

DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH LITERATURE

Abstract

In the realm of instructing foreign languages, literature holds a paramount position in fostering the foundational language competencies, which include reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It serves as a highly effective approach for instructing these core language abilities and language components such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. In contemporary education, many educators employ literature as a captivating teaching technique to engage their students. Translation, in particular, provides students with opportunities to hone their lexical, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and stylistic knowledge. Classroom interactions with literary texts often encompass preparatory exercises, interactive exploration of the material, and subsequent activities, rendering the learning process both enjoyable and efficient.

Careful selection of literary texts holds significant importance as it exerts a lasting and valuable impact on learners' linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge. The study of poetry can provide learners with at least two distinct advantages: A critical understanding of the author's poetic theory, which students acquire through the analysis of various elements within poems. Developing a deeper grasp of language leads to enhanced vocabulary and analytical skills over time. Incorporating drama into the curriculum also aids students in becoming acquainted with grammatical structures within contextual settings. Additionally, it equips them with the tools to express themselves effectively, convey information, and exercise control over the language. Since dramas typically revolve around social events, they

Author

Dr. Swati Chauhan
Associate Professor
Department of English
MRIIRS
Faridabad, India.

contribute to the improvement of learners' personality and behavior. Utilizing novels as an educational asset yields advantages not only in grasping the intricacies of language structure but also in gaining a profound insight into life within the cultural framework of the target language. Novels serve as mirrors reflecting the intricacies of people's everyday lives, shedding light on human experiences and enriching understanding.

Therefore, literature not only enhances learners' verbal and written proficiency but also serves as a doorway to explore the culture associated with the target language, enriching students in both linguistic and cultural aspects.

Keywords: Literature, Use of Poetry, social events.

I. FULL PAPER

In the endeavour to refine the four fundamental language competencies – reading, writing, listening, and speaking, literature assumes a crucial role in pedagogy. When incorporating literature into language instruction, it is essential to emphasize the integrated development of these skills rather than isolating them. These basic language skills are not isolated elements but rather integral components of both spoken and written language, serving as tools for conveying both referential and interactive meaning, extending beyond mere word, phrase, and sentence production. Many renowned literary scholars have undertaken a thorough reevaluation of literature's role within the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom. They have recognized its inherent potential as a wellspring of student motivation and a highly efficacious conduit for learners to engage in communication within a foreign language.

The incorporation of literature stands out as a potent strategy for imparting not only the fundamental language skills encompassing reading, writing, listening, and speaking, but also for addressing a myriad of linguistic dimensions, including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, within the realm of foreign language education. In contemporary pedagogical approaches, numerous educators seamlessly integrate literature to enhance engagement and infuse more fascination into their instructional methods. As an integral component of this pedagogical approach, students are encouraged to translate literary masterpieces such as plays, poems, and short stories into their native tongue. This translational process offers students a valuable opportunity to apply and enhance their comprehension of lexical, syntactical, semantic, pragmatic, and stylistic facets of language. The classroom activities involving literary works often entail preliminary tasks before reading, interactive analysis of the text, and subsequent follow-up exercises. Literature not only injects interest into the language learning process but also enhances students' focus and prolongs their engagement, transforming the learning experience into an enjoyable Endeavour.

Collie and Slater (1990:3) outlined four primary reasons, foremost drivers inspiring language educators to integrate literature into their classrooms the supply of invaluable authentic resources, cultural enhancement, linguistic enrichment, and individual engagement. Beyond these foundational incentives, various other elements underscore the importance of literature as a potent educational asset within the classroom environment. These factors encompass universality, complexity, individual significance, diversity, allure, cost-efficiency, evocative capacity, and ambiguity.

Literature proves highly beneficial in simplifying language comprehension and fostering personal engagement. As learners immerse themselves in literary texts, their involvement takes precedence over a strict focus on understanding lexical items or phrases. This immersion serves as an advantage, as it enables them to absorb diverse structures, methods of connecting ideas, the functional role of sentences in discourse, and syntax.

