

A Deconstructive Reading of William Golding 's *Lord of the Flies* for EFL Learners in the Saudi Context

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Abstract

Comprehending words and expressions in the English language is a critical challenge for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners in the Saudi context given the enigmatic nature of the language and ambiguity of texts with multifaceted interpretations. Focusing on the use of Jacques Derrida's deconstruction approach, William Golding's "Lord of the Flies" was analysed in terms of characterisations, themes, and textual structure to explore how a deconstructive reading influences the interpretation of this post-world war English novel and the implications and challenges of applying deconstructive textual analysis among EFL learners in the classroom. This qualitative study was purely descriptive that employed purposive and convenience sampling techniques for the selection of the texts, where the novel and the researcher served as the key instruments. In particular, the deconstructive reading procedure, advantages and challenges of deconstructive reading for the EFL learners, and multifaceted interpretations of the novel were discussed in this study. Through a deconstructive reading, the EFL learners play an active role in deconstructing the meanings of texts based on their own interpretation and understanding, which can indirectly enhance their interest in language and improve their critical thinking skills. Expectedly, this study would spark interest and appreciation to the concept of deconstruction as well as other prominent literary works, particularly William Golding's allegory debut novel. In order to discover the various dimensions of meanings in literature, it is recommended for future research to comprehensively explore the novel in detail and conduct deconstructive analysis on prominent speeches and characters in play.

Keywords: Deconstruction approach, EFL Learners, Literary criticism, Lord of the Flies, reader-response role, textual analysis

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1.0 Introduction

It is a challenge for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners to gain comprehensive understanding of the English texts in terms of the characterisations, symbolic interpretations, rhetorical devices, and themes. Addressing that, the present study exclusively explored the Nobel Prize-winning British author, William Golding's debut English novel entitled "Lord of the Flies" using Jacques Derrida's deconstruction approach to comprehend the link between the written discourse and its interpretation. Fundamentally, the deconstruction approach involves textual reading of a selected written discourse to unravel the nature of its inherent and integrated focal points. From the Western philosophical perspectives, the substantiality of the texts is believed to transcend the boundary of language. Derrida highlighted the enigmatic and changeable nature of language given the absence of logical connections between the signifiers (Bertens, 2001; Güney&Güney, 2008). Hence, as a possible means of analysing the texts, the deconstruction approach is said to address their irreducible complexity, instability, or contradiction of language used in texts.

The deconstruction approach to textual analysis is linked to the discovery of what opposes the underlying meaning or structure of the texts. As a post-structuralist approach, a deconstructive reading focuses on immersing oneself in the texts and unravelling the contradictions within these texts. The readers set themselves apart from the author and explore and make sense of the internal logic of ideas or meaning of the texts based on their own understanding of the focal points. In other words, there is no authoritative interpretation of any particular text in a deconstructive reading. This unique theory of deconstruction shifts the central role of author in literary criticism to the readers instead. Hence, the constructed meanings of the texts are exclusively subjected to the readers themselves. Through this reader-response approach, the interpretation of the texts become more dynamic and less rigid, resulting in different meanings and topics of discussion. Unlike other approaches, the deconstruction approach allows the readers to critically explore the texts and the reversible and subversive system of binary opposition, instead of a rigid hierarchical structure. Despite the different interpretations of the deconstruction approach, the critics and theorists widely agree on the assumptions that contradict Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of structuralism; thus, strengthening the basis of a revolutionary theory in the field of literary criticism (Derrida, 1979).

Texts are often described as contentious, indistinct, multifaceted, and paradoxical with diverse concepts and principles. The diverse meanings or interpretations of texts critically challenge the learners' learning of the language (Tanvir& Amir, 2018). According to the concept of deconstruction, the constructed reality is closely related to relativism and cultural and personal interpretations. Through a deconstructive reading of any forms of texts (e.g. short stories, novels, or poems), various school of thoughts are captured given the diverse meanings of texts. The interpretation of words used in a particular text depends on the archaic and modern meanings of the words, the underlying contexts of the text, semantics, and other attributes of the meaning construction process (e.g. grammar, phonetics, and syntax). In other words, the contradiction within a particular text is inevitable with no clear-cut meaning or interpretation.

