



### جنبه های نظری و کاربردی ادبیات در کلاسهای آموزش زبان انگلیسی

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#### چکیده

ادبیات در مطالعه زبان سابقه طولانی دارد و زمانی نقش محوری در تدریس زبان (خارجی) در ادبیات کلاسیک ایفا می کرد، جایی که فهم و درک بالای فرهنگ و تفکر ارائه شده از طریق ادبیات بر توانش محض در استفاده از زبان برتری داشت (مالی، ۲۰۰۱، ص ۱۸۰). اما این برتری با محوری شدن نقش برنامه های زبانی کمرنگ شد (ویدوسون، ۱۹۷۲). بعضی از نظریه پردازان آموزش زبان انگلیسی، با تاکید بر افزایش روزافزون توجه به حیطه آموزش زبان انگلیسی در تامین نیازهای شغلی و تحصیلی دانشجویان، هرگونه تلاش در تدریس ادبیات را غیرضروری فرض می کردند (مک کی، ۱۹۸۲). این مقاله به بررسی این مطلب می پردازد که در حالی که اساتید در جستجوی منابعی هستند که دانشجویانشان را به سطحی فراتر از سطح مقدماتی آموزش فشرده زبان که توسط اکثر رویکردهای زبانشناسی ارائه شده است تا دانشجویان را به سطحی برساند که آنها را قادر به عملکرد مؤثر در زبان دوم گرداند، اخیراً علاقه ی جدیدی در حوزه ی ادبیات به وجود آمده است. شایان ذکر است که تعداد بی شماری از دانش پژوهان به این باور رسیده اند که میراث ادبیات، که مطالعه آن منجر به پرورش «نگرش احساسی از یک طرف و نگرش شکاک و عقلانی از طرف دیگر» می شود (اوستر، ۱۹۸۵، ص ۷۵)، نباید توسط دانشجویان زبان انگلیسی که از لحاظ عقلانی و احساسی، اگر نه از لحاظ زبانشناسی و فرهنگی، آماده هستند تا این کار را بررسی کنند نادیده گرفته شود.

**واژگان کلیدی:** تدریس ادبیات، آموزش زبان، فراگیران زبان دوم

# The Theory and Practice of Bringing Literature into the EFL Classroom

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*Received Date: January 8, 2010*

*Accepted Date: March 17, 2010*

## Abstract

Literature in language study has a long pedigree. It once played a pivotal role in (foreign) language teaching in the "classical humanist" paradigm, where an understanding of the high culture and thought expressed through literature took precedence over mere competence in using the language (Maley, 2001, p. 180). Its prominence, however, faded as linguistics became the focal point of language programs (Widdowson, 1982). Some ESL/EFL theorists, emphasizing the ever-increasing focus in ELT on meeting the particular academic and occupational needs of the students, deemed it unnecessary to make any attempt at teaching literature (McKay, 1982). This paper, however, argues that a renewed interest in literature has recently surfaced as the teachers search for resources that take their students beyond the elementary level of intensive language instruction offered by most linguistic approaches to a level which enables them to function effectively in the second language. It will thus be noted that numerous scholars have begun to believe that the literary heritage, whose study fosters habits of "seeing feelingly on the one hand, and skeptically, rationally, on the other" (Oster, 1985, p. 75), should not be denied ESL/EFL students who are intellectually and emotionally, if not linguistically and culturally, ready to examine literary works.

**Keywords:** ESL/EFL Learners; Language Teaching; Teaching Literature

## 1. Overview

By the 1960s, English language educators began to question what they saw as an extravagant emphasis on literature in the EFL curriculum and the methods of teaching it (Stern, 1991). They generally argued that literature should be excluded from the TESL/TEEL profession because of its structural complexity, lack of conformity to standard grammatical rules, and remote



cultural perspective (Spack, 1985). Topping (1968), in particular, expressed concern with the concomitant lack of interest in developing much-needed linguistic skills. Arthur (1968, p. 199) maintains, “Whereas pattern practice, transformational and substitution drills, conversations and dialogues are all accepted parts of the standard fare for linguistically oriented ESL programs, literary texts as part of an ESL program are not to the taste of all teachers.” In addition, the ELT profession was expected to be more increasingly catering to the perceived academic and occupational needs of the students that apparently surpassed the traditional obsession with literature. There was thus a growing concern that changes in academic programs should be encouraged and expected in response to changes in society as a whole. Therefore, as the world careers along the information highway, some find increasingly less reason to brake for Cervantes, Goethe, or Moliere. According to Cladwell (2000, p. 1), some began to wonder “Would it not make more sense to replace English literature with the reading of newspapers and magazines, or with a social sciences discourse, in which students engage in the quantitative analysis of demographics, geography, or economics while using the target language?”

