

The Importance of the Role of Literature in the EFL Teaching Context

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Abstract. Since the early 17th century literature has been the important approach in English Language Teaching (ELT). It has been successfully the essential technique of ELT all over the British Empire. The study of English literature has resulted in the creation of fluent English-speaking generations of the British colonies, which helped greatly in bridging the gap between the colonizers and the original inhabitants of such territories. As a result, we may say that English has been significantly and effectively playing an indispensable role in ELT. Although several approaches in foreign language teaching have come up, literature is still vitally significant in ELT through literary texts that foster learners' motivation (Mackay, 1982). We believe that all approaches remain inadequate if the role of literature in modern language teaching is exempted. In this paper, we try to focus on the effective ways of fostering the role of literature in ELT in general and in Saudi Arabia in particular.

Introduction

Literature plays a vital role in language teaching and should have a proper place in language learning strategies, curriculum, and textbooks. Despite the enthusiasm and logic shown by many ELT experts and professionals that there is nothing much to benefit from learning an alien culture's masterpieces, literary texts still provide us with lots of aesthetic, intellectual and emotional pleasure through a creative and emotive use of language. The language and dialogues of literary texts contrast sharply with the pedestrian vocabulary and insipid dialogues of language textbooks. Because of its capacity for providing pleasure and enjoyment, Literature, as McKay argues, can increase the students' "motivation to interact with a text and thus, ultimately increase their reading proficiency" (1982: p. 531). Side by side with this, the literary masterpieces, because of their symbolic and critical depth, can provide impetus for language learning and enhance the students' language proficiency. Therefore, Literature can play a very vital and lively role in language teaching and learning. Thus, for the purpose of total English, courses on Literature may be included in the curriculum of language teaching for non-native students. This paper aims at investigating the challenges and possibilities for working with Literature in English Language classrooms for undergraduate students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, an area which has not yet been

explored by sufficient academic reflection and research. The authors will focus on a brief review of literature, history of language teaching, experiments with ELT methodologies in the past, the use of Literature in the British colonies, the value of Literature, study of Literature in the context of Saudi Arabia as it constitutes a cross-cultural relation which should not erase the learner's subjectivity, history, culture, needs and desires, Literature in teaching the four basic language skills, how to teach Literature in EFL/ELT classrooms, some key factors to success and finally the conclusion.

Literature Review

Any study of facts in EFL/ELT fields since the middle of the previous century till date will show that despite an overlook on Literature during this period in teaching English as a foreign language, the literary mainstream has always exerted a tremendous influence in the area concerned. Most attempts have been proved ineffective or even discarded while trying to replace literature-based teaching materials by artificially but carefully trimmed and pruned EFL materials. As a consequence, educators and experts in EFL/ELT fields have always felt the magnetic touch and influence of a literature-based teaching approach in EFL. Brumfit and Carter (1986), two famous ELT experts, have pointed out a major dichotomy in their

introduction to *Literature and Language Teaching* between “the possibly static and unquestionable reality of the informational text” and “the fluid, dynamic reality” of the literary text. They have stressed the fact that “a literary text is authentic text, real language in context, to which we can respond directly”. Such a text cannot only grip the reader’s imagination more securely, but can also allow for the examination of language at work. They proposed for an approach to the teaching of Literature in which “language study and literary study are more closely integrated than is commonly the case at the present time” (p. 10).

In his article entitled “A Feeling for Language: The Multiple Values of Teaching Literature” published in *Literature and Language Teaching* by Brumfit and Carter (1986), Michael Long (1986) indicates that current textbooks of language learning work in the monologic mode, whereas literary texts would be intrinsically more dialogic. Moreover, he notes that language learning texts are mainly used for the asking of what he calls “lower order questions” (p. 54) that enable the learners to carry out some activity with language structures, but do not engage them with the text in a meaningful way. In contrast, literary texts could allow learners to ponder over “the reason for a particular combination of words, and an appreciation of their special quality” (p. 45). Long stresses the advantages of Literature over language texts and says:

... Literature is by definition authentic text, and both verbal response and activity response are genuine language activities, not ones contrived around a fabricated text. Moreover, current methodology—for “communicative” language teaching—favors group activities and language learner interaction. Prediction, creating a scenario, debating topics on or around a text ... all seem to develop naturally out of a literature text, while they are either difficult or impossible with the type of text favored by “English for Specific Purposes” (p. 58).

