



Original Research

Narrative Structures and Cultural Intersections: Exploring Malind Anim Folklore through Reader Responses

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Abstract

This study is a literary research that used a reader-response approach, which can open insights into the reader's view of a literary work, to find the results of literary receptions in the Folklore of Malind Anim, an indigenous community that inhabits the southern Papua region. The study of the people's stories of the Malind-Anim community is still minimal, so this research is expected to trigger community's enthusiasm to know the culture that is reflected in the People's Stories of the Society of Malind-Anim and also to be the material of policy-determining consideration in the efforts to preserve the stories of the people of the Anim. Questionnaires are given to 20 readers before reading Malind Anim's People's Stories, containing items that measure the level of readers, then they were invited for a semi-structured interview after reading to see the readers' response to the values in the people's stories of the Malind-Anim community. The research was divided into two phases. First, a structural approach to the work of People's Stories of Malind Anim society, where the researchers used heuristic and hermeneutic methods to find structure and literary elements. In the second phase, to investigate the implications of the work on the reader, the reader response approach was used to extract literary values from the reader's point of view. Results show readers at the developing level can only interpret values in general, such as religion, education, and the environment, and readers at the developed level can interpret that the folklore of the Malind Anim community has three main dimensions that readers can interpret at these levels: Environmental Protector, Gender Equality, and Mitigation.

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1. Introduction

It is challenging to write persuasively and intelligently about reading itself. Reading is a subjective experience that leaves no imprint (Ogden, 2022). Reading offers a vast world from two perspectives. The first is the perspective of reading content, and the second is the readers' perspective. Moreover, reading is comprehending, that is, the construction of meaning (Kelly et al., 1996). This process of meaning construction occurs due to the interaction between the reader and the content of the reading. An area of study that focuses on readers is Reader Response. Reader Response is a helpful approach since it emphasises the creative nature of reading while providing a systematic way of analysing language (Cushing, 2018)

Readers' development as readers is a complex and interactive process, with components like vocabulary, comprehension, and alphabet knowledge emphasised consistently and others targeted at specific developmental moments (Ihueze, 2015). In Reader Response, some readers can be categorised based on a positive/negative spectrum, then three readerly attitudes prevail that can be aligned with particular reader types: The Self-Deprecator, The Re-Reader, and The Sensera (Doche & Ross, 2022). Reader with The Self-Deprecator labels emphasises their lack of poetic skills, which makes literary difficulty hard to overcome. The Re-Reader foregrounds their need to engage with Ariel further to increase their appreciation of it. The

Sensera focuses on the feelings and sensations experienced, which means that difficulty is not construed as a barrier to meaningful receptive experiences. This shows that the reader has an essential role in constructing meaning, not only limited to the content that influences it but also the background and certain conditions within the reader that play a role in the formation of the meaning produced by the reader.

Pantaleo (2021) investigates the meanings made by students of children's literary works about language, social studies, and science. The results of these investigations show differences in meaning generated in the context of learning, which is in line with the context of traditional learning, where reader response theory became a prominent approach to literary criticism and classroom practice during the 1980s (Bush, 1994) But in general, works like Alexis Wright's *The Swan Book* (Stinson & Driscoll, 2022) trigger complicated things, ambiguous and disorienting language that draws on the tradition of literary modernism (Stinson & Driscoll, 2022). There must be a need to study the classification of predetermined readers more deeply, namely developing readers compared with advanced readers (Conradi Smith & Jang, 2022).

From a gender perspective, the reader response approach also has a significant role in determining differences from the interpretation carried out by readers. According to feminist cultural and literary theorists such as Charlotte Brunsdon and Rita Felski, the woman reader is typically defined as passive and uncreative, her interests as trivial and sentimental, and her reading as consequently apolitical (Grdešić, 2022). In a different genre, crime fiction novel readers do not simply view crime fiction as a puzzle to be solved. Instead, they place a high degree of importance on the substantive elements of the fiction, such as the quality and details of the plot, setting, and characters constructed by the author (Burgess & Williams, 2022). In terms of representation of works against reality, they found that Real-World Adventure books prompted reminders of discrete life events, while Real-World Relationships books prompted diffuse experiences. Fantasy Adventure books were the least likely to encourage reminders (Kuzmičová & Cremin, 2022). However, from a methodological point of view, it can be seen that other possibilities can occur due to language switching. These translational alterations affect the readers' perception, specifically dehumanization, discrimination, and racism in the text, comparing responses to each translation with reactions to the original (Mastropierro & Conklin, 2019).