The use of deconstructive postmodern literary criticism encourages EFL learners to critically analyse, synthesise, summarise, and evaluate the texts for the development of low- and high-level critical thinking skills in today's dynamic world. In view of the above, the application of the deconstruction approach to analyse William Golding's novel entitled "Lord of the Flies" was deemed imperative for the present study to explore the implications and challenges of textual analysis among EFL learners in the classroom. Focusing on the deconstructive approach and its implications among EFL learners in the Saudi context, the study addressed the following questions:

1. How does the deconstructive approach influence the interpretation of William Golding's post-world war English novel entitled "Lord of the Flies"?
2. What are the implications of applying the deconstructive textual analysis among the EFL learners in the classroom?

2.0 Literature Review

The present study explored William Golding's "Lord of the Flies" using Jacques Derrida's deconstruction approach to explore the implications and challenges of textual analysis among EFL learners in the classroom. Prior to that, the related literature on the concept of deconstruction was first reviewed. As part of the critical literary movement, Jacques Derrida who is a French critic pioneered the deconstruction approach back in 1960 in response to the dominating use of the theory of structuralism and textual analysis in literary criticism. As Barry (2002) highlighted, the language autonomy position has shifted from structuralism to post-structuralism, which is in line with the philosophy of Nietzsche on the manifestation of interpretations and the absence of reality. Hence, the introduction of the deconstruction approach as a post-structuralist approach in language and literature addresses the ambiguous, inconsistent, and unclear link between the signifier and signified.

The concept of deconstruction considers the complex nature of language that basically reflects an entire civilisation with multifaceted views (Nealon, 1988). The enigmatic and changeable nature of interpretations put the rigid structure used to explore language in question. Therefore, the structure of binary opposites (e.g. nature/culture or male/female) can no longer remain unaffected (Derrida, 1976) given the influence of cultural relativism. Derrida defined "transcendental signified" as a universally exact and relevant concept on its own (Moi, 2001). Fundamentally, a single word is related to various signifiers in semiotics (Tyson, 2006). In a deconstructive reading, the readers construct their own meanings to the texts (Derrida, 1979), resulting in the formation of diverse and changeable meanings of these texts (Culler, 1983).

In "The Death of the Author", Barthes (1977) highlighted that the construction of meaning of a particular text should not be rigidly bounded by the author's intended meaning, as the text is a tissue of quotations which may reflect multi-dimensional and multi-faceted meanings blended together.

Tanvir and Amir (2018), states that "Deconstruction" is a fresh take of textual analysis that contradicts structuralism and other earlier concepts, theories, and philosophies on sense and

meaning (Bauman, 1992) and this view of structuralist reality has rejected established knowledge and theories presents in the mind of the readers(Bretons, 2003).

Literary criticism emphasises the ambiguity of texts and the presence of contradictions within the texts, which highlight the importance of the deconstruction and post-structuralism approaches. Johnson (1980) explains that “Deconstruction” is not taking into account a negative term but considered as a positive concept in the *Critical Difference*. The deconstruction approach is used to analyse and unravel the meanings within the texts (Hancock& Tyler, 2001). There are binary opposites within the textsgiven the presence of hierarchical structure, where the dominant one of these competing opposites is assigned with the privileged status whereas the remaining is assigned with the marginalised or unprivileged status (Cuddon,1991). Nevertheless, the status of the marginalised element can be reversed (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2007) with no regards of the typical typecast or conventional literary theories and ideologies, resulting in the introduction of a new means to textual analysis. For instance, the feminist literary criticism stresses the stereotypical representation of women in terms of social, political, and psychological elements (Tyson, 2010) following the feminist movement during the late 1960s that opposed the misrepresentation of gender in the language of literature (Barry, 2002).

