



RESEARCH PAPER

Difficulties face by students of BS English in Literary Analysis

¹Atiqa Najeeb*, and ²Haseeba Jameel

1. Student of Undergraduate Program, Department of English, University of Kotli, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Pakistan
2. Student of Undergraduate Program, Department of English, University of Kotli Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Pakistan

*Corresponding Author | atiqanajeeb23@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the challenges encountered by Bachelor of Science in English (BS English) students in analyzing literature. It focuses on difficulties such as recognizing symbolism, understanding historical context, identifying literary devices, grasping narrative voice, interpreting stage directions, discerning intended meanings, and analyzing plot structure. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving a comprehensive literature review and qualitative data collection through questionnaire conducted among BS English students. The literature review provided a theoretical framework for understanding the complexities of literary analysis, while the qualitative data collection offered insights into the practical experiences and perceptions of students. The findings reveal several noteworthy trends. Students often struggle to recognize symbolism, frequently misinterpreting or overlooking its significance in literary texts. Understanding the historical context of works proves challenging, with many students failing to connect the socio-political climate of the author's time with the themes of the text. Based on these findings, recommendations are proposed to investigate how cultural background influence the challenges encountered by BS English students in literature analysis, considering factors such as language proficiency and exposure to diverse literary traditions.

KEYWORDS BS English Students, Challenges, Literature Analysis

Introduction

The study of literature is a cornerstone of the BS English curriculum, offering students the opportunity to explore a wide range of texts from various historical periods, cultures, and genres. However, despite its importance and inherent value, many BS English students encounter significant challenges in their journey to understand and analyze literary works. This research paper aims to explore and elucidate these difficulties, which often hinder students' academic performance and appreciation of literature.

Literary comprehension is a critical skill for students pursuing a Bachelor of Science in English. This ability is foundational not only for academic success but also for fostering a deeper appreciation of literature's complexities and nuances. However, students often encounter various challenges that hinder their ability to fully grasp literary texts. The purpose of this research paper is to analyze the specific comprehension challenges faced by BS English students. By identifying and understanding these obstacles, educators and curriculum developers can better support students in overcoming them, ultimately enhancing their literary analysis skills.

Literary analysis is a complex skill that involves a deep understanding of various elements such as symbolism, historical context, literary devices, narrative voice, and plot structure. These elements require students to engage in higher-order thinking, critical analysis, and contextual interpretation. However, the transition from basic comprehension to sophisticated analysis is not always smooth for BS English students. Factors such as a lack of prior exposure to literary concepts, insufficient critical thinking skills, and inadequate guidance can exacerbate these difficulties..

However, the process of analyzing literature can be challenging, requiring students to navigate complex narratives, thematic elements, and literary devices. This research paper aims to explore the difficulties faced by students of BS English in analyzing literature, focusing on the various factors that contribute to these challenges and potential strategies to overcome them. Analyzing literature involves more than just reading and understanding the text; it requires critical thinking, interpretation, and the ability to articulate one's insights effectively. Students often encounter difficulties in identifying and interpreting literary devices such as symbolism, imagery, and irony, which are essential for understanding the deeper layers of a text. Additionally, students may struggle with analyzing complex themes and understanding the historical, cultural, and social contexts in which a work was written. The challenges faced by students of BS English in analyzing literature can also be attributed to the diverse range of texts they encounter, spanning different genres, time periods, and cultural backgrounds. This diversity can be both enriching and overwhelming, as students are tasked with making connections between texts and understanding how they contribute to the broader literary canon. Furthermore, the teaching methodologies and resources available to students can also impact their ability to analyze literature effectively. Traditional approaches to teaching literature may not always align with the needs and learning styles of students, leading to disengagement and frustration. Despite these challenges, there are various "strategies that can help students overcome difficulties in analyzing literature. These include engaging in active reading practices, participating in discussions and collaborative learning activities, and utilizing digital resources and tools to enhance understanding. By examining the difficulties faced by students of BS English in analyzing literature, this research paper aims to shed light on the complexities of literary analysis and provide insights into how educators can better support students in this endeavor.

Literature Review

Analyzing literature presents multifaceted challenges for undergraduate students pursuing a Bachelor of Science in English at the University of Kotli AJK. This literature review aims to explore these challenges through the lens of existing research and scholarly discourse.