Among other things, this continuing undercurrent of disagreement about the teaching of literature resulted in an unproductive bitter and strongly-worded debate. This debate was between the ‘ancients’, staunch supporters of Literature (with a capital L), and the ‘moderns’, devotees of linguistic structures, functions and the like, who would had no truck with literature (Maley, 2001, p. 180). According to Cook (1995, p. 151), the debate has been between “those who defend, as the only source of texts for literary study, that set of classics referred to as *the canon*, and those who argue that many of the texts in this canon are irrelevant to contemporary students” and maintain that students should rather deal with the vast array of genres in the modern world, including *non-literary* discourse as well as *sub-literary* genres.

## 2. ‘Why’ to Use Literature?

In more recent times, since the early 1980s, there has been ‘a gradual rehabilitation of literature and its value for language teaching’ (Maley, 2001, p. 180). Widdowson (1975, 1984) raised the fundamental issues and these were developed, examined, and amplified, most significantly in Spack (1985), Brumfit and Carter (1986) Carter and Long (1991), Duff and Maley (1991), McRae (1991, 1996), Stern (1991), Widdowson (1992), and Maley



(2001). Some of them even published literary anthologies for EFL students as well. McKay (1982, p. 529), in discussing the reasons for the inclusion of literature in EFL classes, argues that most present day literary texts assume that literature can provide a basis for extending language *usage*. Furthermore, since literature presents language in discourse in which the features of the setting and role relationships are defined, it could be used to develop language *use*.

... language that illustrates a particular register or dialect is embedded within a social context, and thus, there is a basis for determining why a particular form is used. As such, literature is ideal for developing an awareness of language use. (p. 530)

One advantage here is that it helps to develop the learners' interpretive skills (Byrne, 1997). Widdowson (1983) maintains that the value of literature in language learning is that, by its nature, it can provide a resource for developing in learners an important ability to use the knowledge of language for the interpretation of discourse. Byrne (1997) chooses to use literature in the reading class for two reasons. First, it is her own enjoyment of literature as the teacher since it is vital if the lesson is to be successful. Second, she believes that reading literature in L2 can bring increased exposure to language and, as a result, stimulates acquisition and expands awareness; the readers, therefore not only have more extensive vocabulary stores (lexical knowledge), they also seem to possess greater communicative competence (reading fluency) than non-readers. She adds that the successful comprehension and use of authentic literary texts gives learners experience in "real" reading in L2 and can be confidence- building and motivating for students.

Marshall (1979), in examining the use of English literature with Puerto Rican students, found that struggling with the potential cultural problem of literature worked to promote a greater tolerance for cultural differences for both the teacher and the student. A second benefit is that it may enhance our students' own creativity. As Frye (1964, p. 77) puts it, "It is clear that the end of literary teaching is not simply the admiration of literature; it's something more like the transfer of imaginative energy from literature to the students."

Cladwell (2000), in his paper, argues against diminishing the role of literature in the language major in favor of discussing it with a new generation of students in new and innovative ways. In response to the question "Why do you teach literature?" he propounds two "equally basic"



or “closely related” answers: “1. Literature is language, and language is communication. 2. Reading a work of literature invites one to see the world from the perspective of another” (p. 2). He argues:

Reading a work of literature, unlike a scientific or journalistic text, creates a space in which the students are invited to transfer a sense of IDENTITY to different (fictitious, or at least vicarious) context and in which they can strive to articulate their experience in ways that are both informed of their own identities and also understandable in the context of other realities. (p. 2)

He then, quotes Alcorn and Bracher (1985, p. 343, cited in Cladwell, 2000, p. 2) who have argued that the process of reading literature allows the reader to “entertain (at least provisionally) perspectives, values, and attitudes divergent from and even contrary to their own”. More important, he compares whatever interpretation made of literature with that quarried out of graphs, tables, maps, charts, and “other assemblages of information” (Cladwell, 2000, p. 3) and pinpoints the fact that the former will always be based in the target language—the language of the original text—while the latter ones are not themselves language-based texts. It is argued that this advantage is especially important for foreign language instruction since there exists a “contemporaneous sense of community” in contemporary societies which only language can evoke—above all in the form of poetry and songs, that is, in the form of literature (Anderson, 1991, p. 145). In short, it seems necessary to integrate literature into FLT curricula in more extensive and innovative ways not as a rival for other types of content-based courses in the language major, nor an intrusive and arcane presence in those courses where it has been integrated (Cladwell, 2000, p. 3).