Meanwhile, Davis and Schleifer(1989) explain that the theory of deconstruction is related to reading approach and in deconstructive strategy are philosophical hierarchies, in which two contradictory forces are called as the 'superior' entity and the 'inferior' entity. Examples for these contradictory binary opposites are good/evil, day/night, male/female, active/passive, and nature/culture. Nevertheless, the contradiction between certain elements may not be as straightforward as the above elements, as there are different cultural interpretations to certain terms—for example, the “cultural” term may refer to “biological” or “thematic” elements (Green &LeBihan,2006). The meanings of specific terms may not be universally applicable across diverse contexts. The deconstruction approach as a post-structuralist approach views any particular text as a constructed reality with multiple interpretations (Barry, 2002), as opposed to other conventional and stereotypical concepts that emphasise a single, definite meaning for a particular text. Unlike structuralism, deconstruction is developed based on the instability of language as means of communication (Derrida, 1979). Through the deconstruction approach, the conflicts, oppositions, inconsistencies, and disintegration within the structure of the texts can be identified (Barry, 2002).

In short, the deconstruction approach is theoretically a new literary approach that benefits the learning of EFL learners in the classroom. In the Pakistani context, Lashari and Awan (2012) applied Barry’s (2002) different stages of deconstructive reading strategies to analyse and interpret a short story entitled “The Cow” by Haider (1994). However, the application of the deconstruction approach in literary criticism, specifically among EFL learners in the Saudi context, has remained inadequately explored. Hence, focusing on the application of deconstructive reading strategies, this study deconstructed William Golding’s “Lord of the Flies” and explored several implications of the deconstruction approach among EFL learners in the classroom, specifically in Majmaah University.

2.1 Deconstructive Reading Procedure

Jacques Derrida's deconstruction approach is based on the concept of "difference" that reflects instability. The deconstruction approach was introduced to substitute the rigid structure of the meaning construction process that applies a single, fixed meaning to any particular text. In a deconstructive reading, the readers play a dominant role in deconstructing the texts by identifying any forms of gaps in the texts. Accordingly, EFL learners should follow a specific deconstructive reading procedure. Essentially, the think-aloud method in deconstructing the text is recommended for the EFL learners to observe and evaluate their thoughts and comprehension as they slowly read the text. At the same time, they are trained to re-read the text to make sense of the text and identify any hints of the underlying context within the text. The learners should immerse themselves in the text and identify the primary message of the text. Following that, they should read the text in detail and identify any forms of gaps (e.g. aporia, binary opposites, or stereotypes). Depending on the learners' critical thinking skills, each link between the signifier and signified should be critically deconstructed. The text is then assigned with a newly constructed meaning.

2.2 Advantages of Deconstructive Reading for EFL Learners

As part of the deconstructive analysis of a particular text, the EFL learners are typically assigned with a task to put their interpretations in writing. Writing can be a very demanding task for the EFL learners since the task to translate their thoughts into words require precise and definitive organisation of words that describe their points of view and reasoning. Furthermore, the assigned reading text can be contradictory, disorganised, and vague for EFL learners to comprehend and interpret. Nonetheless, the deconstruction approach can assist the process of deconstructing the text for EFL learners to deliver an engaging and organised write up of their analysis. In particular, this section describes specific outlines that benefit the EFL learners in systematically organising their thoughts during a deconstructive reading.

Firstly, the EFL learners identify and comprehend the complexities of the binary opposites of "A" and "B" and the circumstances of the existence of "A" and "B". Secondly, the EFL learners can also identify how and why the author plays with words to create an unexpected link between "P" and "Q". With that, the EFL learners' critical thinking skills can be stimulated and improved. In a deconstructive reading of a particular text, the EFL learners are also prompted to use a dictionary since they are required to comprehend the different etymologies (or sources) of the words used and meanings of the text. The EFL learners are required to conduct an in-depth assessment of the text, rather than skimming through the text to obtain shallow description and understanding. At the same time, EFL learners can expand their vocabularies or knowledge of the language and expressions.