Long points out that “the language of literature, adapted for group and interaction activities, overcomes the restrictive element of language teaching, and encourages the learner to test the dimension of words” (p. 59). It can thus be concluded that Literature can be of immense benefit for L2 purposes. Literary texts can create a real feeling for language acquisition by engaging the attention of the learner in a unique way.

William T. Littlewoods (1986) in his essay “Literature in the School Foreign Language Course” has emphasized that courses on Literature are especially effective in developing reading skills and may be also utilized for teaching grammar and the different rules of the language. He further comments that if there are no cultural barriers, Literature can become an effective source of teaching and can help the learner use English for all purposes.

Sandra Mckay (1986) in her influential essay entitled “Literature in ESL Classroom” has answered a number of questions raised against the use of Literature in teaching a language. Many ELT specialists are of the opinion that Literature discourages teaching the rules of Grammar and does not help acquire the basic four skills of language. They sometimes even maintain the view that literary texts may be culturally alienating, and as such, are unsuitable. But Sandra Mckay’s answers are straightforward and convincing. She stresses that Literature provides a broad context of language use for the students and thus can improve the communicative competence of the learners. She further says that “literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax” (p. 190). She, however, maintains the view that the success of Literature in ESL classroom depends on the use of texts that are not too difficult or too far away from the learner’s own cultural contexts. At the same time she mentions that oversimplification of texts may result in “a homogenized product in which information becomes diluted” and thus can reduce “cohesion and readability” (p. 193). Suitable literary texts, according to her, should be “stylistically uncomplicated” with matters “the students can identify” (p. 194).

In her book *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, Claire Kramsch (1993) has emphasized the use of literary texts in language teaching. She argues that “the main argument for using literary texts in the language classroom is literature’s ability to represent the particular voice of a writer among the many voices of his or her community and thus to appeal to the particular in the reader” (pp. 130-131). She goes on to say that Literature provides the learner with “opportunities for the dialogic negotiation of meaning” (p. 131). She strongly maintains that the literary text gives students “access to a world of attitudes and values, collective imaginings and historical frames of reference that constitute the memory of a people or speech community” (p. 175). She further comments that “the success of communicative approaches to language teaching has been accounted for by their functional usefulness and

universal characteristics, but their real potential lie in their ability to engage the learner in the dialect of meaning production” (p. 239).

Ronald Carter and Michael McCarthy (1995) have drawn a dividing line between the functional use of communicative approach and creative spontaneity of literary approach to language teaching. They hold the view that the communicative approach to language teaching emphasizes the “transactional uses of language [that is, the transaction of information, goods and services], at the expense of interactional uses [that is, for the creation and reinforcement of social relationship] and creative uses”. They emphasize that “suitably selected literary texts can provide a motivating and stimulating source of content in the language classroom” and can thus excite fresh responses among the learners (p. 304). Their final observation is that using only “those types of dialogue that are transparent and transactional and devoid of richness, cultural reference, and creativity are to misrepresent what speakers actually do and simultaneously to lose an opportunity for interesting language work” (p. 312).

In his book *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*, Suresh Canagajah (1999) has stressed the need of a pedagogy that will help students “to use English not mechanically and diffidently, but creatively and critically” (p. 176). T Graman is referred to in the book *The Cultural Politics of English* as arguing for “an approach that addresses the existential, political and axiological questions touching the lives of both students and teachers” (p. 310). The author of the book, Alastair Pennycook (1994), emphasizes that “English language must start with ways of critically exploring the students’ cultures, knowledge and histories in ways that are both challenging and at the same time affirming and supportive” (p. 311).

On the basis of the above mentioned literature review, we can conclude that the use of literary texts in teaching English as a foreign language is realistic and useful. Relevant literary courses in English language classrooms can stimulate the imagination of the learners. As these are specimens of real language, they can involve the students in group discussion as well as personal exploration. They will thus enhance reading skills, help acquire new and creative vocabulary, create an aptitude for language and draw attention to different levels of discourse.