### 3. What Should Come First?

While it is now obvious that literature can aid learning language usage or culture and so forth, Widdowson (1975) warns that literature is *misrepresented* when it is “efferently” used to teach something else. When, for instance, the purpose of teaching literature is, as mentioned, to teach culture, literature tends to become simply “a repository of factual data” (p. 78) and its intrinsically “literary nature” (p. 79) is hence lost. By the same token, teaching literature merely for the purpose of language usage will not result in the development of “an awareness of the way language is ‘aesthetically’ used in literary discourse for the conveying of unique messages” (p. 76). He, therefore, mocks those who have banished literature



from the curriculum due to its alleged irrelevance to some secondary purposes, invent their own brand of fiction to display language usage: “Textbooks are full of fiction. Mr. And Mrs. Brown, son David, daughter Mary pursuing the dreary round of their diurnal life” (1982, p. 205). It is believed, accordingly, that “students read such texts but do not become humanly engaged in them; they do not view them as a meaningful use of language” (Spack, 1985, p. 705). As McConochie (1982, p. 232) puts it, it is an EFL student’s right to discover that “English can be a beautiful language,” not solely a “practical and utilitarian” one. Literature is always more than language and that appreciation and enjoyment of literature transcend the development of linguistic capacities (Carter and McRae, 1996). Students should, therefore, have enough opportunities to share in the celebration of language (Widdowson, 1982) which the study of literature engenders (Spack, 1985).

Arthur (1968, p. 199), in his paper, reiterates the fact that “If literature is to be a useful vehicle for the teaching of second language skills, that literature must first succeed as a *literary experience* for the student.” Povey (1967) also verifies this. Arthur goes on to clarify ‘a literary experience’ as the immediate pleasure or satisfaction that is derived from reading or hearing literature or from a special kind of emotional and intellectual involvement with the story. All literary experiences share certain characteristics: It must happen to the reader; it requires a story suitable for the reader and a reader willing and prepared to react to the story; and it also requires the reader’s total intellectual and emotional involvement.

As mentioned above, Widdowson suggests that we should view literature as *discourse* and the study of literature as “an inquiry into the way a language is used to express a reality other than that expressed by conventional means” (1975, p. 80). The student’s aim, therefore, should be to learn how the language system—the structures and vocabulary of English—is used for communication. To those interested in the utilitarian objective of language learning, Widdowson (1975) points out that literature can develop “a sharper awareness of the communicative resources of the language being learned” (p. 83). To this end, Spack (1985) proposes that students be allowed to read both literary works and nonfiction essays in order to become aware of the different ways writers create texts to engage readers; this is crucial to an understanding of why and how texts are put together. Irmscher (1975) and Widdowson (1983) maintain that since the readers of literature are immensely involved in a search for meaning, they



are bestowed another useful tool which is a critical feature of language learning: the ability to interpret a discourse. Interpretive procedures are valuable to learners; they can be applied to “a range of language uses, both literary and non-literary, which they encounter inside and outside the learning situation” (Widdowson, 1975, p. 84). Munby (1978) has provided an extensive list of a variety of reading sub-skills of which Byrne (1997) believes the following are applied in our reading of literature:

- deducing meaning and use of unfamiliar words;
- understanding explicitly stated information;
- understanding information which is not explicitly stated;
- understanding conceptual meaning;
- understanding relations between the parts of a text through lexical cohesion devices;
- understanding cohesion between the parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices; and
- interpreting text by going outside it. (p. 2)

Munby’s last point indicates that we need to use knowledge that is not provided within the language of the text, in addition to our knowledge of the language of the text, in order to reconstruct meaning (Byrne, 1997). Nunan (1991) describes the process as this:

In comprehending a given piece of language, we use what sociologists call interpretive procedures for achieving a match between our schematic knowledge and the language which is encoded systematically. (p. 68)

Our systemic knowledge is our linguistic knowledge and our schematic knowledge is our knowledge of the world; this “experiential knowledge” (p. 3), of the world and of known texts, directs us in our interpretation of new texts, believes Byrne. Spack (1985) holds that schema theory helps to explain how meaning can be created through reading; accordingly, reading comprehension is not simply a straightforward act of retrieving information from a text but is “an interactive process between the reader’s background knowledge and the text” (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983, p. 556).