Adding to that, the deconstruction approach prompts the EFL learners to identify any challenging or complex cultural notions in literary that may criticise or defy the clear-cut system of binary opposition. The deconstruction approach prompts the EFL learners to learn and evaluate the grey area and relationship between the competing opposites (e.g. nature/culture, male/female, mind/body, or reason/emotion) and how one element of the binary opposites dominates the other. Besides that, the deconstruction approach trains the EFL learners to be innately driven to be critical

towards the conventional approach of applying a single, fixed meaning to any particular text. Through this reader-response approach, the EFL learners can freely interpret and construct meanings during a deconstructive reading without being bounded to the rigid structure of privileged versus marginalised elements. The EFL learners are prompted to discover alternative interpretations or meanings of a word, expression, or text that may be overlooked by many.

2.3 Challenges of Deconstructive Reading for EFL Learners

The deconstruction approach introduces a specific reading process of any form of text that typically contains a hierarchical structure of two theoretically competing opposites, where one of the binary opposites is more dominant than the other (Davis & Schleifer, 1989). With that, EFL learners may encounter certain issues during the deconstruction of the text in various ways. The underlying basis of the deconstruction approach lies in the multifaceted interpretations and meanings of texts given the enigmatic and changeable nature of language, which complicate the process of comprehending and interpreting the texts for the EFL learners. The ambiguity and complexity of language make the process of deconstructing the texts difficult for EFL learners, particularly on what and how they conclude the meanings of the texts. Furthermore, in a deconstructive reading of a literary text, one should not just analyse the textual structure and identify the underlying binary opposites, but also evaluate how the author internalises the different set of language rules in writing. As there is no clear-cut interpretation or meaning in an internally conflicted text, the EFL learners may struggle to identify any contradiction or opposing flow of meanings in the behaviour of characters and the unfolding events. According to the deconstruction approach, any text can be structurally ambiguous, brilliant, and upsetting (Barry, 2002). The deconstruction of any particular text can be supported through linguistic, textual, and verbal models (Barry, 2002). Additionally, in a deconstructive reading of a novel, the EFL learners are required to identify and evaluate ambiguous, complex elements in order to comprehend the constructed reality, such as binary oppositions, characterisations, environmental settings, episodes, paradoxical expressions, rhetorical expressions, symbolism, and emerging themes. Moreover, comprehending these multifaceted elements in a deconstructive reading can be a critical challenge for EFL learners who are not exposed to or familiar with other cultures, linguistics, and ways of thinking.

3.0 Methodology

In order to deconstruct and marginalise the unity of structuralism significance, the present study exclusively adopted the deconstruction approach to analyse the characterisations, themes, and textual structure of an English novel that highlighted the complexities and flaws in human nature through children. Basically, the nature of this qualitative study was purely descriptive, which involved the collection of information that was then organised, tabulated, and described (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). Using purposive and convenience sampling techniques, the information was analytically, interpretively, and descriptively gathered in the form of words.

3.1 Instrumentation

An instrument serves as an important data collection tool in research (Arikunto, 2002) for a particular purpose, an individual, a group of people, or an inanimate object (Hornby, 1995). In

general, there are reactive and non-reactive methods, where the former involves the researcher to take an active, internal role in research as an observer, while the researcher in a non-reactive method is not part of research but trails the physical records and accounts of others. Considering the nature and focus of the present study, a non-reactive method was deemed fitting. In particular, William Golding's "Lord of the Flies" and the researcher served as the key instruments in this study.

