

LITERARY MODELS IN FUNCTIONAL USE AND TEACHING OF LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Literature is considered a main subject of study that is given much emphasis in teaching languages. Literary subjects have attracted much interest by languages teachers for its valuable lessons and messages that are conveyed by literature and for its flexible and interesting effect in guiding and explaining. As an authentic genre, literature of all its branches (poetry, fiction, drama), exposes learners to the tradition of the languages. On the other hand, literary texts help them to update their knowledge through dealing with difficulties and unknown language and expressions that are used and dealt with outside classes.

Focusing on teaching languages through literature has encouraged many scholars and teachers to modify the use of literature of a mere interesting into an approach that provides learners with multiple meanings. Through fiction, for instance, learners will increasingly be active in sharing feelings and opinions, examining their ability to use nonstandard language, and modeling the ideal figures and morals in the literary pieces they study. Hence, literary texts are given a high level in educating a persona wholly through examining and developing attitudes towards self-assertion and self-recovery.

The purpose of this paper is to look at some issues and angles in which literature can be exploited successfully in classroom in teaching languages. Stories, poems, and play scenes are considered in this paper as examples and samples of valuable art that bring the use of any literary text in teaching into consideration.

Keywords: Teaching Language, literary morals, literary samples

PART 1

In the past decades, Literature had been taught in a traditional –teacher centered literacy practice due to the fact in the scarcity of resources and nativity of the students. As the new millennium started, the influx of different technologies has brought a vast change in the field of education. It drives educators to revise and uplift their approaches in teaching using the available and recent resources to develop competence among the students of the new generation.

In this paper, the authors uncovered a contemporary approach in teaching literature with the consideration of some teaching and learning principle applicable to ESL learners. Before going further to the main issue,

have yourself reflect on how you process learning in the classroom. In your mind, answer the following questions: Did I consider paradigm shift in teaching? Am I a traditional or a learner centered teacher?

What is Paradigm Shift in teaching?

Paradigm shift is a major change in how some process is accomplished. It can happen when new technology is introduced and that radically alters the traditional way of teaching.

Classroom Environment: Traditional versus learner centered paradigm teaching

	Traditional	Learner centered	Advantages/disadvantages
Teacher	Giving lectures, spoon feeding of ideas	Give tasks for each group. Facilitate learning.	Less work for the teacher. He should always be ready in case of questions to assists them.
Students	Listen to the teacher. Understand what the teacher explains.	Work in groups. Process learning by themselves through accomplishing the task.	Gives freedom for the students. Learning skills are within their control.
Classroom	Desks are arranged in rows where students might be seated alphabetically or according to their height/size. Classroom is a confined place to learn.	Desks may be in circles, as the group arranged them for their convenience. Groups may work outside the classroom, or in any place they want.	Disarranged classroom set up. Students could move freely.

As for the researchers' experience, maximum participation is obviously observed in a learner centered class. Students become active and are encouraged to show up their skills and open to development. Slow learner when working with a group of fast learners exerts effort and work better to fit himself with the group members.

One observed fact in learner centered class is slow learner finds difficulty in writing if a written evaluation is given. This is because of his innate slowness to acquire learning. When this happened, the teachers' resourcefulness in enhancing his writing skill is challenged.

Why do we need paradigm shift in teaching?

The kind of education we need to impart should be transformational rather than transactional. It should nurture the students' personality as a whole. The knowledge and skills that we develop should illuminate the heart and the soul. These should be their tools in accomplishing a realistic life situation. For this reason, teaching will have to change from information driven to a learner centric paradigm.

Learning Principle Applied in a Learner centered teaching:

In a learner centered environment, we accept the fact that:

1. Learning is an active process that allows the students to construct understanding through group interaction.
2. Learning is a relatively change in behavior.
3. Learning can be accessed through performance such as writing, painting or role playing.

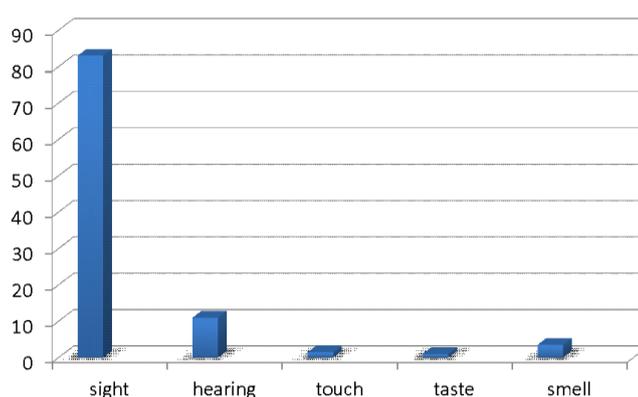
Learning as an active process allows the students to engage in different classroom activities which lead to learning. These activities should consider the use of many senses as we believe that learning is best acquired when several senses are utilized.

