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## English Literature as a Teaching Tool from Fourth Preparatory Students' Perspectives

### الادب الانكليزي كوسيلة تعليمية من وجهة نظر طالبات الصف الرابع الاعدادي

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#### Abstract

Recently literature plays a crucial role in EFL teaching as it provides real situational and communicative materials for teaching English. So, there is a growing trend towards integrating literature into foreign language teaching classes. According to the Iraqi Foreign Language Learning Programme, the incorporating of literature into teaching English language modules begins in the intermediate stage. In the first,

second and third classes, students are provided with short stories written in a simplified way. In the preparatory stage, classic English literary texts, such as poetry, prose and drama are taught to the students. In this stage, various sentence patterns, more difficult vocabulary items and certain elements of style and structures that the author has used are contained within. Iraqi learners face a set of learning problems that can be considered the basis of their

misperception and negative attitudes towards English literature.

Hence, this study investigates the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating English literature into English language teaching classes in Iraqi preparatory schools from the perspectives of fourth preparatory students in Almutafaweqat secondary school for girls in Basra city. It also explores the role of literature in teaching and learning English.

The sample of the research is the fourth preparatory students. It includes (93) female students studying at Almutafaweqat secondary school for girls in Basra city. After reviewing the previous literature, the researcher designs a questionnaire of (24) items and three alternatives, namely (disagree, neutral and agree) then, it is distributed to the students. The study bases on the data which have been collected from students through the online questionnaire using Google Forms. In order to achieve the validity and reliability of the research, the questionnaire is presented to panels of specialists in psychology and educational guidance. The statistical means used by the researcher are the weighted mean and t-test.

The results of study reveal that there is no statistically significant difference in the grades average of fourth preparatory students on the scale of advantages and disadvantages of integrating literature into English language teaching lessons. The hypothetical mean is greater than the Weighted Mean for the sample. Findings expose that some students have enthusiasm to read literature for it gives them the opportunity to convey their own thoughts and views towards the text creatively, and share them with their classmates which improve their conversational and communicative skills. It allows them to express their thinking and respond freely during their English language lesson. In addition some students see that literature increases their self-awareness and worldviews by exposing them to a wide array of different cultures and lifestyles of people. However, most students find that integrating literature into English language classes is not helpful to their learning of language. They see that literature teaching has negatives more than positives in that the literary texts selected for studying are complex, ancient and contain more unfamiliar words. Besides, students are unaccustomed to many literary terms that usually used in literature which, in turn, makes literature learning



monotonous. Needless to say, this impedes the process of comprehension. The lack of interest in literature by students implies that there is no role for literature in teaching and learning English.

Keywords: English literature, advantages of teaching literature, literature teaching approaches, literature teaching problems

الملخص:

حديثاً، يلعب الأدب دوراً حاسماً في تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية لأنه يوفر مواد موافقته وتواصلية حقيقية لتدريس اللغة الإنكليزية. لذلك، هناك اتجاه متزايد نحو دمج الأدب في فصول تدريس اللغات الأجنبية. ومن هنا تبحث هذه الدراسة في إيجابيات وسلبيات دمج الأدب الإنكليزي في فصول تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية في المدارس الإعدادية العراقية من وجهة نظر طالبات الرابع الإعدادي في ثانوية المتفوقات للبنات في مدينة البصرة. كما يستكشف البحث دور الأدب في تعليم وتعلم اللغة الإنكليزية.

تتألف عينة البحث من (٩٣) طالبة من طالبات الصف الرابع الإعدادي اللواتي يدرسون في ثانوية المتفوقات للبنات في مدينة البصرة. وبعد مراجعة الأدبيات السابقة، قام الباحث بتصميم استبانة مكونة من (٢٤) فقرة وثلاثة بدائل وهي (لا أوافق، محايد، أوافق)، ثم تم توزيعها على الطلاب. اعتمدت الدراسة على البيانات التي تم جمعها من الطلاب من

خلال الاستبيان الإلكتروني باستخدام نماذج جوجل. ولتحقيق صدق وثبات البحث تم عرض الاستبيان على لجان من المتخصصين في علم النفس والإرشاد التربوي. والوسائل الإحصائية التي استخدمتها الباحثة هي الوسط المرجح واختبار (ت).

