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# ***Literary Texts as a Tool to Enhance Foreign Language Productive Skills***

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English Languages as a  
Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of “Master” in Didactics of Literature**

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# *Dedication*

*To my beloved family,*

*They have always been a source of tenderness, support,  
motivation and happiness, I dedicate this work.*

## **Acknowledgements**

After my thanks to Allah, The Almighty, for granting me patience and energy to carry out this work, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my highly esteemed supervisor S. HCHANI who has offered her time, expertise and encouragement me step by step through the whole research process. Her patience, motivation and immense knowledge have always prompted me to double my efforts. Especial thanks are addressed to jury members and all teachers of English department in Laghouat University.

## **Abstract**

The present study seeks to investigate the literary texts as a tool to enhance foreign language productive skills. This research focuses on the role of literary texts in foreign language classroom and its effectiveness on developing productive skills. It also represents models for teaching literary texts and the approaches that are used in teaching literary texts in foreign language classroom. This work tackles the challenges and difficulties that are facing foreign language teachers while using literary texts in the classroom. The following thesis focuses on difficulties concerning integrating literary texts in classroom. Also the role of foreign language teachers in making the students motivated and interested to learn language through literary texts. This study highlights models, approaches, and strategies of teaching literature to foreign language learners.

## ملخص

تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف النصوص الأدبية كأداة لتعزيز المهارات الإنتاجية للغة الأجنبية. يركز هذا البحث على دور النصوص الأدبية في الفصول الدراسية للغات الأجنبية وفعاليتها في تطوير المهارات الإنتاجية كما أنه يمثل نماذج لتدريس النصوص الأدبية والمناهج المستخدمة في تدريس النصوص الأدبية في الفصول الدراسية للغات الأجنبية. يعالج هذا العمل التحديات والصعوبات التي تواجه مدرسي اللغات الأجنبية أثناء استخدام النصوص الأدبية في الفصل الدراسي. تركز الأطروحة التالية على الصعوبات المتعلقة بدمج النصوص الأدبية في الفصل. أيضا دور معلمي اللغة الأجنبية في جعل الطلاب متحمسين ومهتمين لتعلم اللغة من خلال النصوص الأدبية. تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على النماذج والمقاربات واستراتيجيات تدريس النصوص الأدبية لمتعلمي اللغة الأجنبية.

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## **General Introduction**

Literature is one of available resources in language teaching and it has been a part of language curricula for many years, fading in and out of popularity in response to new theories and methods in teaching and learning contexts. In the nineteenth century, foreign languages were taught with the help of Grammar Translation Method. At that time, students would translate literary texts from foreign language to their native language (Radhika, O., 1991) to read successfully difficult classical texts through the method of translation (Hall, 2005). During this period, literary texts were the very staple of foreign language teaching and students were expected to read and translate canonical literary texts. These texts were represented as models of 'good' writing as well as illustrating the grammatical rules of writing. This was due to the fact that a special status was given to literary texts in foreign language classrooms. It was taught as a body of knowledge or a subject matter that dominated the language syllabus and not as an integral or an embedded component of language learning (Delanoy, 1997).

After Grammar Translation Method, Audio-lingual and Structuralism methods were introduced that emphasized on pronunciation, structures and vocabulary, literature was down played and discarded to the periphery (Collie and Slater, 1987), (Duff and Maley, 1990). Great emphasis was given to correct pronunciation, memorization through pattern drills and conversational practices rather than communicative competence. During this language teaching method, literature study was associated with 'bad,' 'old,' or 'traditional' teaching methods and it was believed that literature failed to provide vocabulary, structures and functional language that students required. This is because studying and translating literature was regarded as an 'old' method, since the English involved was not being taught in their language classes (Short and Candlin, 1986). However, in the seventies, methods such as the community language learning, suggestopedia, the silent way, total physical response, and the natural approach were introduced, but these methods did not utilize the role of literature to teach foreign languages.

From 1970 up to 1980's communicative language teaching (CLT) approach placed a heavy emphasis on language activity that focused on real life communication set in an authentic context to promote learning like, mastering the use of English in a variety of situations, social contexts and professional areas (Hall, 2005). This method was concerned with learners negotiating for themselves, learning by doing things with language in authentic contexts.

Since the communicative language teaching approach paid much attention to authentic contexts, literary texts were seen as 'ideal resources' in language education as it could offer the use of "authentic materials and 'real' language and communication" (ibid). On the other hand, Liddicoat and Crozet (2000) claimed that literature became more divorced from language teaching and learning when the communicative approach to language teaching was established in the 1970's. In other words, literature was neglected and more attention was given to dialogues and conversations which were more practical and visible in the real world situation in communicative language teaching approach.

However, in the early 1980's, Linguists and English Language Teaching scholars like (Widdowson, 1975, Brumfit, 1985, Long and Carter, 1991) have realized that literary texts can be used to reinforce the skills and complement language teaching and it has found its way back into the teaching of English language. In this regard, Duff and Maley (1990), state "Literature is back, but wearing different clothing". After that, literary texts had begun to be accepted as one of the rich and valuable resources available for language teaching.

Yet, literary texts, despite their authenticity and benefits for the classroom, are still either very much ignored or very much avoided by teachers and students. This is because language teachers and students feel that literary texts are highly culturally charged, conceptually difficulty and a hindrance rather than facilitation of learning the target language.

In spite of the traditional arguments which are against using literature in language teaching context, some educationalists and researchers have recently admitted the great role of literature as resource for linguistic development and cultural enrichment. The good application

of literature in foreign language classroom has always been a matter of skilled teaching.

This research aims to consider literary texts as a significant tool for teaching fundamental language skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing. It focuses on the effectiveness of literary texts in developing foreign language productive skills. The work focuses on the literary texts as a tool which is used in teaching foreign languages to enhance the productive skills.

The main research question which guides the present study is: How a literary text is a tool to enhance foreign language productive skills?

In order to have a reliable answer to the problem statement, three marginal questions are asked and structured as follows:

- What is the role of literary texts in teaching a foreign language?
- Does literary texts support creativity of foreign language learners?
- Why it is important for teachers to use literary texts in teaching foreign languages?