Neuroscience and cognitive psychology research has uncovered the power of our senses. According to researchers Dr. L. D. Rosenblum, Dr. Harold Stolovitch and Dr Erica Keeps, in their neuroscience and

cognitive psychology research on the power of senses, each sense has the ability to acquire these percentages of learning:

Sense of sight-----83%
Hearing -----11%
Touch-----1.5%
Smell-----3.5%
Taste-----1%

“Neuroscience and cognitive psychology”



Therefore in Literature, it is best to have film viewing as the students would be able to use their sense of sight and hearing. Indeed, 94% learning could be expected. After considering paradigm shift in teaching, the learning principles, and the power of several senses in learning, let's have a glance on a learner centered class. One of the main aims of learning g process is to reach a comprehensive achievement and understanding between the students from one side and their teacher from another. To achieve such aim, everyone, here, has a role that helps in reaching the objectives of the process.

A. The student's role

1. Collaborators – they work cooperatively with other students. They consider activities/task as personally interesting and relevant, so they are challenged. They also give an explanation to what is expected. Believing that they have personal competence to succeed, they are optimized to a better performance.
2. Learners- as student, they are open to changes apply and ready to apply this learning to real life situations.
3. Other special roles assigned to them – these roles could be assigned as what the group decided. For example, props coordinator, recorder, interviewer, encoder and others.

B. The teacher's role

1. Coach- During the pre task, a teacher act as a coach by setting the students mind .During task, he can also give special instructions for what they should do or say in a particular situation.
2. Facilitator- Teacher as a facilitator helps to process learning. This could take place by giving the students options and advice from which they can choose to solve any task easily rather than telling them what to do.
3. Tutor- As teacher, he should give special attention to any student who needs assistance.

As a learner centered teacher, we should be open to these:

1. Consider that everyone is a learner.
2. Accept that everyone learns every moment of his life.
3. Be aware that mistakes are excellent opportunities to learn and to improve.
4. Realize that we all have different ways of experiencing learning.
5. Accept that teachers become co-learners with other members of the community of learners.

A task based Approach to teaching Literature

In a learner centered class, the students should be in *group*. Each group should be given a *task*. Skehan P. in his *A framework for the Implementation of task-based Instruction* (1996), defines task as an activity in which meaning is primary, there is some sort of relationship to the real world; task completion has some priority and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome. In this paper, task is a piece of language that linguistically intellectually, physically, emotionally, spontaneously, motivationally and experientially involves learners in the process of learning. This is what we call Whole Literacy Engagement in the process of learning or WLE.

How could a teacher employ this task based approach?

As teachers we should contemplate upon the different ways through which learners can be wholly involved and also should think of the procedures to achieve WLE.

In contemplating the different ways to ensure students involvement and the procedures to achieve these whole literary engagement, one must give high consideration to the ability of the students with regard to the kind of intelligence they possess. Always have in my mind that one learns fast according to his interest. Howard L. Gardner of Harvard in his frames of Mind: *Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983) has identified seven intelligences:

1. Linguistic intelligence. This intelligence pertains to the ability to use the language in oral and written discourse. Having this intelligence enables one to express himself effectively as what great speakers, lawyers, writers and poets show.

2. Logical- mathematical intelligence. This is common for those who could analyze problems scientifically with consideration of the patterns and mathematical process. People with this kind of intelligence could analyze cause and effect thereby applying scientific, mathematical and logical means to ensure that every step is in order.

3. Musical intelligence shows sensitivity to musical composition and patterns and the ability to recognize and compose the different aspects of music as tones, rhythms and pitches.

4. Bodily kinesthetic intelligence. There are times that body movements are coordinated with the use of the mental power in dealing with problems. In this belief, we could say that ones drive to act is dependent on what the mind dictate.

5. Spatial intelligence. This involves the potential to analyze and use the patterns of time and space.

6. Interpersonal intelligence. This is characterized by giving considerations on the reasons why people behave in such a way, what are their motives and what they really want. This intelligence is commonly displayed by religious people, educators, counselors and political leaders as they show empathy, which is crucial to the success of their career.

7. Intrapersonal intelligence. This is one's ability to overcome fears and constraints alone. He could be self motivated, self directed and accomplishment of such work is possible by doing it alone. With the use of this intelligence, he could show himself as a model for others to recognize and follow.