This radical change in thinking about reading process has shed more light on response to literature. Purves (1979) says that literary theorists, early in the last century, assumed that there was only one correct way to read a work of literature. Rosenblatt (1938) rejected this ritualization of response to literature by exploring the interactive relationship between individual readers and literary texts; that is, individual responses to literary works could be as valid as authoritative, formal techniques of literary interpretation (Bleich, 1980). If the meaning of a literary work is dependent on the individual



reader, so too it is dependent on the text's language, structure, and tone and audience or the situation in which an individual is asked to respond to a text (Purves, 1979).

#### 4. What Is Literature Teaching?

McRae (1996), following Widdowson (1983), points out that the key concept in the application of literary materials to language teaching is that of *referential* materials and *representational* materials:

Referential language, and therefore referential materials, remain close to what they mean in a dictionary sense: Reductively speaking, one word has one meaning, one grammatical construction is right and another wrong, the words mean what they say, no more and no less. At this stage of language use, any text or communication is on one level only: purely informational, or at the level of basic interpersonal communication. (p. 17)

Needless to say that an emphasis on representational language learning does not detract in any way from the basic importance of referential language learning. The difference, however, exists where "the rules are questioned, played around with, and put to different uses as part of that ongoing process of language acquisition".

Representational language teaching is neither fashion nor fad. Above all, it is not a ploy to bring Literature into the language classroom-there is a great difference between literature in the language-teaching context and Literature as an institutional discipline, or as the subject of specialist study. Literature with a small 'L' is a suitable shorthand way of describing the approach, although it falls short of being a definition of it. (McRae, 1991, 1996, p. 17)

The basic tenet underlying representational language learning is, therefore, that "it takes imagination to learn a language", as McRae (1996, p. 18) puts it. The application of characters, cartoons, stories, images, songs, and video all attest to language teachers' attempts to appeal to the learner's imaginations, and are all in their way moves towards representational teaching and learning; they are, contrary to most language teaching/learning materials, able to build "linguistic competence allied to the ability to think in the target language and work freely within its language system (McRae, 1996, p. 18). A productive educational balance would be the one which allows for both knowledge *about* language and knowledge *of* language; it,





hence, “encourages an awareness of the language system and how it works at the same time as showing the range of flexibility the system allows for” (p.19). To cut it short, the development of language competence in a learner has to encourage “imaginative interaction”, an element of creativity, and an affective element of subjective, personal development--all of which go well beyond the limitations of referential language.

### 5. Literature (With a Capital ‘L’) and literature (With a Small ‘l’)

According to Cook (1996) and Maley (2001), the debate between the ancients supporting the canon or *Literature* (with a large L) and the moderns advocating sub/non-literary genres or *literature* (with a small ‘l’) (Carter, 1995; McCarthy & Carter, 1994; McRae, 1991) is still continuing. It is worth noting that this debate has basically existed at all levels where work at the interface of language and literature has been in operation. Both sides in the debate have mostly adopted extreme positions and “are often quite wrongly associated with two political tendencies: advocates of the canon are associated with the right and its opponents with the left” (Cook, 1996). Cook argues that literature teachers though may disagree about the definition and nature of literature or about which particular text are its best examples, should avoid the simplicities of a political “either/or” resolution; they should, therefore, share premises:

Firstly, they believe that there is such a thing as literature (fuzzy and indefinable as it may be); secondly, that it is something worthwhile; thirdly, that it is worth inculcating—rather than indoctrinate—a knowledge and appreciation of it into others. (p. 152)

Taking on a positive relativist vantage point on the issue, he argues on the behalf of the strategy of mixing the literary, the non-literary, and the sub-literary and as teacher being allowed to assert the validity of a canon but, at the same time, allowing students to form their own judgments of what it should include. In a similar vein, Carter (1996) recommends that, in “language-based textbooks,” both “canonical and non-canonical texts” (p. 8) be arranged alongside each other and be subjected to the same educational procedures. That is, such pedagogic practices, rooted in a more integrated approach to language and literature study, should underline the “referential and representational continuities” (p. 8) across all texts and enhance respect for the creativity of much ordinary everyday language use, too; “A crucial component in such language and literary awareness is the fostering of



interpretive and analytical skills” (Carter, 1996, p. 12). In so doing, he suggests, it is advisable to study literature with a small ‘l’ both as a preliminary step towards and alongside more canonical literary study. Maley (2001, p. 181), similarly, advocates such an “enlargement of the field” through the inclusion of both perspectives to what constitutes literature worthy of study.