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The present dissertation depends on data collection method. It is structured into two chapters. The first one is divided into five subtitles the first title is defining literature, the second title is the relationship between literature and language teaching, the third title is the role of literary texts in foreign language classroom, the fourth title is about literary texts and language skills and the fifth title is about models for teaching of literary texts .

The second chapter spots the light on teaching approaches used to teach literary texts, the challenges and difficulties in using literary texts, advantages of different genres of literature to language Teaching and the strategies used to comprehend literary texts.

Finally, this research is an attempt to open new paths for developing the traditional teaching literature to foreign language students and to expand awareness of new methods in this field to make sure that both teachers and students are satisfied in teaching and learning process.

# CHAPTER ONE

## The Use of Literary Texts in Foreign Language Teaching

## **1.Introduction:**

This chapter contains a brief definition of literature and talks about the relationship between literature and language teaching. After that, it discusses the role of literary texts in foreign language classroom. It means what literary texts give to foreign language learners. They are considered as Valuable Materials, resources of culture, resources of language, personal involvement. Then, it talks about the effectiveness of literary texts on language skills and how literary texts develop the four skills such as reading, writing, speaking, listening and the communicative competence. This chapter also talks about models for teaching literary texts like: Cultural Model, the Language Model, and the Personal Growth Model.

### **1. Definition of Literature**

Literature could be viewed and defined in several different ways. This however, would depend on different factors such as the function of literature and how it is used in foreign language teaching. Traditionally, “Literature” (with a large L) has been defined as “the ‘best’ writing produced in a given language or society, and this collection of ‘approved’ works has constituted the literary canon deemed by authority to be fit to the study”(Maley,2001). Literature, when defined as a subject of study, is an activity that involves and uses language (Radhika, O’, 1991). It focuses on the literariness of a text. Whereas “literature” with small “l” refers to any texts whose imaginative content will stimulate reaction and response in the receiver” (McRae, 1997, p, vii), including simple poems, short stories drama and texts which present a kind of literariness inherent in them (Moc, 2001).

Simply literature reflects the culture and tradition of language and people. It is difficult to accurately define, though many have tried, despite that many have attempted, but it is clear that the accepted definition of literature is always showing signs of change and advancing. According to Fowler (1965), the word literature proposes a higher artistic expression; only putting words on a page doesn't really mean making literature. A standard is the accepted body of works for a given writer.

Some works of literature are considered as authoritative, that are represents culturally a specific genre. But what is considered to be literature can differ from one generation to other. In this way literature is more than cultural or historical artifact, it can introduce another universe of experience (Fowler, 1965).

The meaning of literature is may be discovered by focusing on what the writer wants to say and how his or her expression is written. Collie and Slater (1990) states that the interpretation of the author's message can be achieved by analyzing the chosen words in a given literary work, or paying attention to the character that provides the connection between the reader and the work.

## **2. The Relationship between Literature and Language Teaching**

Literature and foreign language teaching are related to each other. Widdowson (1971) asserts "the study of literature is fundamentally a study of language in operation" it means that literature is considered as an example of using a language in a context. According to Carter (1986) the expense of its literariness, literature should not be neglected instead, language and literature are integrated in FLT classroom in harmonically. Short and Candlin (1986: 95) confirm "Literature and language teaching should be linked and made mutually reinforcing". It means that language will be used in different activities that takes the student centered learning into consideration.

Literature and language are inter-related. Literature is concretized with the tools of language. Thus it seems to be absurd without language. Edward Sapir(1921:120) states: "language is the medium of literature as marble or bronze or clay are the materials of the sculptor since every language has its distinctive peculiarities, the innate formal limitations – and possibilities- of one literature are never quite the same as those of another". It means that language is the interpretation of literature and the way that the message is conveyed from the literary work is differ from work to another, so language is also be different. Literature and language are closely interconnected each one gets life to other.

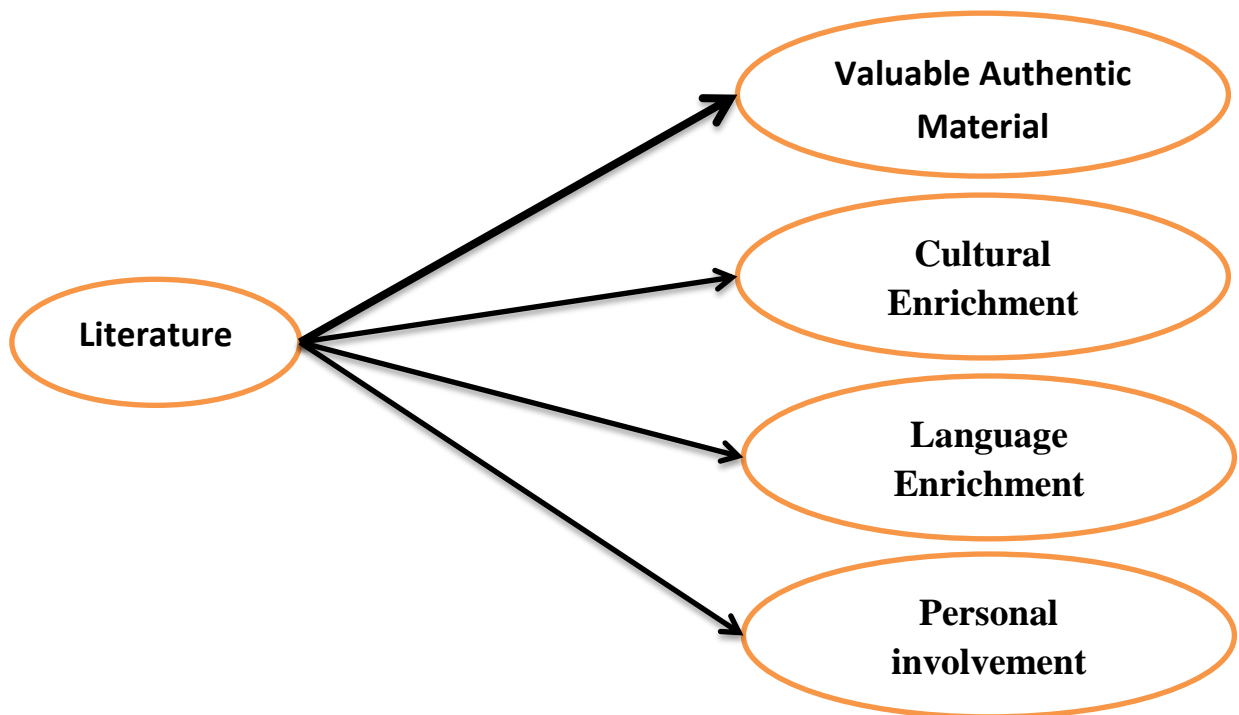
### **3. The Role of Literary Texts in Foreign Language Classrooms**

