

**LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE ARE INDIVISIBLE**

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**Abstract**

*The relationship between literature and language has often been regarded as one of bitter rivalry. Literary critics have railed against the ‘cold’, ‘scientific’ approach used by scholars of language in their analyses of literary texts, whilst linguists have accused their literary colleagues of being too vague and subjective in the analyses they produced. A wide range of factors have been pointed out by experts as being responsible for this situation. Undoubtedly scholars in both disciplines have much to learn from each other. Among a welter of reasons which have been proffered by a variety of authors, this study focuses on the interwoven relationship between language and literature and exposes the interdependence of the two subjects in enhancing English language competence. More important, it claims consistently that the use of literature for language teaching purposes can promote literary understanding and powerful pedagogic tool for college students. Literature and language teaching should be linked and integrated to be mutually reinforcing*

**Key Words:** Literature, language, symbiotic relations, linguists, FLT

Language and literature are indivisible. Their role is not contradictory but complementary to each other. No literature comes to life without language and no language survives without literature. Literature-in-English and the English language are tools in the hand of each other. While language is a tool by which literature establishes an existence, literature serves as a tool through which language propagates itself. The relationship between language and literature is an interdependent one; literature does not and cannot exist independent of language because language is the conveyor of literature. An understanding of the nature and structure of language would enable us to appreciate a literary work much better because language and thoughts are the raw materials of literature. Literary writers use language in their works. Literature can be used to teach language, for instance, drama and poetry can be used for the teaching of speech while rose can be used to teach summary and comprehension.

Literature is generally defined as a collection of writings on any given subject or field of endeavours. The definition only portrays literature as an expression of ideas, thoughts and feelings with emphasis on the aesthetic values of language. Today, language skills are high priorities. Some scholars (stern, 1991; Belcher & Hirvela, 2000; Erkaya, 2005; Van, 2009) believe that literature can provide a medium through which these needs can be addressed and literature can improve language skills. Povey (1972) argues that “literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge”(p.18). Turker (1991) thinks that literature with its extensive and connotative vocabulary and also its complex syntax, can expand all language skills. Oster (1989) writes “literature helps students to write more creatively” (p.85). Murdoch (2002) believe that if literature text selected and exploited appropriately, it can provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners. Ghosn (2002) also says that through the medium of literature we can provide FL learners with language experiences that will not only motivate and foster oral language, but also deepen their awareness of the target language in its written form. In other words, it provides models for their own writing. He also argues that because literature presents natural language, language at its finest, thus can foster vocabulary development in context .Cruz (2010) conveys that a literary text provides students with a much clearer idea about the syntactic structure of a written text and to what extent written language differs from spoken language. He continues that by getting used to the formation and function of sentences, to the structure of a paragraph, a section or a chapter, their writing skill improve and their speech skill can gain eloquence. Berardo (2006) also believes that literature as an authentic material can improve language skills especially reading. From his point of view, reading is considered to be an ongoing interaction, going beyond the physical context of the text, looking for meaning as well as processing information

## 1. Introduction

Recognition of the need to integrate the language, and literature is not new. It was due to the long history of tension between these two disciplines during 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century which eventually resulted in the near disappearance of literature from the language curriculum following World War II. For the structural approaches to language teaching, literature was discredited as a pedagogical tool, because it represented the old tradition. In other words, Literature was not treated as a distinct subject; rather its study was woven into the teaching of classical rhetoric which was then aimed at enhancing in learners the skills of discovery and communication (Spack, 1985).The functional-notional method ignored literature, because in this method the importance lies on communication and they present authentic language samples. Literature was not considered either to have a communicative function or to be authentic example of language use.. It led literary scholars to avoid dancing attendance to rhetoricians and to run their own reader-centered literary criticism courses, giving literature its deserved scope as poetry, drama and fiction.