3.2 Data Analysis Procedure

The researcher adopted a specific deconstructive procedure to analyse, interpret, and describe the gathered data. Most importantly, the data analysis was conducted with respect to the focus and objectives of the study, particularly on the textual structure and interpretation as well as the significance of conducting a deconstructive reading (to comprehend and deconstruct the novel). The data of each emerging theme was recorded and only relevant details were included in the analysis. Besides that, the relationships of these themes were holistically formed. The emerging perspectives and identified contradictions were ensured to be in line with the attributes of the characters in the novel. The data analysis primarily focused on the characters of the novel, such as the nature and behaviour of the key characters and how these characters communicate with one another towards their survival and destruction, which were expected to draw the interests of learners. In addition, external sources (e.g. journals or books) were considered to strengthen the analysis.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the present study was based on the deconstruction approach that was introduced by Derrida (1979) in response to the concepts of formalism and new criticism (that emphasise the structural unity of text) and structuralism. Barry (2002) elaborated that this post-structuralist approach that primarily advocates the decentralisation and deconstruction of texts opposes the existing system of binary opposition under the concept of structuralism. Focusing on the dominant role of readers, the deconstruction theory highlights the existence of different interpretations and meanings of the constructed reality in texts given the enigmatic nature and instability of the language itself (Derrida, 1979). Texts are also perceived as incomplete results with a combination of multiple sources, which reflect the indefinite structure of these texts (Derrida, 1979; Barry, 2002). Certain texts may also be irrelevant or complex to decipher, resulting in vague symbolic representation of the characters or elements. Nevertheless, the readers should try to construct meanings despite unclear or no direct mention or description of these characters or elements in texts. The multifaceted meanings of texts raise ambiguity issues and scepticism among readers.

Focusing on William Golding's English novel entitled "Lord of the Flies", the present study attempted to deconstruct the texts and unravel the diverse meanings of these texts in the Saudi context. Notably, the author of "Lord of the Flies" highlighted various contrasting binary opposites that reflect the essentiality of the novel, such as childhood/adulthood, civilised/uncivilised, and nature/nurture. Unlike adults, the children on an unknown, deserted island are depicted to be irrational or rowdy. The presence of adults in this novel was deemed necessary in order to create

order and discipline. Meanwhile, Jack who was appointed as a hunter and fearlessly killed animals for food represents evil and a threat to civilisation and humanity. This character was described as evil, as he displayed evil intent and gradually diminishing self-consciousness (Golding, 1987). Additionally, the author included several elements in the novel with different figurative and literal representations. For instance, figuratively, Piggy's glasses represents flaws in human nature when it was literally used as a tool to make fire. In another example, the conch is a symbol of discipline as well as the downfall of civilisation and humanity figuratively, while it literally served as a tool to assemble everyone on the island.

4.0 Deconstructive Analysis of "Lord of the Flies"

As opposed to the conventional meta-narrative approach, the postmodern thoughts and narrative approach in this fictional tale reflect the potential downfall of civilisation and humanity in the face of tragedy or in this case, world war. In the first chapter of the novel, the author presented a comprehensive analysis of the characters in terms of their features and personalities. These characters with distinctive temperament display postmodern dismantled features (e.g. diversity, contradiction, and mystery) that mirror the differences of their inner nature. Following that, the second chapter of the novel presented a postmodern narrative structure and the use of postmodern narrative rhetorical devices and writing styles. Additionally, the third chapter revealed the diversification of the narrative that shifted from internal mental thoughts to external physical actions.

The events in this postmodern novel were believed to take place during the Second World War. A British plane filled with school children of age 6 to 12 was hit and crashed at an unknown, deserted island. However, surviving on the island is a great challenge for all these school children. Basically, the novel depicted how the boys organised themselves in search of help and resources on the island.

One of the key characters in the novel, Ralph, was introduced as a fair-haired boy who had a conch and a father who was an officer in the British Navy. He was seen as a ray of hope for the other school children on the island. Besides that, Piggy, who represents intelligence and knowledge, proposed using the conch to gather all the scattered crash survivors on the island and his glasses to start a fire signal. Unfortunately, later in the novel, Piggy's glasses was broken into fragments. He is the final character in the novel to be killed. On the other hand, Jack, as the antagonist, represents strength. He was described as a red-haired, strong, and dangerous boy. Instead of displaying positive leadership qualities to encourage cooperation among the children and to seek rescue, Jack was strongly fixated on the present events and exhibited more regimental authoritative influence over the others.