Experiments with different EFL/ELT methods in the past

Throughout the last century, language teaching professionals were involved in a search for finding

out “appropriate methods” that would help students learn a foreign language in the classroom. Academics have seen a succession of different “methods”, each being discarded when a new one takes its place. Thus, all methods developed so far have changed and revolved in a cyclical pattern, of course, with some positive aspects of the previous practices. In the Western world, initially, the learners were taught a ‘foreign language’ by the Grammar Translation Method. The classroom activities in this method included a focus on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary and of various declension and conjugations, translations of texts and doing various exercises. Remarkably enough, this century-old method has survived all challenges of time and is still practiced in almost all non-native contexts.

Next emerged the Direct Method with its emphasis on conducting classes exclusively in the target language, using everyday vocabulary, and teaching oral communication skills based on question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students. It was very popular in the beginning and was widely accepted as an effective method of teaching a foreign language. But, with the passage of time, the temporary excitement died down both in Europe and in the USA. Their language curricula once again turned back to the old Grammar Translation Method, putting emphasis on reading skills in foreign languages.

The tide turned and after the World War II, different warring nations felt the need to train their soldiers in foreign languages of the occupied territories. This method first called the Army Method was later named as Audio-lingual Method. This new technique emphasized a lot of oral activity, like pronunciation, patterns drills and conversation practice. Despite the initial wide popularity it enjoyed, its charisma did not last long: the main cause being its failure to teach a long-term communicative proficiency.

With the Chomskyan revolution towards “deep structure” of language, a new system under the title Cognitive Code Learning developed. It focused attention on the rule-governed nature of language, with emphasis on more deductive rule learning in language acquisition. Unfortunately, the flair was short-lived, because it pushed the learners out of their patience with its boring drilling, dry rules and ever increasing complexities.

During the 1970s, research on second language learning grew from its linguistic offshoots to an independent discipline in its own right. New ideas and new results were coming on how people learn a language both inside and outside the

classroom. New methods developed and they threw the Chomskyan and the audio-lingual innovations out of the track. One of them is the Community Language Learning method. According to this new approach of Charles Curran, the learners are regarded not as a “class” but as a “group” and they need certain instructions and motivations. For the purpose of learning L2, the students need interaction through interpersonal relationship and the responsibility of the teacher is like that of a football or cricket coach. The learners will sit in a circle, one of them will speak something in the native language and it is the teacher who will translate it in L2 to be repeated by the rest of the learners and the process will go on.

This method, again, suffered a number of disadvantages. As the teacher has almost nothing to do except translation, his role sounds rather passive and nondirective. Assertive direction from the teacher could improve the method. Another problem with this approach was its dependence on inductive strategy of learning, while a deductive of the sort has always proved more effective. As is the fate, this method is virtually discarded from all institutional programs except in theoretical curricula.

The next approach that attracted the attention of language professionals was Stephen Krashen’s Natural Approach. According to this practice, learners could benefit from making a delay in their “production” until their spontaneous speech “emerges”. In the Natural Approach, the learner moves through, as Krashen has put it, three stages. First, he speaks about the preproduction stage through which the learner develops his listening comprehension skill. Secondly, there is the early production stage in which student’s errors are corrected. And finally, there is the last stage in which the learner will torrentially go on producing language and discourse. This approach is, however, prevalent among different language institutions here and everywhere.

And finally the Communicative Language Teaching method, one of the best, if not the last, approaches to teaching a foreign language. Its primary goals are communicative competence, functional use of language for meaningful purposes, strategies for autonomous learning and genuine linguistic interaction with others. Here the role of the teacher is that of a facilitator and guide. The learners are encouraged to construct meaning through genuine interaction with others. Here more attention is paid on fluency and a spontaneous process of learning rather than on grammar and accuracy. Although CLT is playing a very important role in L2 teaching all over the world, it is not, again, free from inadequacies.

