

LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE SKILL

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Abstract

This study is accentuated on the use of literature as a technique to teach language skills.

Shows to the reader what are literature and the role of both teacher and literature in teaching language.

The study focus on how teaching literature important to developing language skill i.e. (reading, writing, speaking listen) and the benefit of teaching drama on developing language skill.

ملخص

هذه الدراسة تركز على استخدام الأدب كتقنية لتدريس مهارات اللغة الانكليزية. وكذلك تبين دور الأدب و المدرس في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية وتركز على اهمية تدريس الأدب في تطوير المهارات اللغوية مثل القراءة والكتابة والمحادثة والسماع

وايضاً فائدة تدريس الاحداث الدرامية في
تطوير المهارات اللغوية.

Introduction

Teaching English through literature in L2 has begun to receive attention in the EFL courses in last few years in fact, it is seen as highly productive skill by many EFL instructors and also teaching English through literature today has evolved around the primary emphasis on its viability as a communication skill to help acquire jobs, promote business interests or provide various forms of entertainments.

Carter and McRae (2001, p. 10) recommend using literature to help students go beyond “acquiring basic knowledge of the language” to “learning about the language and how it Works” because using literature can help develop the “fourth” skill in language.

The use of literature as a technique for teaching both basic language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) is very popular within the field of foreign language learning and teaching nowadays.

1-What is literature

There are many different definitions for literature which show that literature is science like other science and language as atoll which use of literary texts in teaching foreign languages it has been one of the methods to be applied since the ancient times. According to Obediat (1997:32) states, literature helps students acquire a native-like competence.

In English, express their ideas in good English, learn the features of modern English, learn how the English linguistic system is used for

communication, see how idiomatic expressions are used, speak clearly, precisely, and concisely, and become more proficient in English, as well as become creative, critical, and analytical learners. Custodio and Sutton (1998:20).

Explain that literature can open horizons of possibility, allowing students to question, interpret, connect, and explore. In sum, literature provides students with an incomparably rich source of authentic material over a wide range of registers. If students can gain access to this material by developing literary competence, then they can effectively internalize the language at a high level (Elliot 1990:198).

2- What is our role as English Teachers?

Our main concern as teachers is not to teach about literature, but to develop learners' abilities to make them capable of using the language of literature for a variety of communicative purposes by realize the fact that our goal is not teaching English literature but teaching a language. By reading a piece of literature, learners can understand the diverse use of words, phrases, phrasal verbs, multiple meanings, idioms, etc. They learn use familiar words in new contexts with new meanings. Widdowson argues that: "Language teachers have the responsibility to mediate changes in pedagogic practice so as to increase the effectiveness of language teaching".

3- The role of literature in teaching English Language

Literature provides learners with a wide range of individual lexical or syntactic items. Students become familiar with many features of the written language, reading a substantial and contextualized body of text. They learn

about the syntax and discourse functions of sentences, the variety of possible structures, and the different ways of connecting ideas, which develop and enrich their own writing skills. Students also become more productive and

adventurous when they begin to perceive the richness and diversity of the language they are trying to learn and begin to make use of some of that potential themselves. Thus, they improve their communicative and cultural competence in the authentic richness, naturalness of the authentic texts. Povey (1972; 18) argues that "Literature will increase all Language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge". So Literature plays an important role in teaching four basic language skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking. However, when using literature in the language classroom, skills should never be taught in isolation but in an integrated way. Teachers should try to teach basic language skills as an integral part of oral and written language use, as part of the means for creating both referential and interactional meaning, not merely as an aspect of the oral and written production of words, phrases and sentences.

4- Teaching Language Skills and Literature

Both literature and language teaching involve the development of a feeling for language or responses to texts. The responses of the learners to the literary texts reading and interpreting will help them to: –

- develop their reading skills.
- keep by heart useful quotations and expressions.
- integrate language skills such as listening and reading as receptive skills and speaking and writing as productive skills.

- be exposed to the conversations and the dialogues which are actually used in the outside world. These dialogues and conversations create a situation inside the classroom for using language which the learner might need outside in the society.

4-1 Reading skill and literature

The skill of reading could be either reading aloud or reading comprehension .reading aloud aims at recognizing the alphabetical letters and relating them to their sounds. This kind of reading is usually practiced by beginners who want to master the pronunciation of words and sentences rather than understanding what they actually means. While reading comprehension is quite different from merely pronouncing words and sentences correctly , it is actually complicated process through which the reader try to interact and comprehend what they read .reading is receptive interactive skill it is receptive because in reading we usually receive information from what we read whether it is a short text "enter" which is one words , or long text like novel ,so reading skill is interactive and this interactive is taking place inside the mind of the reader.

4.2 – Writing Skill

Writing is skill that is productive and interactive at the same time .it is productive but because we believe that, seen from a broader perspective, in the sense that when we write ,we produce language in order to convey our thoughts to other ,and it is interactive in the sense that when we write we try to fulfill a purpose and deliver a message to reader who is usually in our mind.(Bjork and Raisanen (1997: 8) argue: ‘We highlight the importance of writing in all university curricula not only because of its immediate practical application, i.e. as an isolated skill or ability, writing is a thinking

tool. It is a tool for language development, for critical thinking and, extension, for learning in all disciplines’.