Apart from these two key characters, there are Simon and Eric who represent the mystical visionary power. They "predicted" the negative traits of human nature. Meanwhile, the conch serves as an important element in the novel. It represents discipline. Through the use of conch, the school children organised meetings and whoever with the conch was given the opportunity to freely voice their concern or opinion. There is also a beast that was described as the Lord of the

Flies from the viewpoints of these children. The line between the reality and fantasy in the novel was indistinct, as described in the following excerpt: *"There isn't anyone to help you. Only me. And I'm the Beast. ... Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill! ... You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are the way they are?"*(p.4). The beast was described as a slaughtered pig head on a stick. The exchange between the Lord of the Flies and Simon deeply reflects a distinctive vision about the growing evil among the children on the island. Alternatively, the vision insinuates savagery and the loss of order and discipline. The beast was reflected in these children themselves who gave in to the regimental authoritative influence led by Jack.

Ralph and Piggy first found the conch along the coastline. The conch was used to gather the other survivors on the island. Everyone agreed to elect Ralph as their leader. Ralph then appointed Jack to lead a group of hunters to hunt for food. The boys agreed to start a fire signal at the higher ground using Piggy's glasses and the gathered woods. All the other boys had their own obligations accordingly. Over time, the children gradually got used to the developed order and system and had some fun and games on the island.

As Jack was strongly fixated on hunting pigs for meat, his team eventually overlooked their responsibility to maintain the fire signal. Hence, at some point, Ralph expressed concerns about not maintaining the fire signal as well as the cold weather and rainfall that hit them. He proposed to build huts to stay dry and warm together. The conflict Ralph, Piggy, and Jack was the start of the downfall of the developed rules and order, resulting in chaos and distress among the other children. The younger boys eventually became more anxious and scared as they believed in a mystical presence of a terrifying beast on the island despite the reassurance from the older boys to remain calm and rational. The beast was merely an illusion and a mirror of the maleficent intent of the children through the struggle of power and submission.

One night, an unconscious parachutist landed on the island when Sam and Eric fell asleep during the night watch. The parachute was mistakenly thought as the beast. The twins ran back to the camp, claiming that they were under attack by the beast. Hearing that, the hunters led by Jack searched the area and stumbled upon the unconscious man who was mistakenly seen as a large, deformed ape. Considering their fear, Ralph gathered the boys and requested to start a fire by the beach instead. However, Jack disrespected Ralph and called him out as a coward. Jack then took the opportunity to take charge of the entire group and aggressively re-organised the group under his leadership. A barbaric and violent dancing ritual was organised that night, where Jack killed a pig and placed its head on the stick as an offering to the beast. Following that, Simon envisioned the pig head on the stick as the Lord of the Flies and had a premonition of tragedy and pain. Simon did not believe the manifestation of the beast and hinted that the beast represented the innate nature of humans. Unfortunately, Simon was viciously killed when he returned to the camp later in the novel.

Eventually, the final conflict between Ralph and Jack led the other boys to push a huge rock down the mountain that killed Piggy and destroyed the conch and Piggy's glasses. Ralph hurriedly

ran to hide from the other boys before he finally arrived at the beach. He bumped into a British naval officer who just arrived. He was stunned to see all the vicious and barbaric actions of the boys. Ralph appeared to be traumatised and in a state of shock about the death of Piggy and the other boys. The struggle between good and evil is clearly depicted through the conflicts between the key characters in the novel, such as Ralph, Piggy, Jack, Simon, and Eric. The concept of duality in the system of binary oppositions demonstrated the opposing priorities, social and moral obligations, and values through the antithetical characters of Ralph and Jack. Nevertheless, the line between civilisation and savagery is very closely connected and almost blurred in the novel, as the consequences of the latter appeared to save the boys at the end of the novel.

Besides that, the domination of male figures in the novel represents the postmodern feministic deconstructive features. However, (Lu, S. 2017) has justified the exclusion of female figures based on the following reasons, "if you land with a group of little boys, they are more like scaled-down society than a group of little girls will be. ... Do not ask me why and this is a terrible thing to say because I am going to be chased from hell to breakfast by all the women who talk about equality".