The various studies above show that reader response studies offer a broad perspective. It can be seen from the multiple views regarding the level of formal education, gender, and genre in the works in the various studies. Specifically, in this paper, a study on folklore-based works has been carried out using the reader response method (Warman, 2015). Specific to a myth, a study using reader response is also popularly used as a scientific way of finding readers' perspectives on literary works (Bygstad, 2019; Malo-Juvera, 2012; Modellmog, 2014; Naaeke, 2005). It is different from research using reader response to see the reader's perspective on several folk tales representing the lives of Papua people. This research is urgent since Indonesia's eastern region has a very high level of diversity. Readers who have different backgrounds will undoubtedly interpret it differently. This difference occurs in many fields, such as ethnicity, background, and readers' reading level. It becomes interesting to study scientifically with the response reader method therefore, the research question in this research is formulated as follows:

- 1) How do readers with different cultural backgrounds depict the Malind Anim narratives?
- 2) How do the readers reflect on the value of Malind Anim Folklore?

Through the two research questions above, this research will give an insight into how fertilization emerges from the EFL side, and also the results of this research are expected to examine local government policies to build synergies in preserving local culture and maintaining harmony in the existing cultural diversity.

2. Literature Review

Reader-response is an approach that studies readers' interactions with and around texts, contributing to textual analysis (Whiteley & Canning, 2017). In this interaction between the reader and the text, an interactive process occurs, and the reader's schematic information and understanding of the culture of the text are as important as the text itself for adequate understanding (Melendez & Pritchard, 1985). This occurs because readers have Reading skills, especially vocabulary and background knowledge, which are essential for successful comprehension. After all, they match the level of text difficulty and task definition and encourage active engagement with various texts (Snow, 2010).

There is a crucial interaction between the reader and the text. Several studies are based on the perspective of the text presented and are faced with this reader-response method. In the context of narrative texts, the result is that psychologically, using the "you" perspective in a text succeeds in projecting the reader's psyche (Bell et al., 2019). In the EFL context, applying the reader-response method can encourage searching for meaning and developing higher-order thinking skills in future language teachers. (Garzón & Castañeda-Peña, 2015). The two studies using reader-response are in two different contexts. The first focuses on the reader as the focus, studying the reader's perspective to provide an overview of the reader's psychological condition when reading, and the second shows the impact resulting from reader responses as a form of process—strategic methods used in class.

Placing the reader as the focus of the study will open up an insight into how a narrative text can contribute by looking at the results of the interaction between the text and the reader. For example, by looking at reader-response from *Harry Potter* readers, readers will realise the importance of dialogic engagement with literary and popular texts in self-study research to address normalising discourses in teacher education and promote inclusiveness (Thomas, 2019). In the work *Old Man and the Sea*, the response of readers will assess this work as containing deep philosophical theories and eco-literary criticism that reveal great enlightenment about nature and society (Xiao, 2009). In older works but within the current period, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is interpreted as a source of aesthetic and intellectual pleasure and extraordinary political insight, with imaginative depictions and artful use of literary instruments (Ghimire, 2022).

Folklore is exclusive in this research because the responses produced can come from various groups. *The Folklore of the Malind Anim Community* is a story extracted from the writings of Val Baal, a researcher (Baal, 1966). This story is written in English in the book. Malind Community folklore is commonly found in local content teaching, launched by the government to strengthen local wisdom values. In EFL teaching, especially in the use of reader response to see the results of readers' interactions with a foreign language literary work, it is hoped that it can show how student interpretations can emerge in various ways.

3. Method

This research was carried out through several stages to justify the reader's response to the *Malind Anim Folklore*. The collection of Malind Anim folklore is a manuscript that local government agencies have published to preserve the oral literature of the Malind Anim community. At the initial stage, the researcher conducted Heuristic and Hermeneutic Analysis from the original manuscripts obtained by researchers from agencies interested in tracing the sacred texts of the Malind Anim community, in this case, the tourism office and the regional library and archives service of South Papua. This heuristic analysis was carried out to analyse the structural components in a literary text that may not have been fully excavated (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985). It is essential to do this considering the barriers that arise and the linguistic dialect found in the folklore manuscripts of the Malind Anim community that have been written down.