Effective pedagogical strategies are essential for mitigating the challenges of literature analysis. Educators must provide scaffolding, guidance, and feedback to help students develop the requisite skills and confidence (Clark, 2017).

However, variations in teaching methodologies and instructor expertise may impact the quality of support available to students. ng literature often involves grappling with complex texts, requiring students to navigate intricate narratives, dense language, and abstract themes (Smith & Johnson, 2018). This challenge is compounded by the diverse range of literary genres and historical contexts encountered in English literature curricula.

Students might not have enough support from their teachers or enough books to help them. Johnson (2018) found that having good teachers and access to resources can make a big difference in how well students understand literature.

Engaging critically with literature demands more than surface-level comprehension; it necessitates the ability to interpret texts through various theoretical frameworks and perspectives (Jones, 2019). BS English students must develop analytical skills to deconstruct and evaluate literary works effectively.

For students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, analyzing English literature can pose additional hurdles (Nguyen, 2020). Language barriers may impede comprehension, while cultural differences can influence interpretation, requiring students to bridge gaps in understanding.

Conducting literary analysis often involves extensive research, requiring students to locate, evaluate, and synthesize secondary sources (Brown et al., 2021). Limited access to scholarly databases or inadequate training in research methodologies can hinder students' ability to conduct comprehensive analyses.

Analyzing literature poses significant challenges for BS English students at the University of Kotli AJK, including complexity of texts, language proficiency barriers, and limited exposure to diverse literary traditions. However, by adopting effective strategies and seeking support, students can overcome these challenges and develop their analytical abilities.

Material and Methods

This research employs both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to thoroughly explore the challenges faced by BS English students in literature analysis. Combining these approaches allows for a more nuanced understanding of students' experiences and the complexities involved in literary analysis.

The research design integrates qualitative and quantitative methods, which are suitable for capturing detailed and varied experiences. This mixed-methods approach ensures a well-rounded exploration of the challenges encountered by students. Qualitative methods help to uncover the underlying reasons behind these challenges, while quantitative methods provide a broader statistical perspective on the issues.

Participants for this study are selected through purposive sampling. This technique is employed to ensure that the sample includes students who are most relevant to the research question. Specifically, 15 BS English students are recruited, with 5 students from each of the 3rd, 5th, and 7th semesters. This selection ensures representation from different stages of the academic program, capturing a range of experiences and perspectives. By including students from various semesters, the study aims to understand how challenges evolve as students progress through their studies.

Data will be collected using a structured questionnaire. This instrument is designed to gather comprehensive information about the students' experiences and challenges in literary analysis. The questionnaire consists of both closed and open-ended questions. Closed questions provide quantifiable data on specific challenges, while open-ended questions allow participants to describe their experiences in their own words. This mixed question format helps capture both general trends and detailed personal insights.

The questionnaire is administered either electronically or in person, depending on participants' preferences and accessibility. Electronic administration may include online surveys sent via email or a survey platform, while in-person administration could involve face-to-face distribution and completion. Ensuring flexibility in data collection methods helps to maximize response rates and accommodate participants' needs.

Once collected, the qualitative data is analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involves identifying and analyzing patterns or themes within the data. The process includes coding responses to group similar answers and uncover common themes related to the challenges of analyzing literature. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the nuanced difficulties students face and provides insights into how these challenges might be addressed.

The quantitative data is analyzed to identify statistical trends and patterns in the challenges reported by students. This analysis involves summarizing responses to closed-ended questions and generating descriptive statistics to highlight common issues across different semesters.

Ethical considerations are crucial in conducting research. Participants are informed about the study's purpose and their role in it, ensuring that they provide informed consent. Confidentiality will be maintained by anonymizing responses and securely storing data. The study adheres to ethical standards to protect participants' rights and privacy.

The methodology of this study is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by BS English students in analyzing literature. By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, the research aims to offer valuable insights that can inform strategies for improving literature education and supporting students in overcoming these challenges. This approach contributes to a deeper understanding of the difficulties students face and help develop more effective educational practices.

Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaire highlights various challenges encountered by BS English students at the University of Kotli AJK when analyzing literature. This analysis aims to find out the complexities involved in literary analysis and provide a comprehensive understanding of the difficulties encountered by students.