أظهرت نتائج الدراسة عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في متوسط درجات طالبات الرابع الإعدادي على مقياس إيجابيات وسلبيات دمج الأدب في دروس تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية. حيث أن المتوسط الافتراضي أكبر من المتوسط المرجح للعينة. كما أظهرت النتائج أن بعض الطالبات لديهن حماس لقراءة الأدب لأنه يمنحهم الفرصة لنقل أفكارهم ووجهات نظرهم تجاه النص بشكل إبداعي، ومشاركتها مع زملائهم مما يحسن مهارات المحادثة والتواصل لديهم. فهو يسمح لهم بالتعبير عن أفكارهم والاستجابة للمدرس بحرية أثناء درس اللغة الإنكليزية. إضافة إلى ذلك، يرى بعض الطلاب أن الأدب يزيد من وعيهم الذاتي ويوسع نظرتهم للعالم من خلال تعريضهم لمجموعة واسعة من الثقافات وأنماط مختلفة من حياة الناس. ومع ذلك، يجد معظم الطلاب أن دمج الأدب في فصول اللغة الإنكليزية ليس مفيداً لتعليمهم اللغة. ويرون أن تدريس الأدب له سلبيات أكثر من الإيجابيات حيث أن النصوص الأدبية المختارة للدراسة معقدة وقديمة وتحتوي على كلمات غير مألوفة لديهم. علاوة على ذلك، فإن الطلاب غير معتادين على العديد من المصطلحات الأدبية التي تستخدم عادةً في الأدب، مما يجعل تعلم الأدب رتيباً وصعب الفهم. وغني عن القول

أن هذا يعيق عملية الفهم لديهم. إن قلة الاهتمام بالأدب من قبل الطلاب يعني عدم وجود دور للأدب في تعليم وتعلم اللغة الإنكليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الادب الانكليزي, فوائد تعليم الادب, طرق تعليم الادب, مشاكل تعليم الادب

### The Objectives of the Study

This study examines the advantages and disadvantages of integrating English literature into English language teaching curriculum in Iraqi preparatory schools from the perspectives of fourth preparatory students in Almutafaweqat secondary school for girls in Basra city. It also explores the role of literature in learning English.

## 1. General Background

### 1.1. The Definition of Literature

The use of literature to teach foreign languages is traced back to over one century ago when the grammar translation method dominated FEL teaching. During this era, literature was the main source of material in language teaching. Students were asked to translate literary texts from the foreign language to their own native language. But when the grammar translation method declined and other approaches and methods appeared such

as the Structural Approach, the Direct Method and the Audio-lingual method, the focus becomes on structures and vocabulary items while literature was no longer used (Sarıçoban and Küçüköğlü, 2011). After the emergence of communicative approach in the late seventies and early eighties, the attitude toward the use of literature in language teaching has changed and the only aim for educators is to enable students to communicate the language orally. Afterwards, the goal of EFL teaching has been adjusted to seek for new ways of blending literature with EFL classes again. So, literature has found its way back into the teaching of EFL; yet, not the way it was used with the Grammar Translation method. That is, students are not required to translate long lists of English texts, to communicate fluently in the target language (Pardede, 2011).

Although literature is defined differently by scholars and researchers, nearly most of them refer to the literature as a written text which depicts man's passions, feelings, thoughts and attitudes using words in an entrancing manner. It embraces different aspects of human life and experiences and characterized by its artistic, creative and imaginative forms. Rees (1973) and Owøye (2003) define literature as a kind of text that conveys the way in which people realize, feel and think



about the life. Ogunnnaike (2002) opines that literature is a type of written or oral text which is composed to deliver the historical experiences of people and societies. Similarly, Much & Retnaningdyah (2011) describe literature as an account of humans' emotions, desires, hopes and feelings. Basnet & Mounfold (1993) explain that literature is a production that mirrors society in all its shades and a detailed record of the different countries' cultures. Likewise, Gatdula, Gomez, Rosales and Ocampo- Sunga, (2022) mention that literature is an artistic tool that reflects the nations' cultures.

## 1.2. The Benefits of Integrating Literature into Foreign Language Classes

Nowadays, literature is merged with the courses of EFL teaching in many countries and becomes an indispensable part of language teaching. It is used as a motivating means for learning and teaching English since it contains a source of authentic material. It is regarded a good example of English language in its modern and classic forms. Literature familiarizes learners with the various constructions and lexis of English language. Furthermore, it increases their powers of observation and adds to their store of knowledge.