According to Derrida, the deconstruction of literary serves as a reflection of human nature and how it can be influenced by different external circumstances. For instance, the nature and behaviour of two conflicting key characters, namely Ralph and Jack, when they were stranded on an unknown, deserted island reflect markedly different values towards life and humanity. Likewise, the dark nature of Jack also clearly contradicts the nature of Piggy who was depicted as an innocent and knowledgeable boy.

Furthermore, the use of rhetorical devices yields binary oppositions and opposing interpretations in texts, resulting in ambiguous meanings (Murfin, 1996). For instance, the use of "conch" in the novel displays contradictory meanings—it is a symbol of discipline as well as the downfall of civilisation and humanity. The novel was filled with contradictions, particularly in terms of characterisation. The author described Ralph as an appealing boy who arrived at the lagoon with a conch from the mountain: "*There was complete stillness about Ralph as he sat that marked him out: there was his size, and attractive appearance; and most obscurely, yet more powerfully, there was the conch*" (Golding, 1987, p. 22). Ralph, who possessed the conch, was seen as a leader before the unfortunate events took place. Meanwhile, the author described Jack, who was a fearless hunter, as a leader of evil: "*The mask was a thing on its own behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness*" (Golding, 1987, p. 69).

Adding to that, the use of an omniscient third-person narrative approach adds complexity and ambiguity to the texts, particularly when the characters' actions are described from the perspective of a third person. For this novel, the author put himself outside of the story and did not include further details on the boys' inner life experiences. Therefore, the readers would not be able to find out the author's intended messages that were figuratively expressed in texts given the use of rhetorical devices. For instance, the pig head on the stick in the novel is one of the key elements with multifaceted interpretations. To Simon, the pig head on the stick was seen

as an all-powerful evil. Simon's vision of this so-called Lord of the Flies or the Devil (translated from "Beelzebub), which eventually made him collapsed in the novel, intensified its evil power. However, the pig head on the stick may also serve as a symbol of anarchism that caused the loss of order and discipline and the rise of barbarism and chaos among the boys as they were stranded on the island. The orderly conduct and discipline among the boys when they first gathered after the plane crash gradually diminished over time. Eventually, the boys submitted to their natural barbaric instincts with no regard of civilisation and humanity.

Additionally, the author described the behaviour of the characters in the novel and how these characters react in response to the surrounding environment. The boys were compelled to explore the deserted island to survive. In this case, air, earth, fire, and water served as the key elements to their survival. The author assigned each element to a specific character in the novel. In particular, Piggy represents the fire element; Jack represents the earth element; Simon represents the air element; Ralph represents the water element. These four key characters were confined to the influence of different elements with multiple combinations and eventually struggled against each other due to their personal values and nature of their character—it was either to rule or to be ruled by a single element (p.38).

The deconstructive analysis of these characters' hierarchical assumptions further revealed that the values and principles of Jack and Ralph represent two extreme, opposing ends. The behaviour of these boys reflect the nature of society. Ralph represents adaptability and rationality, while Jack serves as a symbol of brutality and violence. The author drew a line between Ralph (a symbol of civilisation) and Jack (a symbol of savagery) and placed them in conflicting situations. For instance, Ralph disapproved how Jack disregarded the order and system established for the boys on the island. Ralph expressed the need to maintain cooperation and assigned tasks for everyone on the island while waiting for rescue. However, Jack exhibited regimental authoritative influence over the other boys. He and his group were more into hunting and performing the ritual for the beast. He also criticised how Ralph handled the boys' fear of the beast. Their struggle of power eventually led to dire consequences. The novel highlighted flaws in human nature, dominance hierarchy, violence and fear, and tribal psychology themes. The social hierarchy among males and the dominating status of male over female were rather dominant in the earlier years, as masculinity was seen as the dominant figure in shaping civilisation and culture.