The worst of all is the lack of appropriate teaching and learning atmosphere (a context where the L2 is spoken or practiced almost like the L1), for the success of CLT largely depends on situation rather than instructions. Moreover, as there is comparatively less emphasis on grammar and accuracy, the learners can hardly produce effective sentences in acceptable English, let alone a paragraph, or a composition or even a report. Since the student’s stock of vocabulary remains very poor, they find themselves unable to express their feelings, emotions and desires in the target language.

Chomsky’s linguistic competence refers to the knowledge of a finite system of rules. Such knowledge enables an ideal language user in a homogeneous speech community to generate and understand the mystery of sentences. ELT specialists, however, believe that such knowledge, though obviously necessary, is by no means sufficient to carry out a speech act as successfully as possible. They demand that this should be complemented by the “knowledge of not only if something is formally possible in a language, but also the knowledge of whether it is feasible, appropriate or done in a speech community” (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). This second type of knowledge is known as communicative competence. According to Richards and Schmidt, communicative skills are made up of four constituents: 1) grammatical competence, 2) sociolinguistic competence, 3) discourse competence, and 4) strategic competence.

Moreover, the communicative approach adopted by current methodology in FLT aims at promoting learner-centered teaching, demanding students to be independent, critical, logical and analytical in their thinking and devote time to self learning under minimum supervision. But the actual situation, in most cases, is just the opposite. While the objectives are noble and pragmatic, the means and materials are inadequate and ineffective. As experience shows, the learners in Saudi Arabia in general are only passive learners, heavily dependent on their mostly incompetent teachers. They come up with ready-made answers written for them in their textbooks for memorization and reproduction in their examinations. There is little scope for independent thinking or self analysis. Incompetent pedagogy and mostly insipid and boring ELT/EFL teaching materials [as these are usually devoid of natural human feelings and emotions that are able to capture the attention and interest of the learners] are responsible for making the learners tired and unmindful of their lessons and classroom activities. Furthermore, the learners’ lack of motivation, critical

and analytical thinking, and the inability to working independently, lead to their failure in mastering a foreign language. Because most classroom activities are boring and uninteresting, it is seen that students are inattentive, and they insist on finishing a two-hour class in one hour's time or even less than that. As a matter of fact, they are forced to continue their class and the result is usually negative. The reality is that the notion of teaching by delighting is totally ignored and this is one of the main reasons of the failure of ELT/EFL programs.

Thus from the above discussion, we can draw the conclusion that the different methodologies developed and exploited throughout the last century till the present time could not produce any permanent solutions to the problems and prospects of teaching EFL. With the change of time, methods have changed, investigating and discovering new techniques only to be replaced by the old ones.

A Historical Overview of the Role of Literature in EFL Teaching Context

It was the British, of course, who had introduced the study of English Literature in all their occupied territories in Asia, Africa and elsewhere. Their main purpose was to “form a class who [could be] interpreters between [the British] and the millions whom [they govern]—a class of persons [local] in blood, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect” (Macaulay, 1835: p. 430). It was also declared that “the great objects of British rule ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives...” (quoted by Boehmer, 2005: p. 50). The results were that the study of English literature led to the successful creation of generations of English speaking local people who bridged the gap of communication between the rulers and the ruled. Most of the post-colonial authors writing in English were students of English literature, and their success in producing a counter discourse in English is amazing and unparalleled. From these live and historical instances one can well defend that the study of literature in teaching EFL is a historically-proved effective method.

What is amazing today is that many British and American language specialists, with their “language experts”, training schemes and policies, are telling the non-native countries of the world that they must stay away from English literature and must concentrate on “functional” or “communicative” texts specifically designed for language learning. Such ideas, indeed, sound paradoxical. History, as people discover again and again, is replete with such ironies.

Professor Sirajul Islam Chowdhury (2001), a famous scholar in English language and literature, has noted the tendency of the shifting of language teaching away from literature in post-independence India because of objections that Indian students have never seen daffodils: “True, the Indian boy had not seen daffodils, but he has not seen a fairy either. To try to teach language without the help of literature is doomed to be ineffective” (pp. 16-17).