He claimed that the seven intelligences tend to complement each other for the people to find better solution for their problem. It is very seldom that a single intelligence operates at a time.

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences and Education

This multiple intelligences has helped educators to verify their work and encourage them to look beyond the narrow confines of the dominant discourse of skills development, curriculum development and teaching pedagogy.

To the extent, this theory of multiple intelligences has helped educators to reflect on their practice, and serve

them as a basis to broaden their focus on assisting people to live a better life.

Tasked based Approach and Technology

With consideration of paradigm shift, technology finds its role in the presentation of the lesson through audio visual or audio as the medium. Instead of storytelling and discussion, film viewing in case of novel and short stories and audio in case of poems, are very useful tools to pave way a great change.

Classroom Techniques and Procedures

Patterns of task based approach in teaching Literature can be presented through :(Pre-task, During Task, General Discussion and Post Task)

I. Pre-task:

1. Schema building:

A. Brainstorming.

1. Contextualization of the task. (through pictures, question and answers)
2. Illustration of the context.
3. Introduction of some vocabularies.(unlock: pronunciation and contextual clues)

B. Group scaffolding. (Forming groups according to their interest or give the students their freedom to choose their members)

2. Authentic Viewing:

A. Film viewing. **B.** Listening to a relevant story.

II. During Task:

1. Skimming and scanning.
2. Discrimination; (distinguishing both the main idea and the supporting information, distinguishing between the characters' point of view).
3. Identifying; (point of view, character, and setting).
4. Taking notes; (jotting down the significant information in your own words).
5. Predicting; (Predict what may happen in the story in case of dilemmas and suspense).
6. Making Inference; (using what you already know to understand something new/ better).
7. Analysis; (Analyzing the story in terms of plot, conflict, style, purpose and theme).
8. Action; (Role playing, Simulation, Characterization, Dramatization).
9. Summarizing.
10. Evaluation.

III. General Discussion:

This is the part when the teacher clears things out with all the groups. He could ask questions to find out whether the students achieved his goal. Likewise, it is the students' time to gather all the information as accomplished by each group thereby arriving at a conclusion and generalization.

IV. Post Task:

1. Reflection on the task achievement

- a. Relating the story to their own lives.(which part of the story happened to you? How did you go with it? Why?)
- b. Self-evaluation/ Group Evaluation (What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses? How could you overcome those weaknesses?)

2. Follow up

- a. Group rehearsals.

- b. Accuracy based check.
- c. Students writing activity.

Suggested Tasks:

TASK ONE: Apply a rule:

First of all, the teacher should be aware of the student's background and their educational level. He can refer to their previous academic year as far as the topic is concerned. The teacher can start with raising certain points for discussion. For example; in the situation that the king is not murdered but died normally, who should inherit the kingdom / Why? What is the prevailing rule?) Here the teacher feedbacks the students and states a rule.

TASK TWO: Who and Why:

1. Name the round characters and the flat characters in the selected literary work.
2. Explain why each character is categorized in that level.

TASK THREE: Solve:

After assigning the nature of the conflict between both the antagonist and protagonist, the teacher encourages his students to find a possible solution to the problem. In other words, the teacher asks the students to describe the best possible solution to the conflicts, good and evil, protagonist and antagonist.

TASK FOUR: Factors/ Reasons:

Identify the factors that hindered the protagonist to achieve his/her aims.../ why?

TASK FIVE: Culture:

What is the students' point of view concerning the cultural aspects of the literary work?

TASK SIX: Predict:

1. (Here the students should predict some other ends of the work).
2. Other predictions if possible.

PART 2

In modern approaches of learning and developing languages, literature became one of the most effective genres to learn a language. Through the branches of literature, fiction, drama, poetry, and films, learners are motivated to be skillful in speaking languages and in developing the structure of these languages.