Consequently, this enriches their writing abilities without adding extra burdens to the learning process, rendering education both enjoyable and effective. The careful selection of

appropriate literary texts holds immense importance due to their enduring and substantial impact on learners' linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge. It is crucial that these books offer relevant real-life experiences and motivational narratives to spark interest and address the specific needs of the learners. Additionally, consideration should be given to students' aspirations, cultural backgrounds, and language proficiency levels when choosing literary materials.

II. LITERATURE AND READING

Teachers should embrace a comprehensive and dynamically adaptive approach when endeavoring to grasp the essence of a literary work. Initially, the focus should revolve around factual elements such as the setting, plot, and characters, with questions that demand specific references from the text for answers. Moving to the second level, once students have grasped literal comprehension, they should be encouraged to engage in speculation and interpretation regarding aspects like setting, themes, and characters, and drawing inferences based on the author's perspective. On the third level, collaborative activities come into play, where students share their personal reactions concerning characters, settings, plots, and the author's viewpoint. Ultimately, this approach serves as a foundation for the development of their oral and written language skills.

III. LITERATURE AND WRITING

Literature serves as a potent instrument in nurturing effective writing skills, functioning both as an exemplar and a thematic source. It acts as an exemplar when learners' writing closely mirrors the original work in terms of content, structure, themes, and style. Conversely, when learners' writing is inspired by their reading and showcases original thinking, such as interpretation or analysis, literature serves as the subject matter for their writing endeavors. Within this framework, an array of diverse themes is available for writing, including guided, free, and controlled approaches.

IV. LITERATURE, SPEAKING, AND LISTENING

While literature is commonly associated with reading and writing, it also holds a significant role in instructing both speaking and listening skills. Literary works present a plethora of possibilities for diverse activities such as verbal presentation, spontaneous creativity, dramatic representation, character impersonation, reenactment, miming, discourse, and collaborative engagements. These endeavors play a pivotal role in propelling students' progress in both their oral expression and receptive listening skills. To infuse the learning process with vitality and motivation, instructors can incorporate audio or video recordings of literary compositions or personally undertake the task of vocalizing literary texts. Encouraging learners to articulate texts audibly not only enriches their abilities in speaking and attentive listening but also hones their pronunciation skills, with a distinct focus on achieving clarity and precision in enunciation. Additionally, dramatic activities prove to be valuable in expediting the development of oral skills, as students immerse themselves in the characters and gain a deeper understanding of the literature, thereby enhancing their comprehension of the work's plot.

V. ADVANTAGES OF USING BRANCHES OF LITERATURE TO DEVELOP 4 SKILLS

- 1. Use of Poetry:** Studying poetry offers learners a pair of distinct advantages. Firstly, it equips them with a critical appreciation of the poet's theoretical framework by dissecting poems into their constituent elements. Secondly, it fosters an enhanced comprehension of language, fostering a capacity for profound word exploration that may ultimately evolve into a deeper fascination and heightened analytical prowess.

Saraç (2003:17-20) further underscores the educational merits of engaging with poetry. It presents readers with a novel perspective on language usage, transcending established norms in grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. It also ignites curiosity in otherwise disinterested readers by virtue of its openness to various interpretations. Moreover, poetry stirs emotions and provokes contemplation in both the heart and mind of the reader, while simultaneously acquainting students with rhetorical devices, such as simile, metaphor, irony, personification, and imagery, as integral facets of everyday language.

As highlighted by Çubukçu (2001:1), poetry provides a deeply satisfying and pleasurable encounter imbued with rhythmic and rhyming attributes that aptly express "love and appreciation for the sonorous and influential essence of language." Thus, it can be asserted that students cultivate an acquaintance with the suprasegmental facets of the target language, encompassing elements such as emphasis, tone, transition, and inflexion, as they engage in the study of poetry.

Furthermore, through the medium of poetry, students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge of the semiotic aspects of language, thereby gaining insights into cultural nuances, as emphasized by Hiller (1983:10).

Hiller argues that poems should be viewed as hyper-signs, where multiple semiotic signifiers amalgamate through their interconnected relationships, ultimately converging into the "symbolic level," which is the stratum most predisposed to convey meaning within a poem.

- 2. Use of Drama:** Utilizing drama can be a valuable tool for learners to enhance their understanding of life experiences, delve into specific situations, and gain a deeper understanding of their world beyond language (Sarıçoban 2004:15).