Literature helps students understand their personalities through what they read or hear about others, thereby they modify themselves to life.

Actually, literature has always been thought as an essential resource of real situational language because literary works demonstrate a wide range of language use in different real life situations. Collie and Slater (1990) state that literature has a "valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement" (p.3). They claim that literature endows students with the ability to deduce discourse in its social and cultural contexts and go beyond the structural aspects of the language. Obediat (1997, p.32) affirms that:

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 . . . and become more proficient in English, as well as become creative, critical, and analytical learners.

In a similar vein, Much & Retnaningdyah (2011, p.6) assert that literature allows students to internalize and adopt English linguistic forms and

expressions spoken by native speakers in contexts. Literature serves as "valuable materials to enhance students' learning process and to support their mastery of language and culture." They add that literature provides a conducive learning atmosphere for students to master the language along with acquiring the linguistic and cultural competence which are considered as a starting point to have competence performance. Thus, students will learn English language along with the culture of its society. Consequently, students will have cultural background knowledge and an apt description of the situations they encounter when reading a literary text. Also, they will be able to behave appropriately when meeting a native speaker in a foreign country.

Hişmanoğlu avows that literature is "regarded as a complement to other materials used to develop the foreign learner's understanding into the country whose language is being learned" (2005, p.54-55). Explicitly, literature provides students with cultural background of the world outside where diverse social, religious and historical settings are introduced in literary works such as novels, drama and stories. Zhen (2012, p.36) mentions that literature is "the encyclopedia of a nation's civilization and culture."

Since the culture is learned and tied in with language, literature builds up awareness of culturally diverse society and develops learners' understanding of the life in the country where language is spoken.

As an embodiment of the language where it is presented, literature plays a vital role in improving learners' competence in basic language skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. Gwin (1990,p.7) maintains that literature "encourages extensive reading and group work." Equally, Ebele et al (2011, p.261) emphasize that literature "trains every learner to develop love for reading and . . . writing skills". In reading lesson of literary text, comprehension and discussion of such facts as setting, characters and plot enable students to infer the theme of the literary work and evaluate it. Evaluation "stimulates students to think imaginatively about the work and provokes their problem-solving abilities." In other words, reading literature fosters students' critical thinking by offering multiple perspectives, especially in topics dealing with issues such as immigration and cultural differences. Literature can be a potent and motivating source for writing in English, both as a model and as subject matter as well. As a





model, students can imitate or write as the same as the content, style and organization of the original literary work. Literature can be used in a variety of themes to write on in terms of guided, free, controlled and other types of writing (Hişmanoğlu, 2005, p.57).

Consistent with this idea, Stern (1991, p.337) says that playing a record, showing video of a literary work, or making students read literature aloud contribute to developing listening and speaking skills of students. In return, these activities will improve pronunciation and make listening comprehension more interesting. Stern confirms that literature stimulates total participation and helps learners get clear and deep understanding of a work's theme, plot and its characters. And this is fulfilled through group work activities like oral reading, performance of scripted materials, role-playing, reenactment and discussion.

Further, literature makes students familiar with common structural and syntactic devices used in English. Reading literature, students will learn about the different patterns of sentences, how to convey ideas and express their feelings. As such, literature advances the students' communicative abilities in an effective and interesting

way (Hişmanoğlu, 2005). As the literary language is distinguished by its social and cultural contexts, literature reflects human culture and serves real language use, making students aware of the appropriate vocabularies used in social communications in particular interactional settings. To recap, literature cultivates students to accomplish the tasks in international communication, increases their vocabulary items and enables them to express their individual ideas and opinions effectively.

### 1.3. Models of Teaching Literature in the EFL Classroom

Of all the advantages of using literature in English Language classes, the objectives behind teaching literature will bear fruits and promise success if teachers use certain techniques and approaches that could be of benefit not only for him/her but also for students. Therefore, it is helpful to make a review of the models and approaches used to teach literature.

#### 1.3.1. The Cultural Model

The Cultural model is a traditional approach to teaching literature where a teacher investigates and construes the social, political, literary and historical context of a literary text, then s/he shares knowledge with the learners.