The stigma now attached to literature as a field alien to language studies and too difficult a field of study to assimilate needs to be challenged first when students are introduced in a foreign language. To overcome this challenge, students should develop critical and analytical skills, ability to work independently and present their own arguments with supportive evidence from texts. The majority of the students opting for English as their foreign language acquire only minimum or no level of proficiency at their pre-university English courses. The prescribed courses in their preparatory year are forgotten as they only serve the purpose of passing the examinations. As a result, they lack skills in reading and interpreting literature.

The Value of Literature

Two or three decades ago, philosophers and educators believed that Literature was a repository of knowledge—a notion that was usual enough for critics to take it for granted. Even the general readers understood that Literature was a storehouse of documentary knowledge: we could learn about how others lived—civilizations from the earliest till today; how they judged one another, what they considered good manners, what their family life was like, how they structured their society, when they dined, how they grew up and took their place in the world of adults.

But that was only the beginning. Literature also teaches us more about psychology than the psychologists can, more about philosophy than the books on Philosophy deal with: about our the inner life—and its relation to the outer world. Literature widens our experience, deepens our feelings and gives insight into the meaning of our life and existence.

Literature, unlike philosophy, is unsystematic—and this becomes its great strength. It mobilizes all our faculties of knowledge at once: not just our ability to analyze the outer world but our introspection and intuition as well. We can understand what is going on in the hearts of others because we know what stirs our own hearts, and what

could stir them. When a writer imagines his characters' inner drama, his description rings true to us because we have felt similar impulses or imagined analogous situations, and, further, can identify sympathetically with something beyond our ken. We grasp intuitively the complex internal mix: the simultaneous interplay of feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and hopes. Literature is a great school of motivation: it teaches us how, out of the complex functions of impulses within, we make the choices that define our motives and explain our fate.

Literature is a conversation across the ages about the unity of our experiences in diversity. Literature amounts, in these matters, to the accumulated wisdom of the race, the sum of our reflections on our own existence. It begins with observation of facts of our inner and outer reality sharpened by imagination. At its greatest, it goes on to show how these facts have coherence and, finally, meaning. As it dramatizes what actually happens to real-life individuals, it presents us with factual manifestations of acceptable truths. Therefore, the objection that Literature is a fake and stilted approach to life is baseless. On the other hand, it represents real life in real situations.

It is precisely in this peculiar and man-made realm of imagination in which people make up stories and tell them to one another; make up selves and present them to one another; make up the ceremonies that consecrate their doings—that mankind remakes itself into something that fulfills all the potentialities of our nature.

Literature in the context of Saudi Arabia

Although literature is a pragmatic tool for teaching all essential language skills, it has to be acceptable and appropriate in the socio-cultural and religious contexts in which it is applied, particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia. Since literature reflects the religious, cultural and value systems of the authors concerned, there must be a careful selection of texts that fit into the learners' own context. Emphasis should be given on those literary texts which provide universal outlook, widen our experience of life and deepen mutual and cross-cultural bond. Needless to say, in English literature, there are countless authors and texts conforming to the ethics and aesthetics of Islamic values and culture.

Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, the greatest epic of Italian Literature, was directly or indirectly influenced by Arabic works on Islamic eschatology. More influences of Islam are seen on such works as George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*, and

Shakespeare's *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Titus Andronicus*. These works are said to have been inspired by several Moorish delegations from Morocco to Elizabethan England at the beginning of the 17th century. The major works of the authors like Dante [English Translation], William Shakespeare, John Donne, John Milton, Alexander Pope, William Wordsworth, S T Coleridge, Lord Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold and T S Eliot, along with many others of this line until the post-modern era, may be included in the syllabus. They will teach, instruct and delight as well. In all cases of selections, however, immoral, profane and destructive works of art should be avoided.

Side by side with this, we need to decide what kind of Literature is effective for EFL/ELT purposes. Many factors, of course, such as proficiency level, students' needs and interest determine this. Reading texts may come from simplified versions of existing texts, or young adult Literature. Even we can use Literature which is familiar to students in terms of culture and themes.

Relevant to the familiarity of the Literature, in addition to British and American Literature, there are many people who write Literature in English from non-English-speaking countries. It is also possible to choose literary texts written originally in the students' L1 but translated into English.