The pedagogical benefits of incorporating drama into teaching, as elucidated by Lenore (1993), encompass a diverse range of advantages. This approach kindles the imagination and nurtures creative thinking, fosters critical thinking abilities, enhances language proficiency, sharpens active listening skills, and deepens comprehension and retention by engaging the senses. Additionally, it promotes empathy, heightens awareness of others, encourages mutual respect, facilitates group collaboration, bolsters self-esteem, and provides educators with a fresh teaching perspective. Furthermore, there are additional educational merits associated with the integration of drama into foreign language classes, as articulated by Mengü (2002:1-4). These advantages encompass

infusing authenticity into the classroom, exposing learners to the target culture and societal issues, and fostering creativity, originality, sensitivity, fluency, adaptability, emotional resilience, cooperation, and ethical reflection. Drama also refines communication skills and nurtures an appreciation for literature. It serves as a sturdy bridge between receptive and productive language skills. Moreover, drama grants students the time and space to cultivate innovative ideas and insights across various contexts, facilitating the development of novel perspectives and forms of knowledge that are not readily accessible through more conventional modes of learning.

In simple words, drama injects excitement, vibrancy, and motivation into language learning for students. Furthermore, in today's communication-oriented, student-centric teaching methods, educators discover that incorporating drama proves highly effective in language classes. Drama serves as a valuable tool for students to acquaint themselves with grammatical structures within real-life contexts. Additionally, it imparts the skills needed to express, convey information, and exercise control through language use. Since dramas often revolve around social scenarios, they contribute to enhancing learners' personalities and behavior as they engage with the content.

- 3. Use of Novel:** Employing novels as a learning tool proves to be an advantageous approach, not only for grasping the intricacies of the language but also for gaining insights into life through the lens of the target language. Novels serve as a true reflection of the daily experiences of people, functioning as both a depiction and an illumination of human existence.

Helton, C.A., J. Asamani, and E.D. Thomas (1998:1-5) elaborate on the educational advantages of novels in the following manner: they ignite the reader's imagination and enable the recognition of characters' emotions, allowing students to observe how individuals navigate situations reminiscent of their own experiences. Novels equip students with the skills necessary to gather information, process knowledge, identify problems, generate alternatives, and arrive at meaningful, thoughtful, and effective decisions and solutions. Additionally, they foster the development of both oral and written language proficiency. Novels serve as a starting point for a broad spectrum of comprehensive learning activities and exercises in critical thinking, beginning with fundamental comprehension and writing tasks. Moreover, they provide a unique approach to teaching reading, engaging students in the reading process and motivating them to cultivate a lifelong love for reading.

When selecting a novel for inclusion in a foreign language class, the language instructor should take into account several pivotal considerations. Firstly, the chosen novel should possess an engaging narrative capable of captivating the entire class. This entails a dynamic and fast-paced storyline populated by well-defined, memorable characters. Furthermore, it is essential that the novel's content aligns with the cognitive and emotional levels of the students. Additionally, it can be exceedingly advantageous if the novel incorporates specific themes and concepts that are currently part of the classroom curriculum. In the assessment of comprehension, educators can employ evaluations centered around the novel, encouraging students to refine their written language skills, encompassing elements such as spelling, handwriting, grammar, and punctuation. Teacher-crafted essay-style tests serve as a platform for students to gradually

enhance their writing proficiencies and structure their thoughts into coherent paragraphs. These assessments should not only include factual questions aimed at measuring comprehension but also incorporate open-ended questions that actively stimulate the development of critical thinking abilities (Helton, C.A, J.Asamani, and E.D.Thomas 1998:1-5).

Overall, novels simplify, captivate, and enliven the learning journey. When chosen thoughtfully, they have the potential to keep learners engaged for extended periods while imparting knowledge effortlessly. Regrettably, some students perceive reading novels as challenging and uninteresting. However, what they may need to recognize is that it can serve as an effective method for expanding their vocabulary and enhancing their reading abilities. Therefore, literature not only enhances the oral and written proficiency of learners but also serves as a doorway to exploring the rich culture associated with the target language. This enriches students not only in terms of language skills but also in their understanding of a new cultural dimension.

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