Much can also be said to reciprocate the critics' contention concerning the contribution of literature to meeting the objectives of language courses. Notwithstanding the fact that literary texts differ from language pre-ordained materials in the extent of direct relevance, in so far as literature can foster learners' motivation to read and write and consequently their overall reading and writing proficiency, it can serve their academic and occupational needs. (McKay 1982). It follows that usefulness seems to be more a matter of the skill with which literature is employed in such courses than whether or not it should be employed. Cruz (2010) believe that literature as aesthetic recreation can be considered a much more "authentic source and can inspire more authority in the use and enrichment of language. He says "literature can be regarded as a rich source of authentic material, because it conveys two features in its written text: one is „language in use“, that is, the employment of linguistics by those who have mastered it into a fashion intended for native speakers; the second is an aesthetic representation of the spoken language, which is meant to recover or represent language within a certain cultural context". Literature as the authentic material, imparts the diverse forms and functions of written language (Hadaway 2002).

Nevertheless, in spite of lingering reservations literature "has made a widely heralded comeback", as a vital component of English language teaching (McRae, 1991:432). Now Language is the sole medium of literature while literature is the most sophisticated manifestation of language. They are complementary as they enrich and glorify each other. Both scholarly and professional publications have explored the theoretical and practical possibilities of literature in the language class-room; a number of course books and teacher training manuals have appeared, giving concrete expression to these ideas. In sum, motivation, authenticity, cultural/ intercultural awareness and globalization, intensive/ extensive reading practice, sociolinguistic/pragmatic knowledge, grammar and vocabulary knowledge, language skills, emotional intelligence and critical thinking are the payoffs" list of using literature in FL classes (Khatib et al., 2011).

A functional approach to language emphasizes a symbiotic relation between literature and language. Literature is constituted by language and it represents one of the most recurrent uses of language. Language and linguistic analysis can also be employed to access literature from the learner's point of view. Brumfit and Carter already emphasized the role of literature as "an ally of language". This technique is by no means novel, since literature has been a widely used teaching tool in different language teaching methods. However, here the perspective changes giving more relevance to the literary text as a work of art. Could it be that, after five decades of schism in many language departments—particularly between literary and language studies--we now rely on multiple perspectives about text that bring the subfields of our departments closer together and make their interaction potentially more fruitful than during our separate histories in the eras of audiolingualism and even communicative language teaching?

Can *literature* be without *language*? Language and literature cannot be separated because language is the life-wire of literary works. As language is the world's greatest invention, so is literature its greatest art. All the genres of literature exploit language in series of ways so as to carry out their messages to the audience. How far we can go without language? Can there be literature without language? The interface between language and literature has been the object of considerable interdisciplinary research on methods of analysis that can be applied across the two fields and their sub-areas. Less research has focused, however, on the influence of the new technologies on this interface, which transcends borders and cultures, with the process of translation adding yet another dimension to the already complex picture. Language is the medium of literature as marble or bronze or clay is the materials of the sculptor. Since every language has its distinctive peculiarities, the innate formal limitations—and possibilities—of one literature are never quite the same as those of another. The literature fashioned out of the form and substance of a language has the color and the texture of its matrix. Languages are more to us than systems of thought-transference. They are invisible garments that drape themselves about our spirit and give a predetermined form to all its symbolic expression. When the expression is of unusual significance, we call it literature. So far, numerous studies have demonstrated the benefit of literature in English language classes and they indicate that the use of literature in language teaching enriches the learners' linguistics awareness and rhetorical structure of literary discourse (Widdowson, 1975, Collie and Slater, 1987, Carter and Long, 1991, Lazar, 1996, Brumfit, 2000, Carter, 2000), Long, 1986, and McKay, 2000) Literature is, undoubtedly, one of the main resources used as an effective means of language teaching. Literature supplies many linguistic opportunities to the language learner and allows the teacher to design activities that are "based on material capable of stimulating greater interest and involvement" than many other non-literary, informative texts (Carter and Long 1991: 3). This is in consonance with the new currents within the communicative approach that see in reading literature the perfect realization of their principles namely developing communicative competence, that is teaching learners to communicate in the second language and accounting for real, authentic communicative situations (P. A. Lluch, 2007) In this regard, Short and Candlin (1986) pointed out "Literature and language teaching should be linked and made mutually reinforcing". Such integration would enhance the use of language in a variety of activities where investigative and student centered learning is being implemented.