In foreign language teaching literary texts are rich source of activities. They play an important role in motivating the learner. Langer (1997) said that literature gives the student the opportunity to ask questions, decode, link and discuss. Literary texts affect the learners' feelings and minds. Also learner will be able to be creative through the dialogic nature of literary texts. Colie and Salter (1990) have focused on the advantages of using literature in teaching foreign languages. They give several reasons for integrating literary texts in foreign language teaching. According to Collie and Slater (1990) there are four major reasons which lead the teachers to use literature in teaching foreign languages. These are: valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement.

According to Lazar (1993), when literature is used in teaching a language, students will be motivated for language acquisition and they enjoy it. In many syllabus of teaching foreign languages, literary texts are found as motivating materials to facilitate the teaching process. Valdes (1986) agrees that literature plays an important role in transmitting the culture of people who speak the language in which is written. When literature is used in classroom, language will be thought at the same time. Reading literary texts in the target language leads to acquiring profound knowledge of that language (Basnett and Grundy, 1993). Udor and Ubahakwe (1979) state that literature and language are interrelated and they support teaching English by using literature. They argue that language and literature has a relation like father and son relation there could be no dichotomy between them.

Ayo (2003) affirms that students can develop confidence and produce coherent spoken discourses, and they are able to organize sentences into paragraphs using effective linkers for a coherent and meaningful paragraph through the creative method of teaching literature which is used by language teachers. In addition to that literature has a role of enhancing the development of reading skills. Research findings support that there is an interconnection relationship between language acquisition and extensive reading particularly effective writing.

According to Wilkins (1978) reading provides ready tools for acquiring vocabulary and having an effective writing in a second language. Wilkins also asserts that by reading the learner can gain a large repertoire of lexical items. He affirms that readings facilitates acquisition of vocabulary and helps to have an effective writing.



**Figure 01:**

This diagram summarizes the role of literary texts in teaching a language. Literature is considered as a principle element in learning a language. It affects the learner by giving him a real language and it becomes a valuable authentic material in the classroom.

It also provides the learners diverse cultures. The learner becomes aware of others culture and gets new ideas and interpretations through literature.

In literature the learner discovers new expressions and vocabularies which discuss the writer's personal experience, so literature is rich in terms of language and the learner be able to acquire these vocabularies to express feelings about his or her experience in life.

The last one literature involves the learner in the story. It influences her or his feelings and makes him discussing the events of the story or any genre ( Collie and Slater, 1990).

### **3.1. Valuable Authentic Material**

According to Collie and Slater (1990:98) “Literature is ‘authentic’ material. It means that most works of literature are not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching a language” .The choice of words, style and syntactical structure, all these are features that make literary works original. Writers use words and vocabulary related to the context when it is created. They do not bother to think about their works whether they are understood by readers. Their writings are rich in contexts; they express their feelings, thoughts and emotions. Colie and Slater confirm that literature is an authentic material; its input is beneficial for learners in which they can gain vocabularies from writings because they are created from a real life and written by native speakers. Also literature gives “valuable materials to enhance students’ learning process and support their mastery of language and culture” (Much & Retnaningdyah, 2011:6). That is meant that culture and language are learnt from literature. It introduces to the students diverse cultural backgrounds and different social, religious and historical settings in drama and stories. So the students will be able to comprehend the discourse in all contexts.

### **3.2. Cultural Enrichment**

Collie and Slater (1990) believe that literary works such as novel, plays or short stories represent to the reader characters from different social background. A recipient can realize their feelings, way of thinking, traditions; what they enjoy, hate; how they speak and behave. These imagined worlds give the foreign reader a portrait of real society and culture. Collie and Slater state that the world of literary texts contains colorful settings and characters from many cultural and social backgrounds which can give the student an idea of the way of life of people in a particular society and how they behave and think. This diversity in the world of literature helps learners to feel the real society through visual literacy. Long and Carter(1991), claim that literature and culture in foreign language teaching can be seen as a bridge between the

language and its spirit. This relation makes learners to be closer to foreign language speaking countries.

### **3.3. Language Enrichment**

Collie and Slater (1990) have also argued that the language of literary texts rich in terms of context, lexical and syntactic. Student can discover the function and formation of sentences, variety of structure, ways of connecting ideas .These enrichments can prove their writing skills.Using literary texts to teach foreign language may help students to develop skills of language learning and they become more creative and adventurous. According to Carter and long (1991) literature provides many linguistic opportunities to the student it allows the learner to be involved in the learning process through the activities that focus on the form of the text. They learn about syntax and discourse functions and they also become more productive.