Literature in teaching the four skills

Literature plays an important role in teaching the four basic language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. However, ESL/EFL teachers should adopt a dynamic, student-centered approach toward comprehension of a literary text. In reading classes, discussion begins at the literal level with direct questions of facts regarding setting, characters and plot which can be answered by specific reference to the text. When the students master literal understanding, they move to the inferential level, where they make speculation and interpretation of the different aspects of the texts concerned. The third level, that is, the personal evaluative level stimulates students to think imaginatively about the work and enhances their problem-solving abilities.

Similarly, Literature can be a powerful and motivating source for writing in ESL/EFL, both as a model and as a subject matter. It is a model when the students write similar to the original works or clearly imitates their contents, theme, organization and style. However, when the students' writing exhibit original thinking or analysis, or is creatively stimulated by the reading, literature serves as a subject matter. Literature thus explicitly and implicitly facilitates

guided, free and other types of writing. There are mainly two kinds of writing based on Literature as subject matter: writing “on or about” literature and writing “out of literature”. Both these categories are suitable for EFL/ESL students.

The study of Literature in a language class, though being mainly associated with reading and writing, can play an equally meaningful role in teaching both speaking and listening. Oral reading, dramatization, improvisation, role-playing, pantomiming, reenactment, discussion and group activities are practical means of enhancing these skills.

For the above purposes, language teachers can make listening comprehension and pronunciation interesting and motivating by playing a recording or video of literary work. Besides, having students read literature aloud contributes to developing speaking as well as listening abilities.

The study of poetry can also make a very positive contribution to teaching basic language skills. Poetry provides readers with a different viewpoint toward language acquisition by going beyond the known usages and rules of grammar, syntax and vocabulary. It also develops sensitivity for words and discoveries that may later grow into a deeper interest and greater analytical ability. Drama, like poetry, develops critical thinking and heightens effective listening skills. Similarly, novels and short stories can enlarge the students’ worldviews about different cultures and different groups of people. They act as perfect vehicle to help students understand the positions of themselves as well the others by transferring this newly assimilated knowledge to their own world.

Let us conclude with a reference to Obediat (1997: p. 32) who states that literature help students acquire a native-like competence in English, express their ideas in good English, learn the different features of modern English, learn how the English linguistic system is used for communication, see how idiomatic expressions are used, speak clearly, precisely and concisely, and become more proficient in English, as well as become creative, critical, and analytical learners. As a matter of fact, the study of Literature can open the horizons of possibility, allowing the learners to question, interpret, connect and explore. In the opinion of Eliot, Literature provides students with an incomparably rich source of authentic materials over a wide range of sources. In students can gain access to this material by developing literary competence, they can effectively use language at a high level of proficiency (1990: p. 198).

How to Teach Literature in FLT/ELT Classroom

When working with the literary texts to be used in language classes, the language teacher should take into account needs, motivations, interests, cultural background and language level of the students. However, one important factor to take into account is whether a particular work can arouse the learners’ interest and elicit a strong, positive reaction from it. Reading literary texts is more likely to have a long term and valuable effect upon the learners’ linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge when it is amusing and meaningful. Choosing books relevant to the real-life experiences, emotions or dreams of the learners is of great importance.

In contrast to the traditional literature based in a foreign language, the present day FLT/ELT focuses more on oral and written communication skills. Thus, the trend to overload the curriculum with classics of each language for the sake of reading Literature does not exist in FLT/ELT any more. The literature prescribed is carefully selected and supportive measures are taken to familiarize the students with the works. For example, dramas, novels, short stories, poetry, initially partially familiar to the learners should be included in the curriculum, giving them an insight into the aspects of interpreting and appreciating all these different genres of literature. Thus, the traditional approach to reading literary texts and trying to translate every word is avoided and students develop their skills in analytical and critical thinking while learning to support their arguments with evidence from texts. In languages where acquisition of writing systems are more time consuming, the use of simplified texts may be highly effective.

Factors to Play Key Roles

It is true that the success of implementing and applying any new approach depends on a number of factors. Teachers, administrators and authorities, curriculum and syllabus designers, students and teaching materials—all play an important role.