After the heuristic analysis was carried out, proceed with the hermeneutics analysis. At this hermeneutic stage, the researcher closely reads the folklore script and performs a straightforward interpretation. It was in line with the role of the researcher in qualitative research, namely as the main instrument (Jabrohim, 2017). After the structural stages have been carried out, proceed with the reader response method. The researchers distributed a questionnaire measuring the reading level of 20 participants willing to follow the study. This questionnaire comprised 24 questionnaires divided into three sections: cognitive, affective, and conative. The cognitive dimension aims to see how the reader defines the literary work, the affective dimension to know the reading motivation and the conative dimension to catch readers' reading habits. In this study, researchers classified self-deprecators and rereaders as developing readers and Sensera as developed readers. The researcher disseminated the manuscripts of the existing Folklore to EFL readers who had been previously classified and then gave them time to read the manuscripts.

After sufficient time, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with informants who had read folklore texts. The interview was conducted considering Structure, Content, and Interpretation. The researcher explores the interpretation component of the reader by paying attention to the signs in the New Criticism theory. From this new criticism, it was expected to find literariness in this collection of folk tales from the Malind Anim. This literacy-based research was expected to be a stimulus for further development research, both in the realm of literature and the realm of other scientific fields.

4. Results & Discussion

The Malind Anim community is currently facing a severe challenge where the massive acceleration of development is carried out so that the acculturation process of culture takes place very quickly. From the Preliminary initial results by researchers observing local community areas, the values of belief in local culture have been eroded. This is evidenced by the researcher's observation component, where there is still a low level of engagement between local cultural values in the learning process.

The first output of this research stage is the result of heuristic analysis. The heuristic is based on the concept of layers to reduce inclusion errors and addition errors that may occur when selecting papers to view the library. This error has an impact on internal validity and construct validity. By reducing errors, we argue that the study controls the threats to internal and construct validity that can occur in the awareness phase of literature (Aquino et al., 2006). It is also applied in this study to increase the level of validity of the reading readers will receive. Using this heuristic analysis, the researcher focuses on the structure of the work produced in the Malind Anim Folklore Collection. In terms of the writing structure, many things are still lacking in this folklore collection. The primary thing found is the writing structure that does not meet the criteria of writing a story script. The loss of several parts, such as orientation, problems, peak of the crisis, and resolution, is still found in several stories in the manuscript. It encourages researchers to make initial improvements, especially in making the manuscript more straightforward for further research steps to be carried out.

Based on incidental interviews conducted by researchers, the lack of structure in this story is probably caused by imperfect transitions that must be made. The Folklore of the Malind Anim community originates from oral literature, a hereditary belief about the beginning. In the process of converting it into a written literary text, it encounters obstacles. This does not only occur in the folklore works of the Malind Anim community, but many other works also experience the same barriers, both from a technical point of view and at a higher level in the world. Literature is the aesthetic aspect of the story itself (Leach, 2020). Regarding the feasibility of the book, it can be seen that the collection of folklore books is not yet registered.

Manuscripts given to readers for literary receptions are manuscripts modified according to good criteria in a written manuscript and translated into English. It is done to make it easier for the reader to make a reception on the work produced. The changes did not touch on the substance or content aspects of the story. The changes were limited to structure and complementing the deficiencies needed. This completion process was carried out through a structured question-and-answer process to maintain the originality of the work of the Malind Anim people themselves.

Twenty participants were randomly selected from schools in South Papua and then asked to fill in a questionnaire to measure the reader's level. The result was measured, and then those on the upper average line were grouped into developed readers as many as 8 and the other 12 below the middle value were set as developing readers. This reader was given the same work, the manuscript of the Malind people's story in English.

As previously explained, readers consist of developing and developed readers based on criteria given before. In the developing reader, some perspectives presented tend to exist at the surface level. It can be seen in how they carry out interpretations or hermeneutic processes limited to moral values, teachings, and interactions between characters. The general moral that is felt to be reflected in the various stories given, among others, according to developing readers, is the moral value of mutual respect, the moral value of women's emancipation, and the moral value of protecting the environment.

In mapping the reading responses received by the readers, the researcher mapped them into two main groups based on their reading insights. This reading insight is often known as the horizon of hope the reader owns (Jabrohim, 2017). It is crucial, considering the research was conducted in a place dominated by people with low literacy levels (Marnina et al., 2023). The following segment discusses the results of comparisons between developing and advanced readers, as well as the effects of contemplation carried out by advanced readers to see the in-depth meaning of the folklore studied.