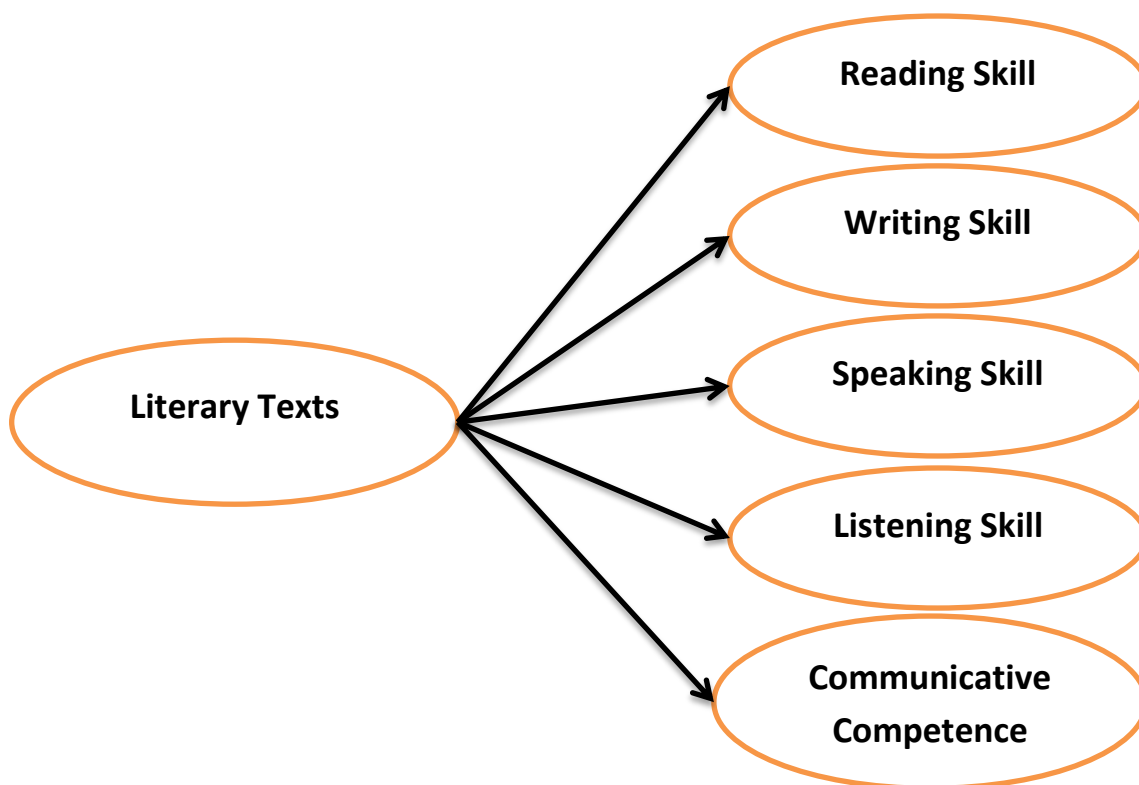
### **3.4. Personal Involvement**

Literature is considered as a useful way in teaching a language. It makes the student be involved in the story of the literary work and understands the meaning of lexical items. The reader here wants to know what happens in the story events and the climax; he feels as if he is part in the story and close to characters. This can affects the student learning process of a language (Collie and Slater,1990). Hirvela (2001) states that literature has advantages in teaching languages. It represents various styles of writings which can develop the writing skills in students. Ur (1996) said that involving the learners' emotions and feelings makes them aware of the various human situation and they can have a critical and creative thinking. Widdowson (1971:7-17) claims: "the study of literature is fundamentally a study of language in operation" it means that literature is an example of language and it is and is a context for language use which involves special, unusual use of language and it feeds creativity on every possible style of register. Literature fosters personal interest in

readers and shift the focus of readers' attention beyond the more mechanical aspects of the foreign language system (Collie and Slater, 1990).

#### **4. Literary Texts and Language Skills**

According to Shang (2006), literary texts offer potential benefits in ESL instruction in many ways. Linguistically, it has the potential of serving as the central focus of a unit of study in the classroom where ample activities involving the application of the basic language skills and language areas are very popular within the field of foreign language learning and teaching practices. Literature is rich with innumerable authentic material of language for the development of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.



**Figure 02:**

This diagram explains the role of literary text in developing language skills. First, reading skill will be developed by reading literary texts. Second, writing skill will be improved when learners comprehend the theme of the literary texts and rewrite what they have understood to get their own creative writing. Third, speaking skill will be developed when the teacher adopts the activity of role playing to get confidence. Fourth, listening skill is enhanced through listening to poems or records of stories. The fifth one is communicative competence in which all skills are developed by using literary texts in foreign language classroom (Shang 2006).

#### **4.1. Literary Texts and Reading Skill**

Literary texts support the development of reading skills because reading texts require interpretation and thus an interaction between the reader and the text. Reading in literature is a combination of reading for enjoyment and reading for information. Literary texts facilitate the interaction and accelerate language learning in content based instruction (Shang, 2006). According to Collie and Slater (1990), by reading a specific literary text, students are exposed to the formation and function of sentences, the diversity of possible structures and the different ways of linking ideas. It offers pleasure so that students are motivated to read and ultimately developing their reading proficiency. For reading purposes, novel and poetry can provide good opportunities for extensive and intensive reading. It is also good for practice sub skills of reading that include skimming, scanning, and finding the main ideas.

#### **4.2. Literary Texts and Writing Skill**

Literary texts can be a powerful and motivating source for writing in foreign language teaching and learning for, both as a model and as subject matter. According to Shang (2006) literature acts as a model when students are asked to write similar to original work or clearly imitate its content, theme, organization and style. Based on literature as subject matter it can be “on or about” the literary text and out of literary text. The latter one uses literature as a springboard for original composition, which, in turn, enhances language learning. The learners can be asked to report the contents of the text or reproduce what one character thinks of another or write about their own reaction to the similar situation. The function of sentences, the diversity of possible structures, and the different ways of linking ideas will expand and deepen students’ writing skills based on literature as a model in controlled, guided and reproducing writing models (Stern, 1991).

### **4.3. Literary Text and Speaking Skill**

The teaching of speaking and listening can be made interesting with an equally meaningful role of literary texts. For speaking purposes, the events in a poem, novel, film extracts or short story can be associated with the learners' own experience in real life. Such a practice paves the way for hot topics for discussion in language classes. Having the students freely reflect on the events and having them critically comment is also facilitative for advancing speaking proficiency. Oral work based on literary texts may help improve students' speaking skills (Sarceni, 2003). Oral reading and role-playing enhance confidence and improve pronunciation; dramatization and re-enactment lead to better understanding of the text and the resultant enjoyment out of it.