According to Bottino (2000), this model helps students to know a large number of words and also the culture of the target language. He discusses that this model regards literature as a cultural means that delivers information and facts to the learners. Talif and Jayakaran (1994, p.16) postulate that this model shows the significance of literature because it "links students with a range of expressions which have universal values over a long period of time" and encapsulates the accrued knowledge. Not to mention that, it inspires students to make a connection between their the target language's culture and their own. Still, this model is not recommended by instructors because it not a student-centred and offers inadequate language work (Much and Retnaningdyah, 2011).

### 1.3.2. The Language Model

The language model focuses on language as the literary tool and uses literary transcript for grammatical and structural analysis. It is viewed as the most common approach to literature in the EFL classroom (Carter and Long, 1991). It stimulates students to perceive the literary text in an organized and orderly way to demonstrate some linguistic features such as figurative language, direct and indirect speech. It includes prediction exercises, jumbled sentences, summary

writing, creative writing and role play which are commonly contained within English teaching programmes (Carter and McRae, 1996). The benefits of the language model are "the expansion of vocabulary; increased reading fluency; enhanced interpretive and inferential skills and exposure to a greater variety of language" (Bibby and Mcllory, 2013, p.19). Teachers use such model for the sake of language activities planned by them rather than for cultural aspects or literature by itself. Accordingly, this model has drawbacks and literary critics think that it is "a reductive approach to literature, disconnected from the literary goals of the specific text in that they can be applied to any text" (Carter and McRae, 1996, p.14).

### 1.3.3. The Personal Growth Model

Bibby and Mcllory (2013)

describes the personal growth model as a student-centered approach to literature study which utilizes the literary text to cultivate personal activities. It is used as a reaction against the shortcomings of the previous two models. This model centres on the language use together with the cultural context and stresses on the reader interaction with the text. Much and Retnaningdyah (2011) comment that the personal growth model offers students literary topics which improve their linguistic



knowledge and thoughts. It capitalizes on learners' real own life experiences to engage students in literary works. It encourages them to communicate their feelings, express their opinions and attempt to relate their own personal and cultural experiences with those expressed in the text. It makes them to look at literature as the same as their real personal lives.

The aim of the personal growth model is to help learners to achieve an engagement with the reading of literary texts and spur them to enjoy and love literature beyond the classroom (Bottino, 2000). Its purpose is to "use literature as a vehicle to educate, to promote critical awareness, and to have students assess, evaluate, and discuss issues within the text and provoked by the text" (Bibby and McIlory, 2013, p.19). The teacher's role in this model is to implant in his students a "lasting pleasure in reading and a deep satisfaction in a continuing growth of understanding" (Talif and Jayakaran, 1994, p.17). This model correlates with the reader response theory in that it concerns with the reader's analysis and inferring of the literary text depending on his/her own experience and intellectual capacity regardless of the meaning of the text per se (Much and Retnaningdyah, 2011).

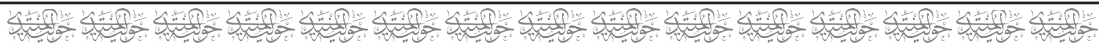
To make use of the personal growth model, teachers should ask students to comment or give their views on any piece of writing they have read and discuss that with their colleagues in the class. Students can respond in the form of paragraph on condition that they should give reasons behind their reactions (Barnet et al, 1996). In short, the personal growth model is the suitable model which teachers are recommended to employ in the EFL classroom because it combines between the goals of the preceding mentioned models, i.e., the cultural model and the language model.

#### 1.4. The Approaches of Teaching Literature

In Whitehead's perspective (1968, p.164) the factor that "determines students' lifelong learning towards reading is how the teacher approaches the teaching of literature." He claims that in order for the teaching of literature to be successful and students find interest in it, teachers should apply a multiplicity of methods and approaches. For example, the periphrastic approach, personal response approach, the information-based approach, language-based approach, and stylistics approach.

##### 1.4.1. The Information-Based Approach

As cited in Hwang and Embi (2007),



Carter (1996) declares that the information-based approach sees literature as a source of information to the students. Lazar (1993) avows that this approach demands from students to collect the cultural, historical and political information about the literary text they study.

#### 1.4.2. The Language-Based Approach

This approach is based on the premise that literature is language and language can be literary. It correlates between language and literature. Its main objective is to teach students how to use language properly. The language-based approach concentrates on students rather than teachers (Khatib et al, 2011). It considers literature as a means to an end in that it is exploited to practise language in different activities such as "prediction, cloze ranking tasks, role play, poetry recital, debate and discussions" (Lazar, 1993, p.43). The language-based approach attempts to draw students' attention to the studied literary text and prompts them to relate its theme to their own life experiences (Rosli, 1995, p.42). This approach is useful because it increases students' knowledge, makes them use language consciously as well as it progresses their linguistic proficiency.