Besides that, the deconstruction theory implies that the discourse of marginalized characters in the novel " Lord of the Flies", such as Piggy, Simon, and Eric have been given a centralized position, and the author, William Golding, shifted them into the mainstream. The highlighted values and principles in the novel, such as civilisation, humanity, and violence, reflect the dreadfulness and negative consequences of war. In the novel, the conventional and stereotypical representations of certain cultures or social groups were disintegrated into savagery. The concept of deconstruction rejects western philosophy based on the logic of binary opposition such as Mind/Body, Black/White, and Rational/Emotional concerning the first category as high status while the other is considered as low status. These cultural relative terms appear to be deeply rooted and interconnected.

Furthermore, several critics claimed that the novel explored sin and religion in response to the Western social and political contexts and the fight between good and evil. Clearly, there are various interpretations of the novel, including the take on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. In addition, through the concept of deconstructive theory, the novel explored the concept of eco-criticism, particularly on the relationship between man and environment and the relationship between man and environmental preservation. The environment (e.g. food, water, sunlight, and fresh air) plays an important role in sustaining all life forms, including mankind. The concept of eco-criticism reflects the fundamental relationship between the environment and literature (Gerbaud, 1995). In essence, the novel contained mystical and parabolic elements, such as the psychological state and brutality of boys without the presence of adults and civilised society, the inherent evil thoughts and deeds, self-gratification, hierarchical social structure, and anti-intellectual ethos among the privileged children.

5.0 Conclusion

Jacques Derrida's deconstruction approach is seen as a breakthrough in the field of literary criticism given the enigmatic and changeable nature of language. Through a deconstructive reading, the readers are prompted to explore, deconstruct, and interpret the meanings of the texts. The deconstruction approach assumes that any particular text can be differently interpreted and has different meanings. Unlike structuralism, the strength of the deconstruction approach lies in its approach that involves exploring the diverse interpretations or meanings of texts through characterisations, symbolic interpretations, rhetorical devices, and themes without being bounded to a rigid hierarchical structure. The narration of a novel describes the characters' way of thinking and behaviour through the use of symbolism, metaphors, and several other literary techniques, which add ambiguities and uncertainties, particularly for the EFL learners. Hence, the deconstruction analysis of the characters and conflicts are expected to enhance the EFL learners' interest and critical thinking skills. Identifying and deconstructing the binary oppositions and other key elements of a novel allows the EFL learners to comprehensively explore the constructed reality based on the underlying meanings of texts.

Using the deconstruction approach, the present study exclusively explored William Golding's literary novel entitled "Lord of the Flies" in terms of the characterisations, contradictions, symbolism, and rhetoric devices. Expectedly, the deconstructive analysis of William Golding's "Lord of the Flies" would spark interest and appreciation to comprehend the diverse meanings of the texts and promote the concept of deconstructive analysis among scholars and practitioners. The use of deconstruction approach in this study proved the dynamic nature of words and expressions in language. The deconstructive analysis of "Lord of the Flies" explored the constructed relationships between characters, themes, and the surrounding environment that are relatable to the readers. Apart from heart versus mind and thoughts versus passion, the novel focused on the struggle between evil and good that eventually led to tragedy for the boys on an unknown, deserted island. One of the key characters in the novel is Ralph who was seen as a ray of hope. He represents goodness and rationality. His values strongly contradicted Jack's values. The evil nature of his character led the other boys to chaos and tragedy. Meanwhile, Piggy, who has a good relationship with Ralph, symbolises intelligence and knowledge. The outcomes of this

study on the deconstructive analysis of the novel were expected to benefit the EFL learners, particularly to expand their perspectives on textual analysis and improving their reader-response role in constructing the meanings of texts.

However, the present study was confined to Jacques Derrida's deconstructive textual analysis of William Golding's "Lord of the Flies" that was filled with binary oppositions, contradictions, and complex rhetorical expressions. Therefore, it is recommended for future research to comprehensively explore the novel in further detail, as only certain parts of the texts on the characters, episodes, and scenes that received substantial criticisms in terms of the language used were selected for analysis. Besides that, it is also recommended for future research to conduct deconstructive analysis on prominent speeches and characters in play in order to discover the various dimensions of meanings in literature.

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