### **4.4. Literary Texts and Listening Skill**

Listening to literary re-enactments makes one substantially alert not only to pronunciation, sentence formation and tone of the speakers but also to the possible errors in their speech and dialogues. As Lazar (1993) agrees that, students can develop their listening skills by listening to the recorded literary materials. Learners can be exposed to the audio versions of the poems, short stories, or novels. The musical elements in poetry stimulate the learners' desire for approximating their speaking patterns to the native speaker norms by adhering to the principles of rhythm, rhyme, and intonation (Shang, 2006).

#### **4.5. Literary Texts and Communicative Competence**

Literary texts can provide excellent examples of authentic language use and can stimulate discussions in which learners can practice communication. It is important to have creativity in a language classroom to provide a successful communicative setting (Candlin, 1996). It can be used to develop learners 'creative abilities to communicate with each other through the engagement of literary texts. Shang (2006) confirms that, literature can be considered as a resource which gives priority to creative uses of language. The discussions and group activities based on literary texts helps improving communication skills. This means that Literature supports the development of Communicative Competence. Generally, emphasizing the use of literary texts in English language classroom is very important to promote basic language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening), critical thinking, communication competences and language areas (vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) in the English language classroom.

#### **5. Models for Teaching Literary Texts**

Carter and Long (1991) have presented three models in teaching of literary texts. These are the cultural, the language, and the personal growth models. It is helpful for foreign language teachers to make a review of the common literary elements, such as characterization, setting, plot, climax, and resolution before starting to teach any foreign language. Students should have information about the author, the background of the work, and so on. This can help them to be familiar with any piece of writing there are different models which can be used to teach literature in EFL classes including: Cultural Model, Language Model and Personal Growth Model.

## **5.1. The Cultural Model**

In this traditional model the major focus is on the history of literary movements, the social, political background of a text, the literary genres and rhetorical devices. Literature plays an important role in preserving the cultural heritage (Lazar, 1999). It helps in understanding the others cultures and ideologies. This model is considered as teacher - centered, when the teacher passes information to the students without focusing on the language. Bottino (2000) claims that this model views literature as a cultural tool or source of facts and information. Talif and Jayakaran (1994) state that this model relates with a collection of expressions which have common values. It promotes learners to understand different cultures and relate them to their own.

## **5.2. The Language Model**

Literary texts, according to McKay (1982), are exploited for the teaching of vocabulary or structures or language manipulation and are utilized to exemplify certain types of linguistics patterns such as direct and indirect speech, and literal and figurative language. Literature is taught for the promotion of vocabulary, structure or language manipulation. Though, it exposes students to the more “subtle and varied creative uses of language in literary writing, its principal aim is to help students find ways in to a text in a methodological way” (Carter and Long, 1991:2). Language-based approach to using literature would include techniques and procedures, which are concerned mainly with the study of the literary text itself by cloze procedure, prediction exercises, jumbled sentences, summary writing, creative writing and role play to deconstruct literary texts in order to serve specific linguistic goals (Lazar (1999). These activities offer a wide range of styles and registers; they are open to multiple interpretations and hence provide excellent opportunities for classroom discussion and they focus on genuinely interesting and motivating topics to explore in the classroom (Duff and Maley, 1990). In

short this model endeavors to develop students' language skills through the study of authentic literary texts.

### **5.3. The Personal Growth Model**

Carter and Long (1991) argue that The Personal Growth Model focuses on the personal pleasure and emotional gain that students can procure by reading literary texts and how an effective reading of literature helps them to progress and mature as individuals. It requires students to relate and respond to the themes and issues by connecting them to their personal life experiences. This model encourages learners to draw on their own opinions, feelings, personal experiences and it is more of learner centered. It aims for interaction between the text and the reader in English, helping to make the language more memorable. This model recognizes the immense power that literature can have to move people and the potential influence of literature that enables students to achieve enjoyment from reading literary works.

The influence of teaching literary texts differ in terms of their focus on the text: firstly, the text is seen as a cultural art effect; secondly, the text is used as grammatical and structural analysis; and thirdly, the text is the stimulus for personal growth activities. Integrating these elements makes literature accessible to learners and beneficial for their linguistic development. An integrated model is a linguistic approach which utilizes the strategies used in stylistic analysis, which explores literary and non-literary texts, from the perspective of style and its relationship to content and form. According to Duff and Maley (1990), the main reasons for integrating these elements are based on their linguistic, methodological and motivational benefits. Linguistically, by using a wide range of authentic texts one can introduce learners to a variety of types and difficulties of English language. Methodologically, literary discourse sensitizes readers to the processes of reading. Lastly, motivationally, literary texts priorities the enjoyment of reading. The above models for teaching literature have been incorporated in different approaches.

## **6. Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the relationship between literature and foreign language teaching. They are linked to each other and each one of them affects the other. It also has talked about the role of literary texts in foreign language classroom. Literary texts are considered as valuable authentic material, which can be useful for foreign language learners to learn language from real life. Literary texts are also a source of culture. Foreign language learners discover new cultures. They also develop language skills when they read literary texts for the purpose of learning a language. Literary texts also considered as a useful tool in which foreign language learners are involved. They go deeper in the text in order to understand it and give their personal point of view towards the events in the texts using the target language. It has also tackled the role of literary texts in developing foreign language skills. The last point in this chapter is models for teaching literary texts such as cultural model, language model and personal growth model.

# CHAPTER TWO

## Approaches, Challenges, and Strategies in Teaching Literary Texts in Foreign Language Classroom

## **1.Introduction**

This chapter contains approaches which are used to teach literary texts in foreign language classroom such as information based approach, paraphrastic based approach, language based approach, personal response approach, moral philosophical approach, and the stylistic approach. This chapter also talks about challenges and difficulties that face foreign language teachers while using literary texts. It discusses some advantages of different genres of literature to language teaching and finally it spots the light on strategies used to comprehend literary texts.