#### 1.4.3. The Personal Response Approach

The personal response

approach banks on the reaction and explanation of a person to a certain literary text. It is more concerned with teaching literature than developing language skills. Khatib et al, (2011, p.205-206) expound that applying this approach, students can not only infer one correct interpretation of a text, but a number of interpretations.

#### 1.4.4. The Periphrastic Approach

To simplify any literary text and facilitate understanding of it, teachers implement the paraphrastic approach that deals with the explicit meaning of a text and recommends using simplified language or mother-tongue language when teaching the text. Hwang and Embi (2007) say that this approach is suitable for the beginners and those who have low degree of language proficiency. Wang (2003), states that this approach contends with such activities as "the incorporation of moral values at the end of the literature lesson, reflective sessions, getting students to search for values whilst reading (cited in Hwang and Embi, 2007, p.5). The paraphrastic approach's focal point is to prompt students to read literary texts for the sake of the moral values so as to imitate what they have already learnt from their extensive reading (Rosli, 1995).

#### 1.4.5. The Stylistics Approach

The stylistics approach uses linguistic



tools to interpret texts of literature. Its goal is to make students read literature comprehensively and be aware of the linguistic structures of literary texts. Maley (1989) pronounces that "this approach is closely in tandem with what EFL/ESL teachers need for their language classes where the focus is on literature as 'text'." He adds that this approach aims to teach students how to construe a literary text meaningfully and how to be alert to the language use and gain knowledge (cited in Khatib et al, 2011, p.205). Lazar (1993) explicates that providing a linguistic analysis and literary criticism for literary works, this approach gives learners better understanding of literature. Subsequently, students will realize the way language tools are employed in deducing literary texts to deliver particular messages to the recipients.

## 2. Research Methodology

This part of the research covers the procedures adopted by the researcher to achieve the purposes of the study. It also involves the steps of constructing of the instrument of the research, finding the validity of the instrument, the population and the sample of the research as well as the statistical means applied in the research.

### 2.1. The Population of the Research

The population of this study are fourth-year female students studying

in Almutafaweqat preparatory school for girls in the center of Basra city. The sample of research consists of (93) students.

### 2.2. The Instrument of the Research

To make the research tool, the researcher submit an open questionnaire form to (93) fourth-year students, cf. appendix (1), and the return rate was 100%. After making a review to the preceding studies and collecting the questionnaire forms from students, the researcher constructs the items of the questionnaire. Subsequently, a questionnaire of about (24) items and three alternatives, namely (disagree, neutral and agree) has been planned to be delivered to (93) fourth preparatory students via Google Forms.

### 2.3. The Validity of the Instrument

The designed questionnaire is displayed on panels of experts specialized in educational guidance and psychology so as to evaluate face validity. The panels are requested to give their views and comments as regards the suitability of the questionnaire items, cf. appendix (2). All items have appeared to be valid and the percentage of the agreement is (95%), cf. Table (1). Hence, the final form of the questionnaire comprises (24) items.

Table 1: The Percentage of Approving Questionnaire Items

	Items Numbers	The Jury	Approvers' Number	Percentage
Positive items	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	6	6	100 %
Negative items	5, 6, 7, 8	6	5	83 %
Negative items	1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12	6	6	100 %

#### 2.4. The Statistical Means

The researcher employs the following statistical means:

1. The weighted mean.
2. T-test for an independent sample.
3. The percentile ratio for the approval of the panels.

#### 3. Findings and Discussion

When comparing the weighted mean of the sample, which is (63.12), and the hypothetical mean of the scale, which is (186) for the sample, it is shown that the sample mean is less

than the hypothetical mean of the scale. It becomes clear that there are no statistically significant differences, as the significance of the research is (0.05), while the significance of the sample on which the program has been applied is (0.00), which is less as illustrated in tables (2). This indicates that the second objective of the research is not achieved, i.e., English literature has no role in teaching and learning English.