4.1 Developing and Advanced Reader Perspectives Comparison

Readers at the developing reader level use literature as escapism or simply looking for entertainment. Ihueze (Ihueze, 2015), in his research, also proves this, where folklore gives the reader's immediate attention to entertainment and preservation. In the reception of this Malind Anim folklore, readers at the developing

reader level tend to make assumptions about how this folklore connects from one generation to the next. It can be seen in their response regarding this folklore's essence.

“Folklore is one of the media that connects one generation to the next. When reading this literary work, I see how a folktale should be able to build bonds, mainly because the character that appears tells of an origin.” — Selvira (Interviewee Reader)

The relationship of origin is a strong identifier for the reader in showing the existence of an affinity function. Readers interpret the "origin" in a literary work as an indication that literature is a link between generations. Therefore, it assumes that the messages regarding these origins are passed down from generation to generation. It is crystallised as a belief for a particular tribe or community. It is also a general assumption of most literary works in the form of folk tales. In the folklore of the Malind Anim people and other regions, readers at the developing level assume that folklore is a means of connecting the origins of the previous generation.

Different things are shown to readers at an advanced level. The resulting responses generally interpret readings that carry out the teaching function. It can be seen from how the reader contemplates literature in the form of folklore. In the contemplation carried out by the reader, it can be seen how the reader elaborates this folklore into elements close to the life of the Malind Anim people. This reflection can be seen in three dominant ways: environmental protection, gender equality, and mitigation. Readers at an advanced level can see literature as a teaching function to be implemented and elaborated on the conditions around them. The topic of discussion regarding the results of readers' contemplation at the advanced level will be described explicitly in the next sub-chapter.

4.2 Environmental Protector

The story of the Malind Anim community is a story that is close to the natural environment. The natural environment is one component closely related to the interactions between the characters and their surroundings the natural environment here, namely plants and animals. Plants are often believed to be herbs or herbs used as antidotes for various diseases that arise in people's daily lives. It is reflected in several stories in their mythology. In their mythology, plants are believed to be antidotes for various poisons or diseases they suffer.

“I see a lot of stories that describe the relationship between humans and nature. In many incidents and stories told, nature is characterized as a source of strength that influences the survival of the Malind Anim community” — Agung Ari Sentana (Interviewee Reader)

The habit of using nature is closely related to the daily life of the Malind Anim community. One of the most basic is concocting, an activity used as the foundation for the Malind Anim community in carrying out their lives. Some of them believe that nature is a symbol of life so that nature can support elements of health in their lives. It is represented in their stories, and they are not worried when they have to be separated from their colony. They entrust their lives to nature. When listening to the reader's response to the story of *Qaraipe*, they assume that a woman living separately from the colony is a matter of great despair. However, this indicates some of the beliefs of the Malind Anim community, among others: (1) Malind Anim women can adventure independently, and (2) Malind women are figures who can optimise natural results in individual survival.

“In the story about *Qaraipe*, for example, at first people might think that women in the Malind Anim community have many limitations, but who would have thought that the figure of *Qaraipe* is depicted as someone who goes on adventures and builds kinship relations with the Dobo community.” — Izak Kaize (Interviewee Reader)

There are many stories from various beliefs in Indonesia that involve women, but not all of them show the greatness of women in surviving independently amid the threats of the forest and the wild. However, this is minimally illustrated in the story of the Malind Anim people. Most readers agree that *Qaraipe* was a figure who could survive independently in the wild until he met Tumu. However, it is unclear how the threats and challenges *Qaraipe* faces are in wild nature. Still, it is seen that the solitude he experienced until his meeting was an indication of a strong self-defense effort made by *Qaraipe* to face the challenges of the wild. *Qaraipe* has tremendous potential to be developed as a figure of an adventurer in the wild, especially in showing how a woman is capable of being independent. But of course, this is also inseparable from the

contradictions that arise, namely, throwing away a girl who does not get a partner in a colony is an act that cannot be accepted by the wider community, especially in showing the emancipation of women.

When compared with the characterisations of other women in various folk tales, it can be seen that there are minor differences. In this case, the folklore of the Malind Anim community gives the reader an impression of how most of the elements of the story are well elaborated on nature. Women are always associated with romance, even with Qaraipe, but how romance is combined with a mystical belief in nature is an identity that belongs to the story of the Malind Anim community.