4.2.1 Writing and Literature

Literature can be a powerful and motivating source for writing in ESL / EFL, both as a model and as subject matter. Literature as a model occurs when student writing becomes closely similar to the original work or clearly imitates its content, theme, organization, and /or style. However, when student writing exhibits original thinking like interpretation or analysis, or when it emerges from, or is creatively stimulated by, the reading, literature serves as subject matter. Literature houses in large variety of themes to write on in terms of guided free, controlled and other types of writing According to Alexander Baird, "Literature is the use of language effectively in suitable conditions" (Baird, 1969; 203).

4.2.2 Reading and writing relation

There is relationship between reading and writing according to Rosenblatt (1988) the strong relation between readings and writing results from a similar process of reading and writing in terms of making meaning audience analyzing and monitoring.

When reader read, they make meaning from the interaction between prior knowledge and previous experience. Prior knowledge and previous experience also influence writing: based on the information writer produce written text. Then during reading, readers move back and forth from efferent to aesthetic stance. So reading and writing have a strong relation. Student who read a lot tend to be better reader and writer than those who do not read much.

4.3. Speaking skill and literature

One of the four major language skills .this skill is productive .it is interactive .it is productive when the speaker produces language orally with the purpose of conveying his ideas to other. this activity demands knowledge of the language rules as well as the social rules for implementing this knowledge to produce speech , language rulers we means the ability to construct sentences that are grammatically correct . we can obtain speaking skill as Shrum and Glisan 200,26 says "repeating after the teacher , reciting a memorized dialogue or responding to a mechanical drill

4.4 The role of Literature on Speaking, Listening

The study of literature in a language class, though being mainly associated with reading and writing, can play an equally meaningful role in teaching both speaking and listening. Oral reading and Drama, may center on a work of literature.

4.4.1. Oral Reading

Teachers of Language are able to make listening comprehension and pronunciation interesting, by involve student in playing a recording or video of a literary work, or reading literature aloud themselves. Through reading literature aloud make student able to developing speaking as well as listening ability. Moreover, it also student became better in Pronunciation.

4.4.2 .Drama

Dramatic activities which literature-based are valuable for ESL / EFL. They facilitate and accelerate development of the oral skills since they motivate students to achieve a clearer comprehension of a work's plot and a deeper comprehension and awareness of its characters.

There are many forms of drama dramatization, improvisation, and role-playing. These three kinds can be useful for teacher to develop student skill through involve student to take apart in one of these kinds which make them more confident by time to use words and sentence in correct way. According to (Stern 1991:337) Teachers indicate pronunciation errors of the students during the act of such activities so as to correct such errors.

4.3.2.1 Using Drama in Teaching Language

The use of drama in teaching language raises the students' awareness towards the target language and culture. Learners should make use of drama to promote their comprehension of life experiences, reflect on particular circumstances and make sense of their extra linguistic world in a deeper way (Sarıçoban 2004:15). The educational benefits of drama, according to (Lenore 1993), are as follows:

1. Stimulates the imagination and promotes creative thinking,
2. Develops critical thinking skills.
3. Promotes language development.
4. Heightens effective listening skills.
5. Strengthens comprehension and learning retention by involving the senses as an integral part of the learning process.
6. Increases empathy and awareness of others.
7. Fosters peer respect and group cooperation.
8. Reinforces positive self-concept.
9. Provides teachers with a fresh perspective on teaching.

Some other educational benefits of using drama in a foreign language class can be listed as follows (Mengü 2002:1-4):

- a) Bringing authenticity into the classroom,
- b) Exposing the learners to the target culture as well as the social problems a society may be undergoing.
- c) Increasing creativity, originality, sensitivity, fluency, flexibility, emotional stability, cooperation, and examination of moral attitudes, while developing communication skills and appreciation of literature.
- d) Helping learners improve their level of competence with respect to their receptive and productive skills.
- e) Providing a solid basis for the learners to bridge the gap between their receptive and productive skills.
- f) Offering students the space and time to develop new ideas and insights in a range of contexts.
- g) Enabling students to develop new understandings and forms of knowing not accessible in other more traditional ways of learning.

In other words, the use of drama seems to be an effective technique in today's communication-based, student-centered foreign language teaching. Since it is an authentic material, it helps students to promote their comprehension of the verbal / nonverbal aspects of the target language they are trying to master. Particularly, teachers, who wish to make language learning more colorful, motivating and interesting, can make use of drama in their language classes. Since drama is the reenactments of social events, students improve their personality and code of behavior. Thus, they can achieve more meaningful and realistic teaching from which students can benefit to a great extent.

5. Conclusion

The use of literary texts in language teaching can be summarized as follows:

1. Literary texts will help not only to improve reading but listening, speaking and writing skills as well.
2. The texts should be chosen carefully, because it should not be forgotten that in these texts there may be grammatical, linguistic, and literal difficulties.
3. Literary texts should include the structures and vocabulary previously learned. In that there should not be difficult and ambiguous structure.
4. Literary texts will help to realize the individual and societal development. They make the readers to improve themselves culturally and educationally in accordance with their emotional features.

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