**Table (2) The comparison between the weighted mean of the sample and the hypothetical mean of the scale**

Items	Test Value = )(186)					
	T	Df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
item1	-1370.272-	92	.000	-122.968-	-123.15-	-122.79-
item2	-1369.897-	92	.000	-123.011-	-123.19-	-122.83-
item3	-1632.043-	92	.000	-123.548-	-123.70-	-123.40-
item4	-1526.190-	92	.000	-123.258-	-123.42-	-123.10-
item5	-1555.476-	92	.000	-123.376-	-123.53-	-123.22-
item6	-1392.505-	92	.000	-122.839-	-123.01-	-122.66-
item7	-1448.694-	92	.000	-122.935-	-123.10-	-122.77-
item8	-2077.508-	92	.000	-123.677-	-123.80-	-123.56-
item9	-1434.135-	92	.000	-122.968-	-123.14-	-122.80-
item10	-1582.960-	92	.000	-122.484-	-122.64-	-122.33-
item11	-1618.835-	92	.000	-122.710-	-122.86-	-122.56-
item12	-1558.463-	92	.000	-122.796-	-122.95-	-122.64-
item13	-1411.178-	92	.000	-122.989-	-123.16-	-122.82-
item14	-1487.072-	92	.000	-122.731-	-122.90-	-122.57-
item15	-1608.190-	92	.000	-123.097-	-123.25-	-122.94-
item16	-1421.334-	92	.000	-122.742-	-122.91-	-122.57-
item17	-1892.941-	92	.000	-123.591-	-123.72-	-123.46-
item18	-1390.196-	92	.000	-123.011-	-123.19-	-122.84-
item19	-1352.471-	92	.000	-122.839-	-123.02-	-122.66-
item20	-1468.350-	92	.000	-123.226-	-123.39-	-123.06-
item21	-1392.505-	92	.000	-122.839-	-123.01-	-122.66-
item22	-1921.871-	92	.000	-122.333-	-122.46-	-122.21-
item23	-1664.715-	92	.000	-123.538-	-123.69-	-123.39-
item24	-1423.031-	92	.000	-122.785-	-122.96-	-122.61-

Table (3) below shows the scale of the pros and cons of integrating literature into English language lessons, arranged in descending order according to the weighted mean. It is noticed that the weighted averages ranged between (1.32-2.67), and there is a group of negative items that topped the scale. The findings of the study reveal that most of the students see that integrating literature into English language teaching classes is not useful for them. That is, literature does not contribute to their learning English language. The results of the first aim display that most students have negative perceptions towards English literature. While four negative items of the questionnaire, namely, (22, 14, 16, 24) get high weighted mean, only two positive items of the questionnaire, i.e., (10, 11) get high weighted mean.

The researcher chooses to discuss the items that get the first six ranks. Examining table (3), it is seen that the first rank is obtained by item No. (22), which reads (Literary texts involve difficult vocabulary and grammatical structures). It gets a weighted mean of (2.67). Students find difficulty in reading or comprehending literary texts as they involve difficult vocabulary and grammatical structures. One common reason for the students' attitudes is that the language most selected literary texts are complex,

ancient and contain more unfamiliar words. It is different from English language used currently, a matter which makes students unable to read or understand these texts. Besides, most students don't have the cultural background knowledge which facilitate the process of comprehension. Needless to say that students are unacquainted with such literary terms as imagery, motif, metaphor, simile, personification, alliteration, rhythm, sonnet and the lyric. Lazar (1990, p.206) opines that learners often look at "literary language as being particularly problematic because it does not adhere to accepted norms of use, but exploits and even distorts the accepted conventions in fresh and unexpected ways."

On the other hand, the item No. (10), namely, (literature enables me to express my ideas and opinions freely) gets the second rank with weighted mean of (2.52). Literary texts are interpretive. Some students have enthusiasm to read literature for it gives them the opportunity to convey their own thoughts and views towards the text creatively, and share them with their classmates. This encourages students to participate in the process of understanding the meaning of literary texts actively. It also contributes to develop the students' imagination and





communicative skills and builds their confidence, thereby, literature lessons become student-centered. According to Boudreault literature makes students evoke "group work and interaction between students offering training in speech" (2010, p.14).