## 2. Language through Literature

EFL learners can be successfully taught English using the technique of teaching language through literature. The texts provide authentic materials and offer rich context of language use. In recent years various factors have undermined the position of literature as an area of language use divorced from others. The privileged status traditionally given to literary texts in the study of a language has increasingly been replaced with a more utilitarian bias which favours language for its instrumental benefits – now the very inclusion of literature in the

syllabus is a matter of debate. Language through literature has included using literary texts as resources for grammar teaching and raising awareness.

Various specific claims have been made about the benefits of integrating language and literature, whether the focus is on language or on literature. Literature provides a resource or authentic context for the teaching of grammar and vocabulary. Because of its appeal to the learners' imagination and emotions, literature provides motivation for language learning. The themes and plots of literary works provide stimuli for meaningful debates, discussions and other language tasks which develop the learners' linguistic and communicative competence. Literature provides learners with authentic models for the norms of language use. Literature assists learners in developing their overall language awareness and knowledge about language. The study of literature helps develop the learners' interpretive and analytical skills (for example, skills of inference) which can be applied to other language-related activities. Literature represents language 'at its best' and thus provides an ideal model for language learning. Literature provides learners with insights into the norms and cultural values embodied in the language. The study of literature educates the 'whole person' in a way that more functional approaches to language teaching do not

### 3. Literature through Language

Literature fosters empathy, tolerance and awareness of global problems. Working with literature involves the students to use their interpretive ability which also instigates multidimensional development of the skills of language by stimulating imagination, broadening their mind. Literature is a tool for learning the differences between language varieties such as a dialogue, a narrative, and a poetic style with the figurative speech. In more advanced levels, it could provide access to a local dialect, accent or specific vocabulary (Littlewood, 1986; Lazar, 1993). Literature through language has included the use of "pre-literary activities such as cloze, multiple-choice, jig-saw reading and practical stylistics.

Literature in English has been an academic subject : who is in and who is out of the canon , high culture verses low or popular culture, re-thinking –"isms"and minority discourses as well as the welter or critical approaches which have burgeoned – reader response , structuralism, deconstruction, and language based and stylistic approaches calling on discourse analysis, speech act theory, etc. Critics create canons, canons and critics co-exist.Literature and language are closely related and this is a fact none can deny. Literature is constituted by language and it represents one of the most recurrent uses of language. Language and linguistic analysis can also be employed to access literature from the learner's point of view. Brumfit and Carter (1986: 1) already emphasized the role of literature as "an ally of language". This technique is by no means novel, since literature has been a widely used teaching tool in different language teaching methods. However, here the perspective changes giving more relevance to the literary text as a work of art. First of all, let us go over the changing role of literature in the tradition of second language teaching to end with an account of its current situation within the communicative approach.

There is a valuable distinction between the study of literature and the use of literature as a resource of language learning. Comparing literary and ‘non-literary’ texts as aesthetically patterned artefacts allow the learners to move from the known to the unknown: in this way literature is made more accessible to them. Literary texts enrich the language input and stimulate language acquisition by providing meaningful and memorable contexts for processing and interpreting new language (Laser, 1993:17). The multiple levels of meaning of literary texts provide opportunities for developing inferential and interpretational skills that are needed for understanding all kinds of representational materials. As literary language is patterned creatively and words and structures are not intended to be read literally (Carter, 1997: 59), the interpretation of literary texts involves emotionally, awakens imagination and creativity, and requires personal response and reaction. Using literary texts in the language can create more awareness of the language being learnt, help develop skills and strategies to apply in many different situations and contexts, increase interest and motivation, and make the learning of the language a more enjoyable and worthwhile experience.

Comparing literary and “non-literary” texts allows to move from the known to the unknown: in this way literature is made more accessible. Linking the study of literary texts to creative language activities such as rewriting endings to stories, role playing, rewriting a narrative from a different point of view or in a different genre) makes the text more accessible to the learners and removes some of the intimidating mystique that often surrounds literature. The study of literature also involves a considerable baggage of metalanguage, critical concepts, knowledge of conventions and the like. Applying basic language techniques to the study of literature develops language skills and promotes engagement with the text. Learners cannot develop literary competence without an adequate competence in language. Integration of language and literature helps compensate for any inadequacies in the learners’ linguistic competence. Developing the learners’ sensitivity to how language is used in a literary text provides them with a ‘way in’ to the text, a starting point for the process of comprehension and appreciation. It doesn’t automatically lead to a consideration of the role of language in literature. Needless to say, the two different approaches stem from different traditions and imply different methodologies.

