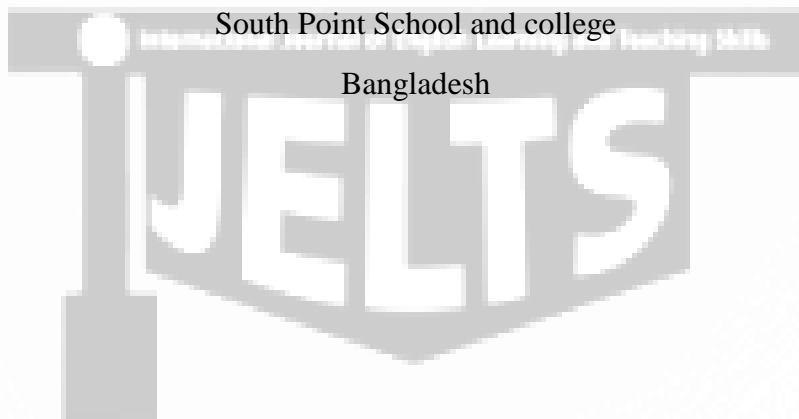


LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

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### Abstract

As a perspective, it seems that the main objective of EFL teaching is to facilitate a fluent communication on the target language. This makes many facilitators believe that an ELF class should focus on mastering linguistic components only. But the main concern of EFL facilitators should be to help learners acquire communicative competence. So, As obvious, the recent trend in EFL teaching indicates necessity of blending literature approach for its rich potential to provide an authentic model of language use. Theoretically, using of literature in language teaching is very advantageous. This paper will review some ideas and research regarding the importance of literature in language classes. It will show how students are enhanced of learning through literature as an impact of the motivational texts. The purpose of this paper is to familiarize language teachers with the effectiveness of using literary contents and to teach how to exploit the text for enhancing student's skills. It will also look for scopes of methodological innovation within teaching language through literary texts. It will include a lesson plan for young learners of an English medium school of Bangladesh where literature is used in language classes to blend all the skills of learning. It will also provide the potentials and challenges toward using literature as a resource for language teaching.

## **LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Literature as a multiplying tool to teach the basics of EFL skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and linguistic basics (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) is getting popular and familiar within the field of foreign language learning and teaching nowadays. Moreover, for turning EFL more explanatory and effective to children and young adults, many language facilitators make their students translate literary texts like drama, poetry and short stories into the mother language, BENGALI. Since translation gives students the chance to practice the syntactic, semantic, lexical, stylistic and pragmatic knowledge, translation both as an application area covering four basic skills and as the fifth skill is emphasized in language teaching. In the following section, the need and importance of literature in teaching in foreign language would be narrated and necessary examples would be cited as deemed necessary.

### **LITERATURE IN 'ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE' (EFL) TEACHING**

According to Collie and Slater (1990:3), there are certain reasons which warrant literature to be a very effective vehicle for teaching language, especially in ELF classroom. Literature being a valuable authentic material, having cultural and linguistic enrichment and by provisioning personal involvement can play a very sensible role in child and youth centric ELF classes.

### **Valuable Authentic Material**

Literature by virtue of its origin is an authentic material. Literature are not stemmed to teach language, but in recently developed training materials, many authentic samples of language in real-life contexts (i.e. travel timetables, city plans, forms, pamphlets, cartoons, advertisements, newspaper or magazine articles) had been introduced. This helps the learners to get experienced to actual language samples of real life / real life like settings. In reading literary texts, students become familiar with many different linguistic forms, communicative functions and meanings.

### **Cultural Enrichment**

For learners who has handicaps to get oriented to the cultural and social context of the country he/she is living in, literary works, such as novels, plays, short stories, etc. facilitate them understanding the communication mode, social nodes and other essences that takes place in that country. A reader can apprehend the way the characters in such literary works see the world outside (i.e. their thoughts, feelings, customs, traditions, possessions; how they speak and behave in different settings. Literature is perhaps best regarded as a complement to other materials used to develop the foreign learner's understanding into the country whose language is being learned.

### **Linguistic Enrichment**

A variety of individual lexical or syntactic stuffs are provided by literature which contribute diversification to EFL Students who become familiar with many features of the written language, reading a substantial and contextualized body of text. They learn about the

syntax and discourse functions of sentences, the variety of structures, and the different ways of connecting ideas, which develop and enrich their own writing skills. Thus, they improve their communicative and cultural competence in the authentic richness, naturalness of the authentic texts.

### **Personal Involvement**

The personal involvement that it fosters in the learners helps Literature to be useful in the language learning process. Once the student reads a literary text, he is drawn into the text. Understanding the contextual phrases becomes less significant than pursuing the development of the story. The student becomes enthusiastic to find out what happens as events unfold via the climax; he feels close to certain characters and shares their emotional responses. This can have beneficial effects upon the whole language learning process.