## **2. Approaches Used To Teach Literary Texts**

Approaches of using literary texts refer to how literary texts are presented and viewed by teachers. Based on the historical development of the approaches recognized to teach literature, it can be said that the approaches have evolved from central focus on literature as a subject matter to making literature as a resource for the teaching of English language. There are various approaches that teachers can choose when they use literary texts in EFL classrooms. Rosli (1995) indicates six approaches of using literary texts that EFL teachers can adopt. These are: information based approach, paraphrastic approach, language based approach, personal response approach, moral philosophical approach and stylistic approach.

### **2.1. Information Based Approach**

Information based approach is a way of teaching knowledge about literary texts where literary texts are seen as a medium to offer a source of information to students (Carter, 1988). Teachers who adopt this approach perform activities like lecturing, explanation about literary texts and terms, reading notes and criticism provided in workbooks or by the teacher. It demands a large input from the teacher and it is closely related “aesthetically patterned artifact endowed with the knowledge potentials

philosophy, culture, morality, and humanities” (Ganakumaran, 120: 2003). This approach is quite ineffective in enhancing students’ language proficiency (Carter and McRae, 1996) because this approach bases itself on traditional views to literature and teaching.

## **1.2. Paraphrastic Approach**

This approach deals with the surface meaning of the literary text (Hwang and Embi, 2007). Similarly, Rosli (1995) asserts that paraphrastic approach allows teachers to use simpler words and sentence structures compared to the more complicated ones in the texts and sometimes the teacher can translate it into other languages. According to Rosli, this approach is suitable for beginners of the target language as it acts as a stepping stone in formulating original assumptions of the author’s work. According to Rosli (1995) ,the main goal of teachers who adopt this approach is enabling students understand the literal meaning of a text but emphasis is not given to their personal engagement in understanding the text in their own ways. Classroom activities frequently used in line with this approach is teacher centered, retelling the literary text using simpler language, the use of translation and reading paraphrased versions provided in books.

## **1.3. Language Based Approach**

Language based approach seeks greater association between language and literary texts. This approach is done by providing them exposure to the target language and connecting them to specific vocabulary and other aspects of the language. Maley and Duff (111:1990) insist that the primary aim of this approach is “quite simply to use literary texts as a resource for stimulating language activities”. With the use of Language Based Approach, the focus shifted to the learner, the reading process and creating language awareness in the learners. Activities like prediction, close, role play, recitation, debate and discussions can be used to create opportunities for language use in the classroom. In line with this

approach, a language-based framework for reading literary texts moves from lexis (vocabulary), syntax (sentences) to coherence (discourse). As Lazar (1993) points out, detailed analysis of the language of the literary texts will help students to make meaningful interpretations and at the same time students will increase their general awareness and understanding of English. The aim of Language based Approach is not on studying literature, but literary text is utilized as one of the resources in providing inspiring language tasks for students. Undertaking a detailed language analysis can facilitate the construction of meanings and encourage students to exercise their existing knowledge of grammar and vocabulary Duff and Maley (1990).

#### **1.4. Personal Response Approach**

This approach helps to motivate and encourage students to read a literary text by making a connection between the themes of the text and their personal life and experiences. As indicated by Ayo (2003) although learners are encouraged to explore various textual meanings, their interpretation must be behind the text. It focuses on learner's response to the author's text. The learners would respond to what they think are the author's intentions and what are the meanings that could be derived from the text (Hirvela, 1996). Teachers who adopt this approach employ activities like question-discussion which are interpretive in nature generating views and opinions on the text. The premise behind personal response approach is on task engagement will be enhanced if students relate the themes of literary texts with their personal experience.

#### **1.5. Moral Philosophical Approach**

This is an approach which incorporates moral values across curriculum. The focus of this approach is to discover moral values while reading a particular literary text (Hwang and Embi 2007). It seeks to find the worthiness of moral and philosophical considerations behind one's reading (Rosli 1995). The focus of teachers who adopt the moral

philosophical approach to literary texts is to make students search for moral values from particular literary text. In this approach teachers employ activities like reflective session, getting students to search for values while encountering a literary text and eliciting students' evaluation on what they should do or not do based on their reading (Hall, 2005).

### **1.6. The Stylistic Approach**

Short (1996) stated that stylistic analysis is useful for relatively inexperienced or unsophisticated students to arrive at possible meanings or texts. Teachers who adopt this approach to using literary texts guide students towards a closer understanding and appreciation of the literary text itself using the combination of linguistic analysis and literary criticism (Lazar, 1993). The main goals of teachers who adopt this approach is to enable students make meaningful interpretations of the text which in turn allows students look beyond the surface meaning of the given literary text and to expand students' knowledge and awareness of the language (Mengistu 2011). Recently scholars have started trying out an integrated approach where any of the approaches or their principle is combined with the other. According to Savvidou (2004) the use of an integrated approach of using literary texts that mix either of the above approaches ensure the maximal utilization of literary texts. So, it is better to use an integrated approach in teaching literature in EFL classrooms to promote basic language skills and language areas of students.

## **2. Challenges and Difficulties In Using Literary Texts**

Although literary texts offer many benefits which make literary texts worth being included in language program, teachers and learners see literary language as problematic since it does not stick to more common usages, but exploits and even distorts the accepted conventions in fresh and unexpected way (Lazar, 1990), and it includes vocabulary, grammatical structures, and syntax considered to be too complicated (Duff and Maley, 1990:7). The length of the text can be seen as the major difficult apart from the linguistic difficulty.

While some teachers may see longer texts as more difficult than short texts, it is, however, possible that shorter texts may present more difficulties because they do not offer the extended contextual support and repetition which longer texts do (ibid). Concerned with culture, they claim that culture does offer difficulties in a way that it is impossible for the outsider to share fully the range of references of an insider. All literary works make reference to things outside themselves and are thus liable to interpretation, or variable misinterpretation. However, they contend that such variable interpretation makes literature interesting.

The other problems in using literary texts are concerned with conceptual and acceptance difficulties. Conceptual difficulties refer even though the language written in the text is simple, easily intelligible, students may still find it hard to make sense since they are not able to perceive the ideas the text conveys. Whereas acceptance difficulties is concerned the most instinctive negative reactions we experience towards certain types of text or certain authors (ibid).