The impact experienced by readers when viewed from the results of receptions carried out also varies. Firstly, readers at the developing reader level always prioritise the restoration of identity, and they are adamant that this folklore is a way to restore the origins of the current condition. They argue that the Malind Anim people who inhabit this area of South Papua have many kinship origins. However, this has not been explored in depth, so further investigation of the various sources of kinship relations is necessary. When asked how to proceed after the investigation was carried out, these different kinship relations were found. They felt this relationship was unifying for them, but this was a bit contradictory to the initial assumption regarding the tribes inhabiting South Papua. Most of the tribes that inhabit the area of South Papua are ethnic, with relatively small colonies, such as Asmat, Mappi, Boven Digul, and Malind Anim.

Different things are reflected from the perspective produced by advanced readers, and they assume that the form of elaboration between a character in a literary work and a creature that is remembered as an animal that maintains a relationship should be used as a figure that supports preservation efforts. Some participants elaborate with preservation programs in other countries, which have been successful, among those mentioned is *Smokey Bear*.

Readers feel that opportunities can be generated from reading literary works in the form of folklore. This folklore can be used as a means of campaigning against various conditions of environmental destruction that occur. It is supported by most Indonesian people who believe in mythology or values left by their ancestors. Still, of course, by not removing the element of sacredness from these values or figures, it can be turned into a campaign for environmental improvement. Overall, the readers' contemplation on Malind Anim folklore shows that there is a form of elaboration between literary works and efforts to preserve the environment by considering the opportunities that arise from folklore, which is essential for particular communities.

4.3 Gender Equality

Arranged Married, in the local mythological literature of the Malind Anim community, there is a reflection of an arranged marriage that appears in the story of the origin of the Malind Anim community's kinship relationship with the Dobo community. Matchmaking is a pairing process between girls and boys in a village. Researchers feel this indicates that there is a practice of arranged marriages. But unfortunately, there are no details about how this matchmaking process happened. It can also be interpreted that the failure of the matchmaking was the beginning of the meeting between the Malind and Dobo people. It means that people believe matchmaking narrows social interaction and limits relationships to one particular ethnicity or family.

Protected Girl, in one of the stories told in the mythology of the Malind Anim community, there is an issue that includes children's environment, especially girls. It is said that girls with dimples are women with unique characteristics. This specialty is in the form of guarding carried out by one of the *Dema* or spirits represented in the figure of a snake (Beghr'aw).

“The snake (Beghr'aw) is often depicted as a spirit, a figure that might be feared by anyone who sees it, but here we don't think that this spirit plays a role in establishing balance between genders. Anyone would definitely think the same thing when a girl is looked after by a wise spirit, of course this is the message that is being conveyed to humans to treat the people being looked after well.” — **Selvira (Interviewee Reader)**

In a society with a high level of diversity, there is a distortion between racial and gender elements. It can be seen in how the confusion between the Malind Anim community experienced a shift due to the arrival of other cultures. In several explanations, it can be seen that when an occupation by a particular group of people, the occupation of culture also occurs. Some readers say this is quite relevant in the life of the Malind Anim community today. Their point of view regarding equality is slowly changing. People who originally had certain functions and roles also shifted along with the emergence of other cultures that were more

dominant. It also influences the social conditions of the Malind Anim community. Previous studies have shown that several things are not even seen in the current generation, namely the stereotype of the colonial occupation of the Malind Anim community, homosexuals. Apart from being feared as Swamp Headhunters, the colonialists at that time also indicated that the Malind Anim community was homosexual, but this tends to be weak because, up to the current search, there was no indication of going there. However, if this is assumed, then this shows that the Malind Anim community is a society that is very vulnerable to being affected by cultural distortions that occur in their environment.

Seeing this, the research team placed readers in a position where they explored their understanding of the reading of Malind Anim folklore and its relationship to gender equality. At the level of developing readers, this is not easy because they feel that when the reading is elaborated on the current conditions of the Malind Anim community, they cannot find any clues. However, when asked to build assumptions about the reading of this Malind Anim folklore, they felt that this indicated that there was a specialty given to the Malind Anim community, especially to women, but it was only limited to that. At the level of advanced readers, deeper assumptions can be found regarding the specialization of these Malind Anim women. Advance readers assume that by elaborating on the beliefs held by the Malind Anim community, this can be seen from the family system used, which is still the same for most people in Indonesia, namely patriarchy. However, patriarchy here is not only shown by absolute domination by men but also by privileges for women whom Dema protects. Although Dema or spirit in most Indonesian people's beliefs is elaborated with super powers attached to a man, this does not appear in the Malind Anim folklore. No superpowers are given to women whom Beghr'aw protects, but the thing shown is protection. It can also be elaborated as a means of supporting women's safety.