One of the most significant challenges identified is the difficulty students have with understanding the historical context of literary works, which is essential for fully grasping the text's meaning and relevance. Historical context is crucial for interpreting literature, as it provides insight into the social, political, and cultural conditions that influence a text. According to the data, 53.3% of the students reported struggling with this aspect. Historical context involves the socio-political, economic, and cultural background in which a literary work was produced. This background can deeply influence the themes, characters, and events depicted in the text. For instance, understanding the impact of Victorian society on Charles Dickens' novels or the influence of post-colonialism on Salman Rushdie's works requires an appreciation of the historical period. Many students struggle with this aspect, often due to a lack of background knowledge or inadequate integration of historical context in their studies. Teachers could use historical background information in their lessons, provide contextual summaries, and incorporate multimedia resources such as documentaries or historical texts to bridge this gap.

Students also face challenges in recognizing and analyzing literary devices such as metaphor, symbolism, and imagery. Literary devices are tools used by authors to convey deeper meanings and enhance the reader's experience. For example, Shakespeare's use of metaphor in "Macbeth" adds layers of meaning to the play's exploration of ambition and power. However, students often struggle to identify these devices and understand their significance in the text. This difficulty suggests a need for targeted instruction on literary devices, including exercises that help students practice identifying and interpreting these elements in various texts.

Another major difficulty for students is applying critical theories to literary texts. Critical theories, such as feminist, Marxist, or psychoanalytic criticism, offer different perspectives for interpreting literature. For instance, a feminist reading of Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" could reveal insights into gender roles and societal expectations of the 19th century. However, students often lack the foundational understanding needed to apply these theories effectively.

Understanding the intended meaning of poetry is another area where students face difficulties. Poetry often employs complex language and symbolic imagery, which can be challenging to interpret. Students may struggle with deciphering poetic language and uncovering the deeper meanings behind the words. This difficulty highlights the need for targeted strategies to improve students' skills in interpreting poetry. Introducing specialized poetry analysis techniques and encouraging close reading practices could help students gain confidence and proficiency in understanding poetic texts.

Analyzing Plot Structures and Character Development Analyzing plot structures and character development in novels is another area of difficulty. Students need to understand how narrative elements and character arcs contribute to the overall story. For instance, analyzing the development of the protagonist in George Orwell's "1984" requires an understanding of how plot events shape the character's journey and the novel's themes. Students often find this aspect challenging, which underscores the importance of teaching narrative analysis and character studies. Educators could use tools such as plot diagrams and character maps to help students visualize and understand narrative structures and character development more effectively.

Interpreting dramatic texts, including understanding stage directions and dialogue, presents additional challenges. Stage directions provide crucial information about the setting and actions, while dialogue reveals character interactions and conflicts. For instance, understanding the dramatic irony in Shakespeare's "Macbeth" involves careful attention to both dialogue and stage directions. Students may struggle with these elements, highlighting the need for detailed instruction on dramatic techniques. Educators could incorporate practical exercises, such as performing scenes or analyzing dramatic techniques, to enhance students' understanding of theatrical conventions.

The data also indicates that BS English students recognize the importance of creative writing skills and critical thinking in literature analysis. Creative writing skills can enhance students' ability to engage with literature by fostering a deeper appreciation of literary techniques and styles. Critical thinking skills are essential for analyzing complex texts and developing well-supported interpretations. Encouraging the development of these skills through writing workshops and critical thinking exercises could support students in becoming more proficient in literary analysis.

Students also face challenges related to difficult language and limited interpretation of complex literary texts. The use of sophisticated language and intricate narrative structures can pose obstacles to comprehension and analysis.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, including enhanced instruction, additional support, and opportunities for practice and application in literary analysis for BS English students at the University of Kotli AJK. Educators should focus on integrating historical and theoretical contexts into their lessons, using interactive and practical methods to engage students, and providing additional support where needed. Professional development for educators can also play a crucial role in equipping them with effective teaching strategies. By addressing these challenges, educators can enhance students' analytical skills and foster a deeper appreciation for literature, ultimately contributing to their academic success and engagement with literary studies

Results and Discussion

Table 1
No of problems face by Students

Problems	No of students	Percentage
Understanding Historical context	8	53.3%
Understanding literary theories	7	46.67%
Literary devices	4	26.67%
Narrative voice	3	15%
Character analysis	3	15%
Intended meanings	10	66%
Plot structure	12	80%
Stage directions	6	40%

The research on "Analyzing literature poses challenges for BS English students in University of Kotli AJK" reveals several key findings. Among the challenges identified, understanding historical context is reported as a significant issue, with 8 students encountering difficulties in this area. Similarly, 7 students struggle with grasping literary theories, indicating a need for additional support in theoretical comprehension. Literary devices pose challenges for 4 students, while narrative voice and character analysis each present difficulties for 3 students. 10 students facing challenges in intended meanings. Plot structure emerges as a major concern, with 12 students reporting difficulties in understanding narrative organization. Additionally, 6 students find interpreting stage directions problematic.