1. FICTION

Fiction and the process of telling short stories to learn and develop English language is considered a priority for the power of stories and the illustrations and terms within are influential way to make successful connection with our lives. Words are not only spoken but visualized because listeners effectively respond to them when they connect these words with their illustrated experiences, characters, morals, and mental reactions. People, in regardless to their ages, respond powerfully to the event of the story when words are read with much attention to the way of reading. Below are some approaches to develop learning English language:

a. Picture Books

Involving stories in learning English language adds sort of enjoyment and interest to discover other words and expressions that used within the context of the story events. This depends mainly on the fact that pleasure and enjoyments are important keys for successful reading and learning any language. In successful learning, colorful and delightful picture books help students to become readers of good manners. On the other hand, pictures within book stories functions as a very good tool to use the language meaningfully. For instance, rhythms of any read prose section produce a powerful influence in learning and teaching when these rhythms are spoken in attention in correspondence with this section details. Moreover, scenes of fear, anxiety, excitement, or passivity within a story should be acted and reflected through readable expressions. Happiness, enjoyment, and laughs should be gestured through the tone of the voice while reading by students and teachers as well. For authors, stories are told through picture books with a consideration to the

medium of words and their illustrations. Thus, learners who lack or have limit knowledge of any language can follow the story events through illustrations and colorful indications to realize and obtain vocabularies and expressions. Hence, the process of creation a desire to learn and read words of different languages needs an actual skill that merges the words and pictures into a whole for much easier learning and teaching (Tyrrell pp.51-65). So, going interestingly through looking at illustrations will ease focusing on the full text and will encourage going on in reading the next written sections to handle finally the subject material in full recognition.

b. Learning through Morals

Learning English language through literature relies on the fact that learners live reality and fantasy as well in which both of these words and expressions are not easy to be forgettable. The story events present certain expressions that enable teachers to go through by definitions, explanations, and discussions. For instance, a teacher could talk about shape shifting as a new term through what people think about it and how do they analyze it psychologically and sociologically through sharing a short-time show of shape shifting movie scenes of *Twilight*. Here, students do their best to connect the spoken, the written, and the visual words and terms. Moreover, such subjects arises the interest to focus on the importance of morals as humanity and the danger of losing it. A well-chosen and well-told story can achieve goals in developing the inner personal attitudes to acquire hidden aspects of the mother language and other targeted languages. At this point, book stories of special moral themes help to make language enjoyable and comprehensible for considerable inputs (Laine pp.65-73). Hence, the acquisition of words and expressions and the recognition of their meanings could be of great benefit when all of these aims are woven altogether in a story and the way of telling it.

c. Language Structures

In the act of learning language structures through stories, teachers find good opportunities to teach structures within short stories and tales in a matter of avoiding the routine. For instance, stories and adventures of Sherlock Holmes as fictional detective stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, show fiction of crime, mystery, and suspense that require to use language structure such as model verbs (it should not be...they have been there...she might be killed...) and some conditional sentences of if clauses (What if...? If he had not..., if they had found her...). These structural phrases will be aroused unintentionally through reading and discussing such sort of tales that have to be exploited purposely for learning and teaching the language structure. Actually, this way of teaching parallels the structural exercises that is given to students yet in one clear difference that the learners show much interest to activate their mental knowledge in acquiring pure structure in a form of fiction. In stories, so many structures are associated strongly with particular tale characters or with a memorable scene. Jane Eyre as a character in *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte focuses on the word "evil" as a noun part of speech when she connects evil with the consequences of this deed:

It is far better to endure patiently a smart which nobody feels but yourself, than to commit a hasty action whose evil consequences will extend to all connected with you; and besides, the Bible bids us return good for evil. (Jane Eyre/ Chap. Six)

d. Short Stories and Fairytales

As one of the important facts, stories that are assigned for learning and teaching English language should be short enough to achieve aims successfully. Different sorts of stories should be tackled that all encourage students to reflect their personal impressions about events and characters which in turn develop their abilities to use structures correctly. In student-centered learning process, teachers should choose stories and short tales that can offer brief time and effort. This might be helpful if teachers choose folk and fairytales to place them within students, most interesting tools of learning language. Tales of different cultures certainly present everything related to cultural values that are transmitted to student's information. For instance, Lewis Carroll in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* quotes: "Actually the best gift you could have given her was a lifetime of adventures", and another quote he wrote: "...I can't go back to yesterday because I was a different person then". Such sorts of well-known quotes encourage students to remember certain words and phrases of characters and authors within tales and make these stories unforgettable sources of enjoyment and imaginative memories. To avoid classical ways of teaching language, students are asked to tell a story by the mixture of language, spoken words, and pictures through holding up some illustrations or picture cards. This approach helps to expand students' interests to learn language by working on together the triangle of picture, story, and language. For more enjoyment, learners can add extra phrases or paragraphs to illustrate the topic point in their hold up pictures that leads to feeding their knowledge with additional vocabularies and sense of achievement.