The other positive item which gets the third high rank is No. (11): "Literature makes me understand people's personalities and lives." It has weighted mean of (2.29). Literature deals with the social problems and real life situations of people and exposes different types of personalities. In reading literature, students learn not only the various aspects of language but they also recognize the depths of human self and experience characters' emotions and motivations. In addition, literature increases students' self-awareness and worldviews by exposing them to a wide array of different cultures and lifestyles of people a matter that enriches their own individual characters. Nevertheless, most of the students think that literature reading is monotonous and difficult to remember. So, negative item No. (14), i.e., " Literature is very boring and I cannot memorize it" gets a weighted mean of (2.27). There are a multitude of reasons for students' feeling of boredom when learning literature. Most schools do not have the audio-visual teaching aids that can be

used to teach English literature in order to simplify the process of memorizing, add fun and break the monotony of the lesson. Another cause is the individual differences among students. That is, students are of different levels and some of them are unqualified. Therefore, teachers should use different and new teaching methods and approaches to suit the different levels and abilities of learners. In a word, teachers should make literature lesson more active, enjoyable and a welcome escape from the classroom situation. Item No. (16) gets weighted mean of (2.26) as students are incapable of interpreting literary texts because of their complexity. Students lack cultural knowledge of English literature that involves formal and classic language. It is different from the language of their own literature, as such they feel confused and it difficult for them to comprehend and construe. To cope with this problem, teachers can use the native language to explain the meaning of some complex texts or give interpretations of them (Lau, 2002). Accordingly, students display their inability to read or study English literature, in turn, the negative item No. (24) has weighted mean of (2.22).

Obviously, all the negative items which obtain high weighted mean are related to each other, i.e., students agree that integrating English literature into

English language is problematic for fourth class students because of its difficult vocabulary and grammatical structures, old classic language, and negative aspects. In sum, students complex literary texts that can not be decide that literature is hard to read, interpreted easily, not to mention it is understand or memorize for it contains boring.

Table (3) Weighted Means of positive items (1-12) and negative items (12-24) arranged in descending order according to their strength

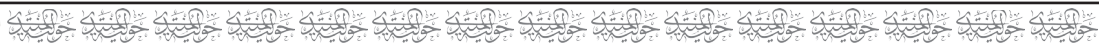
Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
item22	93	1	3	2.67	.614
item10	93	1	3	2.52	.746
item11	93	1	3	2.29	.731
item14	93	1	3	2.27	.796
item16	93	1	3	2.26	.833
item24	93	1	3	2.22	.832
item12	93	1	3	2.20	.760
item6	93	1	3	2.16	.851
item21	93	1	3	2.16	.851
item19	93	1	3	2.16	.876
item7	93	1	3	2.06	.818
item9	93	1	3	2.03	.827
item1	93	1	3	2.03	.865
item13	93	1	3	2.01	.840
item18	93	1	3	1.99	.853
item2	93	1	3	1.99	.866
item15	93	1	3	1.90	.738
item20	93	1	3	1.77	.809
item4	93	1	3	1.74	.779
item5	93	1	3	1.62	.765
item23	93	1	3	1.46	.716
item3	93	1	3	1.45	.730
item17	93	1	3	1.41	.630
item8	93	1	3	1.32	.574

#### 4. Conclusion

Theoretically, using literature in language teaching is very advantageous for it offers four benefits: authentic material, cultural enrichment, language advancement, and personal growth. Literary works present authentic material and so students will be familiar with a variety of language structures, lexical and syntactical items and the correct usage intended for native speakers. As far as the cultural background is concerned, literature enables students to gain a fresh view of the culture of the foreign language they are studying. Furthermore, literature aids students to have the self-confidence required to use the language spontaneously. It encourages individual participation and group work activities where all students take part in general class debate. As a result, educators will have a good chance for developing students' speaking skill.

Nonetheless, the results of study reveal that there is no statistically significance difference in the grades average of fourth preparatory students on the scale of advantages and disadvantages of integrating literature into English language teaching lessons. The hypothetical mean is greater than the Weighted Mean for the sample. The results of the study exposes that

some students have enthusiasm to read literature for it gives them the opportunity to convey their own thoughts and views towards the text creatively, and share them with their classmates which improve their conversational and communicative skills. It allows them to express their thinking and respond freely during their English language lesson. In addition some they see that literature increases their self-awareness and worldviews by exposing them to a wide array of different cultures and lifestyles of people. However, most students find that integrating literature into English language classes is not helpful to their learning of language. They see that literature teaching has negatives more than positives in that the literary texts selected for studying are complex, ancient and contain more unfamiliar words. Besides, students are unaccustomed to many literary terms that usually used in literature which, in turn, makes literature learning monotonous and impedes the process of comprehension. Consequently, there is no role for literature in teaching and learning English.