## 6. ‘How’ to Teach Literature?

Maley (1989, p. 10) makes a valuable distinction between two primary purposes for ‘literature teaching’, and then recommends keeping them separate in mind: (i) the *study* of literature and (ii) the *use* of literature as a resource for language learning. The first one suggests “an immediate rivalry set up between ‘teaching language’ and ‘teaching literature’” (p. 10). In addition, it tends to “put it (literature) on a pedestal” and underscore its ‘special’ status. The study of literature involves an approach to texts as aesthetically patterned cultural artifacts. This can be accomplished in two ways:

- (a) ‘Literary critical approach’ is the traditional approach which focuses on the ‘literariness’ of the texts; it presupposes an already attained level of competence in the language and familiarity with the literary conventions.
- (b) ‘Stylistic approach’ starts quite properly from marks on paper and goes on to make textual discoveries ends in descriptions (e.g., parallelism, deviancy, etc.) based on which interpretations proceed; so, it views literature as ‘text’.

Widdowson (1975,1992) points out that students should progressively (not frequently) be exposed and introduced to literary texts and sensitized to the devices through which literature achieves its special effects *before* they embark upon a wholesale or fully-fledged study of particular literary works. Otherwise, it results in demotivation and a kind of pseudo-literary competence “in which students learn to manipulate a lego-vocabulary of critical terms without understanding” (Maley, 1989, p. 11), and to merely parrot ideas based on the recording of received opinions.

The *use* of literature as a resource for language learning is clearly an interesting and valid way of approaching literature and reveals much more relevance to ESL/EFL students since its primary concern is language (Maley, 1989). This approach thus avoids any polarization between ‘teaching language’ and ‘teaching literature’, since literature is language.



Furthermore, it regards literature as one among many other “equally valid uses of language and treats it as a proper object for the work bench”, as Maley (1989, p. 10) puts it. Literature is viewed as one source among others for promoting language learning. Students are allowed to use texts in many ways which suit their purposes: experiment, dismember, transform, and discard them. This use of literature might seem to some as “desacralizing” and “will carry the taint of heresy”. However, Maley (1989) responds to this by claiming:

As long as we remember our primary purpose is language development, anything is grist to our mill. Even if our eventual aim is to develop an understanding of literature, this approach is in the long run more likely to meet with success among EFL/ESL students than approaches (a) and (b). In our experience students develop an understanding of how literature functions as a by-product of their interactive engagement with the texts. (p. 11)

As for reasons for prioritizing literature as “a peculiarly potent resource”, Maley (1989, p. 11; 2001), enumerates some of its special advantages such as universality, non-triviality, personal relevance, variety, interest, economy and suggestive power, motivating power, ambiguity, and multiple (valid) interpretations and puts them as grounds for using literature as a resource in the classroom to teach language.

## **7. Literature Teaching as a Process**

Carter and McRae (1996, p. xxi) argue that the analytical and study techniques associated with approaches to the first purpose of literature teaching, mentioned above, are “product-centered”. They tend to focus on the text as holistic, “as something which is intact and even sacrosanct.” Methods associated with more product- and teacher-centered approaches are directed towards a development of knowledge *about* literature rather than knowledge *of* literature. It is worthy to note that such methods do not bear any systematic relation to the development of linguistic skills in students, and teachers advocating thing ‘purpose’ would probably be opposed to any notion that literature and language study might be integrated.