### **METHODOLOGY OF USING LITERATURE IN TEACHING LANGUAGE SKILLS**

Owing to having a numbers of variation integrated, Literature plays an important role in teaching the basic language skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking in a EFL process. When using literature in the language classroom, skills should be imparted in an integrated and chronological way. Facilitators should teach basic language skills as an integral part of oral and written language use, as part of the means for developing both referential and interactional meaning, not merely as an aspect of the verbal and written production of words, phrases and sentences.

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**Reading**

Fairy tales and short stories are very effective in the process to improve students' vocabulary and reading capacity. There can be as many words as the teacher thinks necessary. This activity helps students to learn more vocabulary, and also teaches them the use of a dictionary. This happens because when students read, they interact with the text and each other as well. By interacting with the text, they interpret what they read. By interacting within themselves, they can work toward speaking English more creatively.

**Writing**

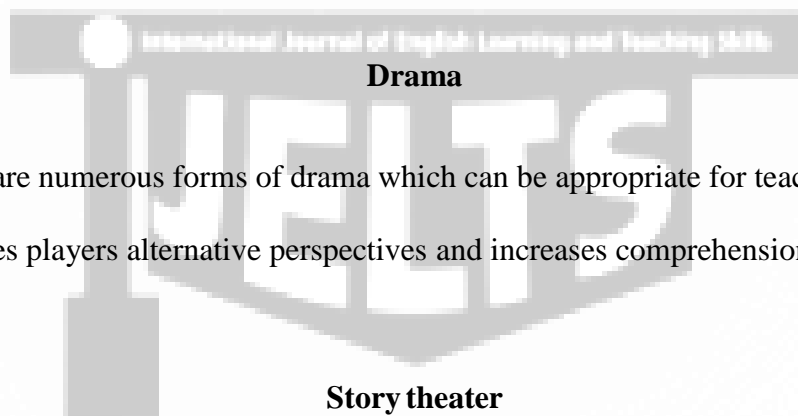
Literature and short stories can be a motivating and powerful source for writing. Short story as a model occurs when students' writing becomes closely similar to the original work or clearly imitates its content, theme, organization, and style. However, when student writing exhibits original thinking like interpretation or analysis, or is creatively stimulated by, the reading, literature serves as the core subject matter. In accordance with this, literature helps students to write more creatively. Teachers also can ask students to write dialogues or more complex writing activities if students have reached a certain matured level of language proficiency.

**Speaking, and Listening**

The practice and use of literature in a language class can also play a strong and meaningful role in teaching both speaking and listening. Oral reading, dramatization, improvisation, role-playing, pantomiming, reenactment, discussion, and group activities may center on a work of literature.

### **Oral Reading**

Language teachers can make listening comprehension and pronunciation interesting, motivating and contextualized at the upper levels, playing a recording or video of a literary work, or reading literature aloud themselves. Having students read literature aloud contributes to developing speaking as well as listening ability. Moreover, it also leads to improving pronunciation. Pronunciation may be the focus before, during, and / or after the reading.



There are numerous forms of drama which can be appropriate for teaching English. Drama provides players alternative perspectives and increases comprehension.

### **Story theater**

The simplest of these classroom drama activities is Story Theater. The suitability of this drama form is limited to young children. There is no audience for this drama. The value comes from participation. The teacher reads aloud the story, while the students pantomime the action. The teacher usually assigns the characters to groups of students. Stories filled with action and minimum dialogue are best for Story Theater.

### **Creative Drama**

Players of creative drama enact stories without narration. The story is conveyed only

through action and dialogue. Players know story events and make up their own lines as they are performing. Stories with extensive dialogue and action work best for Creative Drama. Through extempore and improvisation, creative drama extremely helps students with generation of self capacity to deliver dialogue with creativity.

### **Role-play**

As a related activity, role-play from a socio-cultural approach. Students can dramatize actual incidents, which caused cross- cultural misunderstanding. In this way, the role-play prepares students to overcome miscommunication problems using the target language.

### **Group Activities**

Group activities stimulate total participation through making each student responsible for facts and ideas to be contributed and discussed. All students are involved and the participation is multidirectional. When teaching English through literature, some of the group activities used in language classroom is general class discussion, small-group work, panel discussions, and debates. All of these group activities both develop the speaking abilities of the students and give importance to pronunciation practice. Teachers indicate pronunciation errors of the students during the act of such activities so as to correct such errors.

### **Example of use of literary approach to imparting EFL**



### Picture Dictation

Draw the mountain I'm describing to you (students)

There are some small streams running down the mountain. At the foot of the mountain there is a village. Students are required to compare their pictures with their friends.