It is likely that some teachers may have negative attitudes towards using literature in the class because their main goal in language teaching is to teach the grammar of the language (McKay, 1982:529).

Similarly, (Rodhika, O', 1991) affirms that linguistic difficulty of the text and the background knowledge about English language and culture to interpret some literary texts are the major difficulties in foreign language classroom. However, literary texts remain an unavoidable tool

in the hands of language teacher. It is in the teacher's domain as what to teach and how to teach and how to use poetry, drama, prose, short stories or novel for language teaching (Sujata, 2009). A text which is extremely difficult in linguistic or cultural levels will bring few benefits. For these several solutions have been suggested in regard to the problems of linguistic or other difficulties.

### **3. Advantages of Different Genres Of Literature To Language Teaching**

English literature, in all its genres, exercises learners' ability to understand and appreciate the language they encounter every day. Through its different types, literature increases students' self-awareness and worldviews by exposing them to different cultures and lifestyles. Besides, the diversity of literature provides both practical and intangible advantages to its reader and illustrates the power and pleasure of language. In reading literature, one learns not only to recognize and appreciate the various aspects of language but also to be acquainted with diverse sentence patterns and certain elements of style that the author has used. In addition to making the learner a more efficient reader and writer, the different kinds of literature exposes students to a wide array of human experience that enriches their own individual characters with empathy and understanding.

#### **3.1 Drama**

Drama, or plays, is texts that tell a story through performance rather than the narrative style used in novels. Mullamaa (2009) says that "Drama is doing. Drama is being. Drama is such a normal thing. It is something that we engage in daily when faced with difficult situations" (Mullamaa, 2009:3). Drama is regarded as an ideal way to teach language whereby students are exposed to English as it is used in real conversations a matter that develops learners' conversational and

communicational skills (Goodwin, 2001). By dint of drama teachers can teach different areas and skills of English language like grammar, pronunciation, reading, writing, speaking and listening in an integrated way though the focus will be on meaning and fluency rather than structure (Dervishaj, 2009). Moreover, drama "stimulates learners' intellect and . . . helps [them] acquire language by focusing on the message they are conveying, not the form of their utterances" (Mullamaa, 2009:4). The benefits of using drama in the EFL classed can be summarized according to Boudreault (2010) as follows:

- Drama makes the learning experience fun for the students and even memorable because it is interactive and visual;
- It gives students opportunities for developing their communicative skills in authentic and dynamic situations;
- It relieves the tension of learning and changes the students' perception of the language learning from a negative to a positive
- It builds students' confidence as it puts the teacher in the role of supporter in the learning process and the students become the center of most classroom activities.
- It gives the students the opportunity to develop their imagination and encourages them to express their own ideas creatively.
- It encourages group work and interaction between students offering training in speech.

### **3.2 Short Story**

Short story is the most widely used literary genre in the foreign language classroom. It is used "with all levels of proficiency, all age groups, in many classroom activities and for different language focuses: grammar, writing and speaking" (Salli-Copur, 2007:5). The educational benefit of short story lies in its being easy for students to understand, attention-grabbing and short enough to be covered in one or two lessons. (Collie & Slater, 1991; Sariçoban & Küçükoğlu, 2011). It "gives students the chance to use their creativity, promotes critical thinking skills and

helps them to go beyond the surface meaning and dive into underlying meanings" (Arioğul 2001:18). In line with this idea, Young (1996:90) indicates that since short stories are entertaining, they reduce students' anxiety, and make their critical thinking "natural, familiar, and sometimes even fun", not to mention "the stories put issues of critical thinking in an easily remembered context".

Short story is, moreover, a good technique to improve students' listening, speaking and reading skills and increases their stock of vocabulary items as well. In a study carried out by Lao and Pourkalhor and Kohan (2013) who make a comparison between a group of students that read literary texts and a second group that read non-literary texts at a university in Hong Kong, it is seen that students who read literary texts are better in reading and acquire more vocabulary items than those who read non-literary texts (Pardede, 2011). From Pourkalhor and Kohan's perspective, "short stories could be beneficial since literature has the quality of being universal and short stories will allow the teacher to deal with human problem" (2013:54).

### **3.3 Poetry**

According to William Worthwords, poetry is the spontaneous overflow of thoughts and feelings. Poetry has numerous uses and benefits in the English language classroom because of its "short length, perfectly suitable for a single classroom lesson, its peculiar structure and its characteristic linguistic features" (Llach, 2007:10-11). Teaching poetry "promotes cooperation and communication as well as individual expression in the EFL classroom" (Panavelil, 2011:12). It also contributes to developing analytical abilities of students making them aware of the sensitive use of words and expressions by the poet. Poetry is thought-provoking and helps teachers to break away from routine exercises (McKay, 1982). Since poetry is characterized by its deviation from the norms of language, it equips readers with various styles of language use that go beyond the ordinary usage and rules of grammar, syntax and vocabulary (Khansir,2012). It too helps students to know the different

figure of speech, for instance, metaphor, simile and irony which are current in daily language use (Saraç, 2003). Added to this, "poetry can be a creative way of exposing English language learners to quality literature while teaching reading strategies at the same time" (Norris, 2010:1).

In addition, poetry provides good practice in developing correct pronunciation and intonation through rhythms and rhyming patterns which not only do develop technical language skills, but also add fun and vigour to the process. According to Saga (1987:85), "the properties of rhyming and rhythm . . . make students familiar with the suprasegmental aspects of the target language, such as stress, pitch, juncture and intonation." Besides adding to the range and variety of uses of English, poetry provides cultural insights and forms a basis of discussion. It is an effective way of conveying culture since it embraces many cultural elements and allusions (Sage 1987).

### **3.4 Novel**

Novel is a term that "applies to a great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose" (Abrams,1990:190). In fact, novel provides an excellent platform for a wealth of pedagogic activities. It engages students "intellectually, emotionally, and linguistically and it is the basis for a variety of classroom activities, ranging from extensive reading tasks to close textual analysis" (Tsai, 2012:104). Because reading novels brings joy and satisfaction for readers, novel stimulates students to read further and to be, accordingly, less anxious about the language (ibid). Novel too enables learners to make prediction, draw conclusions and decipher the implied meaning lied behind the literal meaning of words. It offers a glance at the target language culture and helps them to understand and appreciate it. (Lazar, 1990). Addressing life dilemmas, novel reflects real life situations and teaches students how others face problems similar to their own and overcome them (McKay, 1986). More than this, novel increases students' awareness of language use because it evokes their

understanding of "conversational discourse" (ibid :191). Through novel, students can travel to distant lands and experience exciting things.