4.4 Mitigation

Mitigation is rarely manifested in various elements of mythological stories in Indonesia, but this is represented in the folklore of the Malind Anim people. It is seen in how the interaction between animals and humans. Animals are believed to be one of the figures that indicate impending danger for specific groups or colonies. In this Malind Anim belief, it can be seen that the dog and the swan are the figures that bring this omen. Apart from these two figures, other animals are embodiments of stealth, namely lizards. In one of the stories of the Malind Anim people, the lizard represents one of the large clan owners in the southern region of Papua.

Folklore is not only one component that represents the surrounding community, but also folklore is a component that influences the values and beliefs that emerge in that place. Malind Anim people have values that are crystallised through their folklore. It is undeniable that the southern region of Papua is an area that was used as a transmigration point by the Indonesian government. Therefore, the mixing of cultures occurs massively in this region. It also causes stereotypes between a mixture of local beliefs and immigrant communities where immigrant communities have the dominant culture so that the culture of local communities becomes eroded. With this framing, it can be seen that there are genuine things that are an integral component of the Malind Anim community, and there are also things that are the impact of culture that comes and is assimilated by the local culture. From this assumption, it can be seen that the relationship between the Malind Anim people and nature is the most dominant thing that emerges.

From the domination of the relationship between the community and the natural environment, several things emerge that can be indicated as the primary concern of the Malind Anim community, namely mitigation. Mitigation is a concept that is far from just a fundamental relationship between the Malind Anim people and nature, and this is not only a matter of preservation but also about how the Malind Anim people survive natural threats that occur during their time of dependence on nature.

Malind Anim's literary works are folk tales reflecting the relationship between humans and nature. Readers at the developing reader level see this relationship at a fundamental level, namely the efforts of the Malind Anim community to interact with the natural environment and how they respect nature. Belief in nature has also been elaborated in the reader response investigations conducted. Readers see that the form of dependence on nature gives birth to the sacredness of nature itself. This is shown through the representation of their Dema creatures. The figures that appear are represented in forms that are always related to nature, animals, and plants.

Advance readers see different and much more profound things regarding the relationship between humans and nature represented in this folklore. Several stories illustrate how animals are protective figures

in various things that harm or threaten humans. This protection is not limited to how animals can fight or dispel danger. More than that, the form of protection is in the efforts made by these animals and plants to signal impending natural disasters. This is felt to be something very unique in the oral literature of the Malind Anim community. For example, when disaster strikes, the dog character who is a company for the Malind Anim community in hunting or carrying out their activities, as told, will signal that distress will come. In today's world, it can be seen that dogs are very comparable figures in people's lives. They are pets that can understand their master or owner well but do not have the specificity to predict the danger of natural disasters. Animals as a marker of the arrival of natural disasters are commonplace, but this is different if implied in a folk tale. This indicates a synergy between animals and humans in anticipating distress to minimise the impact of the natural disaster itself.

This research proves that readers at the developing level can contribute to how the values of the Malind Anim people can be maintained and preserved through crystallization in this Collection of Folklore. This is a general description of how the values in Folktales appear and are represented by ordinary people in general. However, when viewed from a deeper perspective, this is reflected in the interpretation carried out by the advanced reader at the advanced reading level. The resulting understanding is much deeper and not only at the surface level.

5. Conclusion

This research is exclusive because it involves EFL learners with a work that is a folk story translated into English, and then they respond to the literary work. The developing reader depicts the Malind Anim as escapist literature and relates the issue to preservation; on the other side, the developed reader describes it more profoundly in the context of society and the environment. It brings the assumption that a reader with a higher reading level will significantly assist the reader in developing the resulting form of interpretation. This research is far from a perfect word; it is just a simple form of investigation, seeing differences in interpretation in readers with different reading levels. The rest of this research is still limited to how EFL with varying reading levels meant people's stories. Further efforts are needed to examine the impact in the context of education as a learning process in the classroom and other academic areas.

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