### Imaginary Dialogue

Imagine the mountain can talk

Read what it says - explain why it says these things

“Come close to me for serenity”

“Don't come up here and spoil the surrounding!”

“Don't cut down trees up here!”

What else can the mountain say? Who are the mountain's friends? Who are the mountain's enemies?

### BENEFITS OF DIFFERENT GENRES OF LITERATURE TO LANGUAGE

There are enormous benefits of using different genres of literature in EFL.

### Using Poetry to EFL

Metaphor in poetry is the most prominent connection between learning and poetry. Most poetry makes use of metaphor as one of its primary methods, and thus offers a significant

learning process. There are some benefits that can be derived from studying poetry:

- The appreciation of the writer's composition process, which students gain by studying poems by components
- Developing sensitivity for words and discoveries that may later grow into a deeper interest and greater analytical ability
- provides readers with a different viewpoint towards language use by going beyond the known usages and rules of grammar, syntax and vocabulary,
- triggers unmotivated readersowing to being so open to explorations and different interpretations,
- evokes feelings and thoughts in heart and in mind,
- makes students familiar with figures of speech (i.e. simile, metaphor, irony, personification, imagery, etc.) due to their being a part of daily language use.

### **Using Short Stories to EFL**

Shortfictionis asupremeresourceforobservingnotonlylanguagebutlife itself. In short fiction, characters act out all the real and symbolic acts people carryoutindaily lives, anddoso inavarietyofregisters andtones. A short story takes all the component of life in a small pouch.

There are some benefits that can be derived from studying short stories:

- Provide interest to students due to being simple and short when compared with the other literary genres.
- Unfold different cultures and different groups of people.
- Provides more creative, encrypt, challenging texts that require personal exploration.
- Motivates learners to read due to being an authentic material.
- Gives students the chance to use their creativity.
- Promotes critical thinking skills.
- Helps students coming from various backgrounds communicate with each other because of its universal language.
- Helps students to go beyond the surface meaning and dive into underlying meanings.

### **Using Drama to EFL**

Using drama in a language classroom is a good resource for language teaching. It is through the use of drama that learners become familiar with grammatical structures in contexts and also learn about how to use the language to express, control and inform. The use of drama raises the students' awareness towards the target language and culture. In this context, the use of drama is a tool that gains importance in teaching a foreign language. The educational benefits of drama are as follows:

- Stimulates the imagination and promotes creative thinking.
- Develops critical thinking skills.
- Promotes language development.
- Heightens effective listening skills,
- Strengthens comprehension and learning retention by involving the senses as an integral part of the learning process.
- Increases empathy and awareness of others.
- Fosters peer respect and group cooperation.
- Reinforces positive self-concept.

#### **Using Novel to EFL**

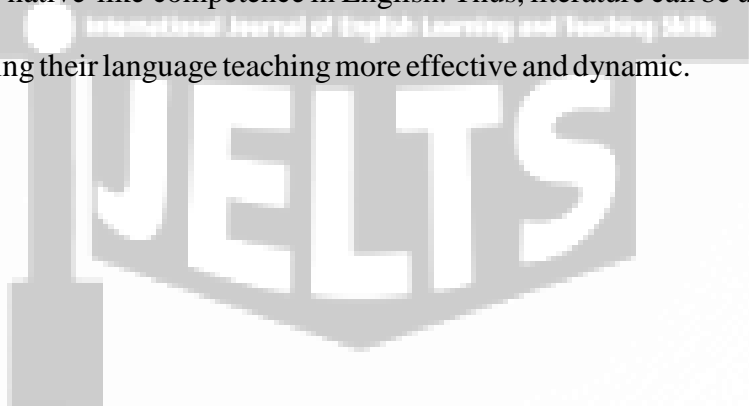
The use of a novel is a beneficial technique for mastering not only linguistic system but also life in relation to the target language. In novel, characters reflect what people really perform in daily lives. Novels not only portray but also enlighten human lives. Using novel in a foreign language class offers the following educational benefits:

- Develops ideas about different cultures and different groups of people.
- Enhance students' motivation to read owing to being an authentic material
- Offers real life / real life like settings.
- Improves critical thinking skills and insight.

- Enables students to go beyond what is written and dive into what is meant.

### **Conclusion**

Students' motivation in the learning process is often determined by their interest in and enthusiasm for the material used in class: The more enthusiastic and self-motivated the learners are, the more they learn. This type of involvement cannot be imposed; it must come from the materials and lessons that are implemented and used in the classroom. Literature helps students acquire a native-like competence in English. Thus, literature can be used by teachers of English in making their language teaching more effective and dynamic.



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