### **3. Strategies used to Comprehend Literary texts**

Various strategies are used to read literary texts. Some of them are: steps into literary texts, bottom up process, and top down process; aesthetic reading, and efferent reading,

#### **3.1. Steps into Literary Texts**

Langer (1991) listed four major steps in the process of understanding a text. Firstly, being out and stepping into an envisionment. This is where students make initial contacts with genre, content, structure and language of text by using prior knowledge and surface features. Secondly, being in and moving through an envisionment. Students, in this step are immersed in their understandings, using their previously constructed envisionments, prior knowledge and text itself to further their creation of meaning. Thirdly, stepping back and reflecting on one's own previous knowledge or understandings. Lastly, stepping out in which the students react to the text, or to the reading experience itself (Langer, 1991).

#### **3.2. Bottom Up Process**

Reading strategies have been ameliorated through the years to facilitate reading and understanding literary texts to language learners. Bottom up processing is a strategy used when readers try to understand language. They look at individual meaning or grammatical characters of the text in order to understand the whole text. To predict meaning of the literary text, syntactic and semantic cues are used by the reader (Carrel, 1998).

### **3.3. Top Down Process**

The top down process of reading provides relevant background of knowledge to readers. Carrel (1988) state the immediate goal for EFL teachers is to minimize reading difficulties and to maximize comprehension by providing culturally relevant information to students before they embark on their reading assignments.

### **3.4. Aesthetic Reading**

Reader response approach believes that aesthetic text-approach is achieved through aesthetic and stance. Aesthetic distance implies temporary detachment from the pressure of the world in which a reader lives in order to enter the secondary world mapped out by the literary text (Benton, 1992; Bredella, 1996). Thus, aesthetic approach to literature has a strong emotional appeal because students are invited to live through what the speaker, narrator or characters experience in their textual worlds. This helps students to improve their language proficiency as well as develop their creative thinking in expressing thoughts and opinions. It is interaction based that the students make connections between ideas, themes, and characters. At the same time, the activities of comparing and contrasting the content of the text will develop students' ability to analyze and criticize what they have learnt and already known (Zafeiriadou, 2001). Therefore, Language for aesthetic purposes enables learners to enjoy literary texts at a level suited to their language proficiency and develops the ability to express things creatively.

### **3.5. Efferent Reading**

Efferent reading emphasizes on the knowledge that the text conveyed. Students are mainly involved in the information they are supposed to gain from the text. Hence, efferent reading is not appropriate to the nature of literature teaching, which contains much more than a simple opinion or knowledge (Zafeiriadou, 2001). In addition, selecting simplification, extracts or simple literary texts may help to avoid reading difficulties. In simplification the original text is shortened in characters, situations and events, the vocabulary is restricted and the structures are controlled. Simplification is not favored because of its reduction process. To remove the burden of intensive lengthy reading extracts are advantageous. However, they are artificially isolated for teaching purpose does not necessarily cultivate interest in reading in the English language learners. Using the abridged version and understandable texts are the best solution to understand a literary text in English language classrooms.

### **Conclusion**

The previous chapter has discussed the approaches used to teach literary texts. It also has discussed the challenges and difficulties that face teachers when they use literary texts for teaching foreign languages. This chapter also has tackled the advantages of different genres of literature to language teaching. Finally the previous chapter has talked about some strategies that are used by teachers to make foreign language learners comprehend literary texts.

## **General Conclusion**

Foreign language teachers want their learners to be able to communicate and express their ideas in correct form. Literary texts have been integrated into foreign language teaching as an interesting and relevant tool that helps students to develop their foreign language skills. The objective of this research is to develop students' language skills through literary texts, with the help of methods that are adopted by teachers. These methods can facilitate the language teaching and learning process. If teachers select carefully the literary text, it will be a valuable resource for enhancing students' response to using literature outside the classroom. Integrating fun literary short stories for example will develop the creativity of students and motivate them for learning language through literature.

This work has talked about the effectiveness of literary texts on foreign language skills. Foreign language skills will be developed when learners are well guided by teachers. Literary texts have several roles in foreign language teaching. Researches considered literary texts as a valuable authentic material, a resource of language. They also consider literary texts as a tool to enhance language skills for learners of foreign languages. Literary texts are also combine culture and language together for a best model of learning a target language

According to scholars, several approaches are used in teaching literary texts in foreign language classroom. The first approach is information based approach which is using literary texts as a resource of language. The second approach paraphrastic approach that allows teachers to use simpler words and sentences compared to the more complicated ones in the texts. The third approach is language based approach, the focus shifted to the learners. The fourth approach personal response approach in which the learners make a connection between the theme of the text and their personal experience. The fifth approach moral philosophical approach which incorporates moral values across curriculum. The sixth approach the stylistic approach, it enables learners to make meaningful interpretations of the texts and to look beyond the surface meaning of the literary texts.

As for the teaching methodology, our suggestion is to adopt a process teaching methodology that is, fundamentally, task based oriented; a methodology within which the learners are expected to interact with the literary texts by doing. Down to earth, a methodology that is student-centered. The teacher, then, has to come down from the pedestal, helping learners play more active role in learning. This methodology also calls for more complex strategies: cooperative learning in particular. Our suggestion, then, is to make use of cooperative learning strategies namely literature circles: a learning technique that has proved very successful in engaging students with reading literature worldwide. Last but far from least, our suggested teaching frame work makes a place for technology in the literature classroom through the implementation of the filmed versions of literary works. This suggestion stems from the belief that film adaptations of literary works might reinforce the students understanding of literary aspects of the studied material, and can also ease the burden of conveying to the students the cultural aspects the text.

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