Through stories, students play the role of story-tellers by reading, explaining, reflecting images, and sharing traditional and new story events. As a story-teller, student believes in a fact that literature and life share an interrelation through a main tool of language. To Paul Scott, "the function of novels is to convey a view of human life"(Mouli 2011). Thus, telling a story whether verbal or by illustrations should be accompanied by a focus on:

- * learning the language because the main target in the lesson is not learning a literary piece, but rather to acquire a language skill.
- * using familiar words in new phrases, sentences, and paragraphs.
- * heading conversations with other colleagues in a team-role or an individual-role part.

e. Native Speakers

In so many ways, the teacher of English language should know how to create various opportunities to use language through purposeful reading. Gathering learners of foreign language with native language students may help in adapting another effective way to acquire good language. To balance the scales of learning language, teachers try, if possible, to have a class of mixed students (native speakers and foreign learners). Native students can demonstrate the reading process through clear and skillful ability. This in turn encourages other students to develop their skills of listening, understanding, and then reading to enhance other interrelated psychological aspects of self-recovery and self-confidence. A part of the necessity, students of foreign language consult natives in some of language principles and in some of its inquiries within the framework of the story they share.

f. Silent Films

For another influential approach, teachers may adapt situations of reviewing in spoken words some scenes of silent films. In this approach, students take the position of scene-tellers to other audience students or to interpret some situations in films. Similarly, a student may act as a story-teller when he/she fills the gaps of some omitted scenes of the film. This omission encourages students to anticipate what may happen to be retold by language (Jakobson, Pomorska and Rudy p. 463).

Douglass Biber, a lecturer in Northern Arizona University, states in his *Variation Across Speech and Writing* that all literary genres provide scientific evidences for developing learning language and linguistic (30). For instance, in fiction, narrative helps to develop language through the skillful narrator, while in drama language is developed through dialogue form. In fiction or drama, language is centered when texts of high degree of narratives or dialogues are remembered well. This is due to the fact that a good narrative is scientifically an effective memorable way for language learning purpose. Moreover, the power of words plays a great role to build another basis for good learning. Keith Green in her article *Read Texts, Long Texts and Mental Representations*, asserts that "language causes feelings, produces emotions and moves people. When we read a work of literature...it is not some mental representation that enables us to feel the way we do, it is the power of the words" (Green pp. 49-67). On the other hand, fiction maybe targeted by adults or teenagers to use taboo language that is used in contemporary fiction and films because taboo words are the first words young learners acquire in a foreign language (Martino and Di Sabato p. 60). Including slangy language exposes teachers to consider all aspects of language as a source of learning that needs to be studied according to its suitability to situations.

2. DRAMA

A good drama can be chosen to develop intellectual and emotional motifs to learn language inside English classroom. Drama provides another effective way to enrich learning in which conflict and emotions could be brought from life experiences into classroom. Characters, audience, acts, setting of time and place, tone of happiness or sadness, and sense of tragic or comic ends all help to use the language. In drama, students find an opportunity to create situations by their own to play within the scenes of the act as a matter of emotional reactions and personal feelings. Moreover, students use some old words spoken or written that are no longer used:

Doubt thou that the stars are fire;

Doubt that the sun doth move;

Doubt truth to be a liar;

But never doubt I love. (Act II, Scene III/ *Hamlet*)

Drama functions as a helpful tool in terms of

1. It provides a sense of communication that functions to learn English language. Students feel that they have something to offer and to share adults' experiences. Thoroughly, they do a sort of thing that helps them to enjoy using old and new languages.
2. It helps teachers to assess their student's development through watching them at work of performance.
3. It provides opportunities to pass a text book to some verbal activities by acting scenes.
4. Learning language in drama helps students to communicate, learn, act, involve, and to share experiences socially and academically with others.
5. Senses of humor, happiness, sadness, excitement, and refreshment are mixed with messages of morals and values that are held by the beauty of language.

Accordingly, music within drama may act influentially to add a thematic entertainment. Students must be told by their teachers that a musical drama tells a story in a helpful way if it is accompanied by the use of the language. They should know that including music while acting drama and speaking language is an ideal reflection for a desirable experiential way of learning as a technique to produce ways of successful language communication. Sound and music effects develop further activities of student's self-confidence when students are given individual parts.

CONCLUSION

Literature helps students to acquire a native-like competence in English language. It expresses students' ideas in a good language and helps to learn them the features of modern language. Teachers can use literary texts whether original or simplified because both sort of texts consist traditional and new vocabularies as the source of modified and unmodified language. Using literary texts encourages students to learn through interacting situations that develop in turn other personal aspects such as self-esteem and self-confidence. Literature examines the acceptance of values and morals and foster good attitudes towards them

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