



USING LITERATURE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT)

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ABSTRACT

The basic purpose of learning any language is to communicate in that particular language to its native speakers. The reason for learning a language varies from person to person. A person may learn a language for existence in a new place, for studies, business etc Hence the sort of conversations, vocabulary, grammar and the sense that a reader come across a literary text is basically known to him and actually practiced by him, and this practice would help him to converse and communicate in real time situations with flow, good vocabulary, proper grammatical structures and expressions which are effective, stylish and in a standard way. Using literature to learn a language basically interests a reader and it also enhances the reader's reading speed and writing style. While reading a literary text, the reading speed complement the better understanding of the flow of thought in the literary text and in the case of writing style, the reader could know the proper punctuations, capitalization, order of words, sentence structure etc. to put in brief, learning a language through literature makes the process very easy, enjoyable and effective.

Keywords: *communicate, native, structures, expressions, complement.*

INTRODUCTION

The main concern of the language teachers and teacher trainers is not to teach about language but it develops learner's ability to make them capable of using the language for a variety of communicative purposes. The goal of any language should be to equip the students for a lifetime communication through the written and spoken word. Teaching of a language emphasizes on the use of literature as a popular technique for teaching the basic language skills i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing and its vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Language is the ability to acquire and use complex systems of communication, The scientific study of language is called linguistics. Since Gorgias and Plato in Ancient

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Greece it has been debated whether words can represent experience as questions concerning the philosophy of language. Rousseau the great thinker has argued that language originated from emotions. Immanuel Kant was of the opinion that it originated from rational and logical thought. 20th-century philosophers such as Wittgenstein argued that philosophy is really the study of language. Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky are the authority for linguistics.

Teaching language through literature helps teachers first to acquaint themselves with language to develop their own competence and understand language as a social phenomenon and not as an exclusive branch of learning. Literature offers a wide range of language structures, which can enhance learner's understanding of language usages. Literature is a social phenomenon, using as its medium. Language, a social creation.

Language has an important bearing upon literature. Literature is the personal use or exercise of language. Language is the vehicle of thought. Now there is a question whether language can be super imposed. It is true that poor thought can be dressed up in fine words, the fact is that thoughts and expressions are inseparable. The one is made to suit the other. In great writers, thought and expression are equally matched. Some amount of elaboration go with the expression of deep, stirring or tumultuous thought as we find in Shakespeare's tragedies. Language is the skin and body of thought. We must look to the adequacy of language to thought, and this is the characteristic of a great writer.

In a nutshell. "Literature is the personal use or exercise of language". This is so proved from the fact that one author uses it so differently from another. The aim of language teaching changes not only from country to country, culture to culture but from individual to individual. The problems faced in teaching foreign languages force the teachers to find out an develop some new methods and techniques of teaching. Communicative language teaching, which is very popular nowadays, gives credit to the use of the 'authentic language' as it is used in a real-life context whenever possible.

Literature is the end and language is the means. Whenever we come in the close contact of the persons of different tastes and nature, we are likely to have some good or bad impression which needs our reaction and when it becomes essential for us to put our ideas, we try to find some fine words and an impressive style to make it literature. Our idea is based on some facts and when these facts are to be sprinkled on the paper, we have to give them a tinge of imagination in order to give them a shape of literature. Wordsworth once said that "all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" yet that spontaneous overflow requires a flowery language or appropriate words put in a unique style to make it literature. Hence Dante's verdict is more correct when he says that "poetry and the language proper for it are an elaborate and painful toil."



Structured drills in audio-lingual method makes the process monotonous which directs the students to look for new tools and materials, other than the textbook, to make the learning entertaining and interesting. Literature helps students to develop interpretative abilities to learn the language. Lazar says “Literature is particularly a good source for developing students’ abilities to infer meaning and to make interpretations. This is because literary texts are often rich in multiple levels of meaning and demand that the reader/learner is actively involved in teasing out the unstated implications and assumptions of the text”.

In using the literary texts in ELT classrooms, the most important thing is to prepare the students to read the text. The pre reading activities should cover the functions of literary works such as enjoyment, aesthetics, understanding, imagination, information and knowledge, cognition and knowledge. In the post reading activities, the questions are given to identify the comprehension of the readers. This is also important to identify the student’s response and expressions on the problem presented in the story. It makes them more evaluative and judgemental. They can enrich their vocabulary as well as the knowledge of grammatical structures, making of sentences using words, create their own sentences, use of phrases. This encourages the understanding of the meaning and language producing skills.

Literary text is used for explaining and understanding as well as stimulating readers for practicing the language skills. The analysis on the linguistic inputs such as grammar, structure and vocabulary and the use of the literary work for practicing four language skills does not put away the students understanding on the human problems presented in the literary works. The language input and the students perceiving the human problems as well as the enjoyment, the aesthetics can be explored at the same time in the classroom to enrich the student’s appreciation on literary works and all at once improving their language competence. This needs the teacher’s creativity in exploring the literary works as a text to be used in language teaching.

Many samples of language in real-life contexts like travelogues, forms, pamphlets, advertisements, newspaper articles are included within recently developed course materials. The literature as a part of a story or an article arrests the attention of the reader. Ambiguity is also very interesting as it creates different meanings to different people. It is rare for two readers to react identically to any given text. In teaching it is an advantage that each learner’s interpretation has validity within limits. The second advantage is that there is enough room for discussion of each one’s perception which will make the class very interesting. When selecting the literary texts to be used in language classes, the syllabus makers should take into account needs, interests, cultural background and language level of the students. Reading a literary text is more likely to have a long-term and valuable effect upon the learners’ linguistic and extra linguistic knowledge when it is meaningful and amusing.

As language and literature are the two sides of the same coin, teaching and learning processes give great delight as a communicational skill. There are between 6000 to 7000 languages in the world used by people. Some languages have become extinct. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) operates with five levels of language endangerment: "safe", "vulnerable" "definitely endangered" "severely endangered" and "critically endangered". Many projects aim to prevent or slow this loss by revitalizing endangered languages and promoting education and literacy in minority languages. Across the world, many countries have enforced specific legislation to protect and stabilize the language of indigenous speech communities. Austin & Sallabank assumes, "While languages have always gone extinct throughout human history, they have been disappearing at an accelerated rate in the 20th and 21st centuries due to the processes of globalization and neo-colonialism, where the economically powerful languages dominate other languages".

Let the old heritage be preserved and the new ones to be encouraged to come up as we human beings need varieties. I conclude by saying "Speech is one of the highest manifestations of human intelligence".

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