Most important, Carter and McRae (1996) maintain that the exploitation of literary texts in the language classroom and, especially, as a resource for language development “involves the teacher coming down from the pedestal or lectern and involves a classroom treatment of literature which does not view literature as a sacrosanct object for reverential, product-centered study”



(p. xxii). Rather, a “process-centered” (p. xxii) pedagogy for literature does not specialize it any particular status in the classroom. Methodological implications of such use of literature are the following:

- EFL classroom strategies such as cloze, rewriting, prediction activities, role-playing are adapted and adopted to teach literary texts in the language lesson;
- text manipulation (e.g., rearrangement and dramatization);
- language-based, student-centered activities and the use of other texts and media; and
- two-way channel of teacher-student communication and pair/group work in order to achieve more self-sufficiency.

It is generally argued, as mentioned earlier, that process-centered literature teaching should first succeed as a ‘literary experience’ for students and that the work conducted on the language of the texts should not simply mean an end in itself but should also service, ‘representational’, literary goals. Moreover, it is mostly noted that exploited literary texts should be “authentic and unsimplified” that “construct experiences or content in a non-trivial way” and preserve ambiguities and indeterminacies in experience, thus providing many natural opportunities or points of entry for discussion and for resolution of differing interpretations (Carter & McRae, 1996, p. xxiv).

“Language-based approaches” seek to integrate language and literature study through offering approaches to literary texts which are accessible not just to more advanced students but to a wider range of students from lower to upper intermediate levels (Carter, 1996, p. 2). At any points, two main principles are discernible. “Activity-principle” involves students’ active participation in literary construction of an artifact as a process. “Process-principle” entails students’ more appreciation and understanding of texts by making them directly experience a process of meaning-creation. Strategies such as those of rewriting, prediction exercise, cloze exercises, ranking tasks, active comprehension techniques, producing and acting out the text, and so on—which have the advantage of being familiar to teachers—place the responsibility for making meaning on the students, usually working in pairs or in a small group. It might be due to this fact that language-based approaches are said to be student-centered, activity-based, and process oriented (Carter, 1996, p. 3).

‘Stylistic approaches’ then follow to further foster interpretive skills and to encourage reading between the lines of what is said in literary texts



(Carter, 1996, p. 4; Carter & Long, 1987, 1991). “Discourse stylistics” (Carter, 1996, p. 5) operates under the direct influence of work in pragmatics, discourse, and text linguistics which could have these advantages; (i) providing students with a “detailed, explicit, and retrievable” *method* of scrutinizing texts to reach an interpretation; (ii) basing interpretation on systematic verbal analysis and thereby reaffirming the centrality of *language* as the aesthetic medium of *literature*; and (iii) suiting nonnative students for the kind of conscious, systematic knowledge they possess about the language (Carter, 1996, p. 5). Short (1996), very beautifully, argues that stylistics (which is usually thought of as an analytical technique to help support or test already-formed interpretative hypotheses), if “turned upside down” (p. 42), can be of considerable use even to learners—“relatively inexperienced or unsophisticated students,” (p. 11) (p. 41) especially, those with little or no linguistic knowledge—to arrive at possible meaning of texts. It is worth noting that a tendency to overconfidence in stylistic approaches would be detrimental in many respects.

Maley (1989), having decreed literature to step down from the pedestal and be used as a resource for teaching or learning language, recommends teachers “break free from the dominance of Comment and Explanation, and explore alternative ways of using literary texts” (p. 13):

1. Not all approaches are suitable for all text. Therefore, allow the text itself to determine the nature of the activities.
2. The text is not everything but one element in a set of linked activities.
3. The text should be presented in a variety of way dynamically such as with holding it till the end of the activity, etc.
4. Activities are not only questions but other forms as instructions, suggestions or prompts.

Such activities should then be applied on the basis of two criteria: they entail constant reference back to and interaction with the text; and they ensue interaction between and among students. He, accordingly, proposes a three-stage-framework as a working model for the presentation of literary texts in L2 classroom (p. 14):

- Framing, or ‘getting ready,’ that can cover “thematic preparation” by turning students’ attention to the content or theme of the text. It can also cover more “general sensitization”



such as having learners focus on what it is that distinguishes prose from poetry.

- Focusing, or ‘engaging,’ though the designed activities which lead them to understand it and to interpret it for the purposes in hand.
- Diverging, or ‘moving on’ which is achieved through leading students into parallel activities of various kinds, e.g., role-play, transfer to other text-types, creative writing, seminar exercise, etc.

