS) provide valuable insights into the influence of English literary works on their language skills and overall learning improvement. The analysis reveals both the benefits and how using literary works as part of the English learning process, and the students' experiences highlight key factors that contribute to the effectiveness of this method.

The first finding from the study is the varied frequency with which students engage with literary works. While more than half of the students learn literary works through reading text and also audio visual like drama and film, a notable portion of them engage with these texts based on recommendations from their lecturers or personal preferences. The difference in impact between works recommended by lecturers and those chosen by students themselves is particularly striking. Literary works recommended by lecturers are often perceived as more academically challenging and aligned with specific learning objectives, yet they tend to be less engaging due to the lack of alignment with students' interests. In contrast, when students select literary works based on personal preference, they are more invested in the material, leading to greater motivation and a deeper understanding of the content. This highlights the importance of aligning reading material with students' interests to foster a more engaging and effective learning experience.

The second findings is the contribute literary works to english learning improvement and their english proficiency skills. The data on improvements in students' English language skills demonstrates the positive impact of literary works across multiple areas. A significant majority of students reported improvements in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Notably, all students reported improvements in speaking and listening, which can be attributed to the combination of reading literary works and engaging with films or dramas.

The exposure to conversational patterns, pronunciation, and sentence rhythm through these audio-visual materials likely helped students internalize these aspects of language more effectively. Additionally, improvements in writing skills reflect the influence of diverse writing styles and structures found in literary works, which provide students with models for crafting their own written responses.

The third findings indicate that students feel more confident using English after engaging with literary works. This increased confidence stems from their ability to learn not only vocabulary and grammar but also the cultural nuances embedded in the language. Literary works provide insights into how native speakers express ideas and emotions in various contexts, which helps students feel more connected to the language and its usage in real-life situations. This sense of cultural understanding, combined with the improvement in language skills, boosts students' confidence in their ability to communicate effectively in English.

The last findings suggest that learning through literary works is considered more enjoyable and effective due to several factors. Literary works offer flexible and natural language use, relatable to real-life situations, and provide students with exposure to diverse cultural contexts. The captivating and engaging nature of stories in novels and films also contributes to a more enjoyable learning experience. Additionally, literary works offer a form of escapism, allowing students to explore fictional worlds that help them gain insights into reality in a more relaxed and enjoyable way. However, it is important to recognize that this method may not be suitable for every student, and a balanced approach that includes textbooks and other learning materials should be used to ensure a comprehensive learning experience.

The previous studies collectively support the foundation of the author's research, (Intan Nia Salsabila et al. 2024) conducted a study which examines how literature improves students' English proficiency demonstrating that literary language proficiency students. This study builds upon these findings by exploring how literary engagement directly impacts students' learning improvement and English proficiency development.

Studying literary works can be considered as learning by doing because, in the process, a person does not merely receive information passively but also experiences, analyzes, and interprets texts actively. Literary learning involves emotional, intellectual, and imaginative engagement, allowing readers or learners to feel as if they are directly experiencing the events within the work. Research conducted by (Melia Erba Robani, Fia Anisa Rachim, Amelia Febriani, and Ega Rizqi Fitri A, 2021) highlights how the learning by doing method can optimize the quality of learning. This study aligns with the concept of literary learning as a form of learning by doing, where students do not just passively read literary texts but also actively engage in the process of understanding, analyzing, and interpreting language in real-world contexts. For instance, reading dialogues in novels, scripts in plays, or conversations in films helps students learn English in everyday use, enabling them to experience language learning directly and more effectively.

The benefits of studying literary works as a form of learning by doing are diverse. First, learners can develop empathy as they understand different perspectives, emotions, and life experiences of characters in stories. This helps them become more sensitive to the feelings of others in real life. Second, critical and analytical thinking skills improve as students must interpret implicit meanings, understand symbolism, and evaluate moral messages in texts. These findings align with research conducted by (Ni Kadek Sri Widiastuti and Vera, 2023), which shows that integrating literary works into English learning enhances students' critical thinking skills. The results indicate that students respond positively to the use of literary works, as it helps them express opinions and evaluations more critically.

CONCLUSIONS

The significant influence of literary works on learning improvement and english proficiency skills of Students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS). The research revealed that engaging with both written literary works, such as novels and poetry, and audio-visual media, such as films and dramas, positively contributes to the enhancement of students' language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The study also found that students tend to feel more confident using English after studying literary works, as they acquire vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore, the research suggests alignment with personal preferences fosters a greater sense of involvement and enhances the learning experience. The combination of written texts and audio-visual media allows students to internalize language patterns, pronunciation, and conversational rhythms, which are essential for effective communication. While the method of using literary works proves to be enjoyable and effective for many students, it is important to recognize that it may not be suitable for all learners. Therefore, integrating literary works with traditional textbooks and other learning resources can offer a more balanced and comprehensive approach to language acquisition. Overall, the study supports the value of incorporating literary works into the English language curriculum to improve language proficiency and provide a more engaging, culturally enriched, and enjoyable learning experience for student.

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