First, it is clear that teachers must play a crucial role in the implementation of a new approach or method. If they lack motivation in innovation, it will be hard for an approach or method to be introduced or applied. Without motivation, they cannot be committed themselves to taking challenges, devoting time, and sacrificing some of their benefits.

Second, administrators and authorities play an important role in creating conditions both for teachers

to have access to the approach and for teachers to apply it. If favorable conditions are not made, it will be difficult for collaborations to occur, workshops to be held and nominations to be made.

Third, curriculum and syllabus innovators are also important since they are the creators of the framework around which a particular approach is applied. Their opinions must be considered before an approach is introduced and approved. If innovators can become members of the administration, this can be very beneficial in introducing new ideas in a timely manner.

Fourth, the ultimate reason for any change in approaches or methods is to satisfy students' needs. It is, therefore, important to pay close attention to the requirements of students. For, without them, innovation or introduction of new approaches and methods are in vain.

Fifth, appropriate textbooks are one of the factors that consolidate credit for an approach. Textbooks can contribute to the longevity or the brevity of the application of an approach. If we want an approach to firmly take root then the selection of textbooks must be done with much consideration. Furthermore, once a certain textbook is selected for a syllabus, it is necessary to make full commitment in using it. Naturally, adjustments and changes can be made after a certain framework of syllabus is created.

Sixth, cooperation with experts is something which cannot be ignored. Their advice and expertise are of great help if a trial and error approach is used in applying new approach.

All of the above reflections have been drawn on the basis of the authors' long experience in introducing literature in teaching English language in their Departments concerned.

Conclusion

Thus, the use of literature as a popular technique for teaching both basic language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) will be highly effective in the context of the Kingdom. Moreover, in translation courses, many language teachers make their students translate literary texts like drama, poetry and short stories into their mother tongue. Since translation gives students the chance to practice the lexical, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and stylistic knowledge from other courses, this particular technique is emphasized in

language teaching. Moreover, introducing literature in FLT/ELT paves way for equipping students with a number of other essential skills such as development of critical thinking, analytical skills, formulating and expressing independent opinions and presenting one's own interpretations independently. Above all, students are provided with an opportunity to broadening their horizons of understanding other cultures. This, again, provides a platform for cross cultural understanding and intercultural communication.

It is, thus, strongly recommended that texts from literary discourses and other related sources must be included in language teaching curriculum so that the learners can turn out to be creative and reflective and can use English as a foreign language naturally and spontaneously.

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أهمية دور الأدب في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

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ملخص البحث. اضطلع الأدب دوماً بدور بالغ الأهمية في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية، فقد كان منذ بداية القرن السابع عشر الأسلوب الرئيس والأداة الأساسية لتعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في المستعمرات الخاضعة للإمبراطورية البريطانية في ذلك الوقت شرقاً وغرباً وقد أثمر هذا نجاحاً باهراً. وقد أدت دراسة الأدب الإنجليزي إلى تكوين أجيال من سكان المستعمرات يجيدون التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية مما نتج عنه ردم الهوة في مجال التواصل بين المستعمرين وأهل البلاد.

وبناء على ذلك يمكن القول بأن دراسة الأدب الإنجليزي شكلت أسلوباً فاعلاً ومؤثراً على مر التاريخ في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وبالرغم من ظهور الكثير من نظريات تعليم اللغات الأجنبية خلال الخمسة العقود الماضية، إلا أن الأدب ما زال يلعب دوراً حيوياً في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية وذلك من خلال النصوص الأدبية التي تزيد من دافعية الطلاب في التعلم (McKay, 1982). يعتقد مؤلفا هذا البحث أن جميع أساليب تعليم اللغة الحديثة وطرائقها قد تكون محدودة التأثير إذا لم يكن للأدب دور فاعل فيها. وفي هذا البحث يحاول المؤلفان أن يلقيا الضوء على دور أكثر تأثيراً لتوظيف الأدب في التدريس الفعال والناجح للغة الإنجليزية بشكل عام وعلى مستوى المملكة العربية السعودية بشكل خاص.