One of the benefits of using literature in language is that it encourages “dynamic learning-learning which involves as actively as personally as possible (McRae, 1991:8). Literature is authentic material and reading authentic texts can aid the process of language acquisition because “it is a space for the exercise of mental energy, it is a space for creativity, it is a space where the personal elements of interaction, involvement, concern and personality can all be accommodated. (McRae, 1991:15). Duff and Maley (1990: 6) formulate three types of justification for using literary texts: linguistic, methodological and motivational. Linguistically, the use of literary texts is justified on the ground that they offer genuine samples of a very wide range of styles, registers, and text –types at many levels of difficulty. Methodologically they offer opportunities for genuine interaction between learners because of their openness to multiple interpretations. Motivationally they deal with matters that are



likely to engage learners in a personal response from their own experiences. Therefore, reading literature is positive in several ways. It presents with authentic and varied language material, it provides with contextualized communicative situations, real patterns of social interaction, and use of language (Collie and Slater 1987: 2).

Among language educators, there has been a hot debate as to how, when, where, and why literature should be incorporated for valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement. Literature is constituted by language and it represents one of the most recurrent uses of language. 'English education in India has largely depended on the teaching of literature. It is only in the recent years that there has been a shift of emphasis from teaching literature to language. The relationship between literature and English language teaching has been rather a difficult marriage throughout all these years. In many situations while English language teaching adopted a structural approach, literature was taught as a separate subject. In the recent years, current approaches have endeavored to reexamine the role of literature as a basic component and source of authentic texts of the language curriculum and recognized the indispensable role of literature to ameliorate learners' language development, cultural awareness, pragmatic awareness, emotional intelligence, critical thinking as well as their motivation. Literature is a verbal art that leads readers to appreciate the beauty of language. The merits of literature are multifarious and used in English Language teaching to broaden students' horizons by giving them knowledge of the classics of literature, to improve students' general cultural awareness, to stimulate students' creative and literary imagination and to develop their appreciation of literature. Literary texts offer a rich source of linguistic input and can help learners to practice the four language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – in addition to exemplifying grammatical structures and presenting new vocabulary. The Literary texts provide opportunities for multi-social classroom experiences and can appeal to learners with different learning styles. Literature is beginning to be viewed as an appropriate vehicle for language learning and development since the focus is now on authentic language and authentic situations.

Literature provides learners with a wide range of individual lexical or syntactic items. Students 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 possible structures, the different ways of connecting ideas, which develop and enrich their own writing skills. Students also become more productive and adventurous when they begin to perceive the richness and diversity of the language they are trying to learn and begin to make use of some of that potential themselves. Thus, they improve their communicative and cultural competence in the authentic richness, naturalness of the authentic texts.

Literature generates creativity in language and imagination and should feature in any education system that regards discovery and enjoyment as essential components of the learning process.

## 4. Conclusion

Although the controversy over the appropriateness of literature in language teaching still exists, this paper legitimizes the use of literature as a vehicle through which critical pedagogy can be implemented in language classes. Literature provide the learners with a variety of authentic stories depicted in poetry , drama and other literary genres by which the real social and cultural setting can be brought to the world of the classroom. Taking heed of all (dis)favors, in conclusion, the author defends the use of literature in language on the basis of arguments put forth in this paper.. Integrating literature in language paves the way for equipping students with a number of skills. an integrated approach to the use of literature in the language classroom offers foreign language learners the opportunity to develop not only their linguistic and communicative skills but their knowledge about language in all its discourse types. The relationship between language and literature is interwoven. Language is regarded as the conveyor of literature; and literature cannot exist independent of language. The English language can be enhanced through organized and systematic teaching of the three genres of literature. Also, the aspects of English: Speech, lexis and structure, comprehension and summary, and composition are already integrated in the teaching of literature It must be taken into consideration that those features which are addressed as literature's disadvantages in the EFL, are exactly what can be employed to enrich language teaching and learning experiences. Although, it needs to be reiterated that the current consensus of opinion regarding the integration of literature in language programs is overwhelming, and by far exceeds the points of controversy.

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