Table 2
No of Students face problems

No of female students	8	46.67%
No of male students	7	54.33

This table provides data on the gender distribution among BS English students at the University of Kotli AJK regarding the challenges they face in analyzing literature. It indicates that out of the surveyed students, 7 are male, while 8 are female. This data suggests a slightly higher representation of female students in the study compared to male students.

Table 3
From which semesters Students are selected

Semester	No of students
Semester 3rd	5
Semester 5 th	5

Semester 7th

5

This table presents data on the distribution of BS English students from different semesters at the University of Kotli AJK who were included in the research on challenges in analyzing literature. Specifically, 5 students each were surveyed from the 3rd, 5th, and 7th semesters.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has thoroughly examined the challenges faced by BS English students in analyzing literature and has highlighted several key areas where these students encounter difficulties. The findings reveal that students struggle with understanding various critical aspects of literary analysis, including symbolism, historical context, literary devices, narrative structure, character development, and plot organization.

By analyzing these issues, it becomes clear that overcoming these obstacles requires a multifaceted approach involving both educational strategies and institutional support.

One major issue identified is the difficulty students face in understanding historical context. The historical context of a literary work provides essential background that influences its interpretation. Without a solid grasp of the time period and societal conditions in which a text was written, students may miss crucial elements of meaning and relevance. This difficulty highlights a need for educators to incorporate more comprehensive lessons on historical context, perhaps through integrated coursework that combines historical and literary studies.

Another significant issue is the difficulty students have with literary devices, such as symbolism, metaphor, and imagery. These elements are essential for uncovering deeper meanings within texts, yet many students find them challenging to identify and interpret. To address this, educators should implement targeted instructional strategies that focus specifically on literary devices. By providing students with the tools and practice they need to analyze literary devices, educators can enhance their interpretative skills and overall comprehension.

Understanding and applying literary theories is another area where students face difficulties. Literary theories offer frameworks for interpreting texts, but they can be complex and abstract. To improve students' grasp of these theories, educators might consider using more accessible language and concrete examples when introducing theoretical concepts. Incorporating theory into practical exercises and discussions can help students see how these frameworks apply to actual texts, making theoretical analysis more approachable and less intimidating.

Narrative structure and character development are also areas of concern, as students often struggle with analyzing how stories are organized and how characters evolve. Effective teaching strategies in these areas might include using narrative diagrams to map out plot structures and character development arcs. Classroom activities that involve dissecting narratives and character studies can help students better understand these elements. Providing clear guidelines and frameworks for analyzing narrative structure and character development can further support students in developing their analytical skills.

The challenges faced by students in interpreting stage directions and understanding dramatic texts indicate a need for more focused instruction in drama. Drama involves unique elements, such as stage directions and dialogue, which require specific analytical skills. Educators can address this by incorporating more detailed studies of dramatic texts, emphasizing how stage directions and dialogue contribute to the overall narrative and thematic content. Practical exercises, such as reading and performing scenes, can also help students better understand and engage with dramatic literature.

Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of creative writing and critical thinking skills in literature analysis. Developing these skills can enhance students' ability to analyze and appreciate literature more deeply. Creative writing exercises that allow students to experiment with different literary styles and techniques can provide valuable insights into how literary devices and narrative strategies work. Critical thinking activities that challenge students to evaluate and question texts can further strengthen their analytical abilities.

By focusing on these areas, educators can enhance the learning experience for BS English students, helping them overcome the challenges of analyzing literature and succeed in their studies. As students develop their analytical skills and deepen their appreciation for literature, they will be better prepared to engage with texts in a meaningful and insightful way. Ultimately, addressing these challenges will contribute to a more effective and enriching literature education, fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of the literary arts.

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