### Recommendations

As the study demonstrates that the integrating of English literature into English language teaching classes for the fourth secondary schools has a number of problems on the part of students, the following recommendations could be of benefit and help to the English teachers. First, teaching literature in secondary schools requires careful planning and organization. Besides, teachers should be well-versed with the knowledge and methodology of teaching literature. They should keep abreast of all the strategies that are effective for facilitating learning English through literature. Second, teachers can adopt a dynamic, student-centered approach toward comprehension of a literary work where the teacher becomes a facilitator and supervisor rather than the source of knowledge. In other words, students should be encouraged to engage in frequent discussions about what they read and be motivated to write imaginary stories or conversations. Third, teacher trainers should organize workshops and seminars to update teachers' knowledge as regard literature teaching and help them improve their methods and strategies.

Fourth, teachers should teach key concepts, new vocabulary items, explaining any difficult words either

orally or by reference to glossaries, dictionaries, pictures or by using mother tongue language before students read the text. It is also preferable for teachers to introduce students to the authors' biographies and give background information on the texts so as to assist students in gaining necessary background knowledge. Fifth, teachers should make students involved in pre-reading activities in order to present background information and discuss in groups issues that crop up from the text under discussion. They can use think aloud strategy to make the topic of discussion more accessible to incompetent students. Students' understandings should be kept at the center of focus in discussion. Sixth, teachers should motivate students to express their initial impressions about the required text, develop their own interpretations and gain vision from others since there is more than one way to interpret any piece of literature. This can be achieved by asking students to participate in clarifying the literary text, a matter that guides them to listen and speak to one another.



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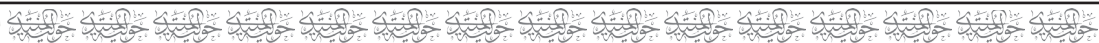
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## Appendixes

Appendix (1) Dear students: the researcher conducts a study. "English Literature as a Teaching Tool from Students' Perspectives." Please read the items of the questionnaire carefully, then tick (√) the choice you select.

	Items of the Questionnaire	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1.	Literature helps me getting ideas for reading new books.			
2.	Literature develops my literary skills.			
3.	Literature improves my knowledge of English language.			
4.	Literature makes me aware of poetic forms and literary devices.			
5.	Literature makes me know about classic English poets and writers.			
6.	Literature makes me know about the other countries' cultures.			
7.	Literature improves my writing style.			
8.	Literature increases my language vocabulary items.			
9.	Through literature, I read different types of literary texts.			
10.	Literature enables me to express my ideas and opinions freely.			
11.	Literature makes me understand people's personalities and lives.			
12.	Literature helps me comprehend my emotions and feelings.			
13.	Literature study is unimportant.			
14.	Literature is very boring and I cannot memorize it.			
15.	I am not familiar with the culture of literary texts.			
16.	It is difficult for me to understand or interpret the literary texts.			
17.	Literature does not develop my knowledge of English language.			
18.	Selected literary texts do not fit my age.			
19.	I'm not enjoyed reading literature.			
20.	Literature does not add anything to me.			
21.	I am not interested in literature learning.			
22.	Literary texts involve difficult vocabulary and grammatical structures.			
23.	Literature does not develop my knowledge of English language.			
24.	I find difficulty in reading and studying English literature.			





appendix (2) A group of panels who examine the scale of the advantages and disadvantages of integrating English literature into the English classes

	Names of Panel	Specialization	Place of Work
1.	Assist. prof. Dr. Kamal Moony	Psychological Health	College of Fine Arts
2.	Instructor Dr. Abd- Alkareem Cheloob Saagitt	Educational Guidance & psychology	Open Educational College in Basra
3.	Instructor Dr. Waheed Agaall	Educational Guidance& Psychology	Open Educational College in Basra
4.	Instructor Dr. Farhat Abbas	Educational Guidance & Psychology	Open Educational College in Basra
5.	Instructor Dr. Mariam Talib Eatia	Educational Guidance & Psychology	Open Educational College in Basra
6.	Assist. Lect. Nasser Al-Shara	Educational Guidance & Psychology	Open Educational College in Basra