Carter and Long (1991, p. 2) and Lazar (1993) have, in addition, suggested three different models for the teaching of literature to ESL/EFL students:

- “Cultural model” views a literary text as a product and it is treated as a repository of information about the target culture. It, therefore, “enables students to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space, and to come to perceive traditions of thought, feeling and artistic form within the heritage the literature of such cultures endows” (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 2). It is also the most traditional model used in university courses on literature that examines the social, political, and historical background to a text, literary movements and genres. There is no specific language work done on a text. Finally, this approach tends to be quite teacher-centered.
- “Language model” views the text as an example of certain types of patterns and structure through which learners proceed and pay attention to the way language is used; they, thereby, come to grips with the meaning and increase their general awareness of English. Within this model of studying literature, the teacher can choose to focus on general grammar and vocabulary or use ‘stylistic analysis.’ At last, it tends to be more learner-centered.
- “Personal growth model” seeks to help students find independent ways into a text in a systematic manner so as to “procure” more personal enjoyment and emotional gain by such engaging with the literary texts. This model encourages learners to draw on their own opinions, feeling and personal experiences. It is also a process-based approach which aims for interaction between the text and the reader in English. Some researchers



have advocated a combination of the last two approaches in the general classroom (Byrne, 1997; Clanfield, 2003; Maley, 2001).

Maley (2001) argues that classroom activities, for the most part, fall into one of two categories: (i) “Those that focus on the linguistic analysis of the text,” and (ii) “those in which the text functions as a springboard for a variety of language activities, including discussion and writing” (p. 183). The kinds of activities in the second category, especially, draw on those techniques developed as part of the communicative approach in general as well as some generalizable categories such as comparison, completion, re-ordering, matching, extension, and reformulation Maley (1994), in his “Short and Sweet: Short Texts And How to Use Them”, enumerates and elucidates a useful taxonomy of these categories. Furthermore, techniques such as opinion and information gap, problem-solving, and role-play/simulation are common along with a variety of activities to promote students’ creative writing. Maley (2001, p. 184), then, proposes “other heuristics” which could be used to generate activities and interactive language work in the framework of the ‘what, how, who, when/where, why’ model for any text:

- What it contains: language features, information, emotions, as well as what associations and personal feelings it arouses;
- How it works: repetition, rhyme, rhythm, metaphor, and parallelism;
- Who wrote it, and who it was addressed to; and,
- When/where it was written: background information on the sociocultural and personal context against which it was written;
- Why it was written; why certain choices were made (e.g., why a poem not a pamphlet? Why this word and that? Why the omission of some information?). (p.184)

Clearly, the key to success in using literature as a resource in ESL/EFL class rests, as many scholars advocate, is the selection of literary works (Byrne, 1997; Durant, 1996; Hill, 1992; Maley, 2001; McKay, 1982). Texts which tend to be extremely difficult on either a linguistic or cultural level and are too long, too far removed from the world knowledge of the students, or too anachronistic will have few benefits. As mentioned earlier, authentic and unsimplified literary texts which suit our purposes in various respects are highly recommended. The responsibility is, practically, put upon the shoulders of teachers, as Maley (1994) puts it, “The detailed permutation of procedures and texts is in any case a decision only the teacher can properly make” (p. 3). Durant (1996) also recommends that teachers themselves are the best source of tasks for use by their own students. More important, the



text has to have the capacity to engage the interest of the student, as mentioned earlier.

## 8. Conclusion

This paper, exploring the pros and cons of the use of literature in language classroom, aimed to establish a down-to-earth rationale for the promising incorporation of literature into L2 class in order to satisfy various ends of the curriculum. It was argued that the inclusion of literature in EFL classes can provide a basis for extending language usage, be ideal for developing an awareness of language use, provide a resource for developing in learners an important ability to use the knowledge of language for the interpretation of discourse, promote a greater tolerance for cultural differences, and enhance the students creativity. It was pointed out that if literature is to be a useful vehicle for the teaching of second language skills, that literature must first succeed as a literary experience for the student. A distinction was then made between Literature (with a Capital 'L') and literature (with a small 'l') arguing that language teachers should avoid the simplicities of a political 'either/or' resolution and should, instead, share premises. Attempts were thus made to suggest ways of making literature an intrinsic part of the EFL programs and of using it as a resource capable of contributing to learners' mastery in four basic areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Popp, 2006). The paper also examined a variety of perspectives of how to achieve an integrated language and literature classroom to make EFL learners acquainted with patterns of social interactions of the target language (Nieto, 2010).

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