



ENHANCING ENGLISH COMPETENCY WITH LITERATURE

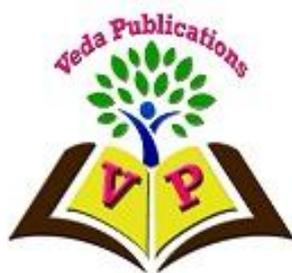
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents various points to justify the idea that English literature promotes English Language Teaching (ELT). Literature in ELT enhances the aspects of English language learning. Incorporation of Literary concepts and texts in teaching the language will no doubt enhance English Language teaching and learning. Literature provides interesting and creative materials which appeals to the involvement of the learning and helps the learners to move towards language enrichment. This will undoubtedly wipe out all the stereotyped methods of teaching of the English Language. It promotes active participation from the learners' side since literary texts act as a tool in kindling the learners' interest towards learning the language to its fullest. This will broaden students' knowledge of classics and language in literature and help them to learn the cultural underpinnings along with the language. Literature will elevate the personality of the minds as well. The integration of English Literature and language teaching will stimulate creativity which is a basic tool to learn language to its brim.

Keywords: *Integration, Language, Literature.*





Literature is the art of discovering something extraordinary about ordinary people, and saying with ordinary words something extraordinary – Boris Pasternak

Literature is something that elevates one's personality and gives entirely a different perception about ordinary things. And this perception is enhancing English competency. Literature helps to attain language through imitation. When an English language learner reads literary texts, he will get words and formation of sentences without any conscious effort.

There is no one who can tell that he/she lacks taste in literature. Literature carries a lot of qualities, and it is perfectly ornamented with Language. Great writers of literature have the tendency to play with their language. Each one is identified with his/her language. And the language they use is remarkable. The figures of speech are carefully dealt in the language of literature. The creativity of the writers with the blend of successful word usage and careful manifestation of feelings add beauty to literature. The aesthetic exuberance is expressed with metaphor, personification and vocabulary. When someone is able to appreciate the quality of literature, he/she will automatically find pleasure in enhancing competence in language.

Literature and English language are related to each other. Language is the source for all the successful presentation of literary writers. The works of literature get their perfection with carefully carved words. The undeniable fact is that the beauty of literature lies in the versatility of language.

The closeness with literary language takes one to experience variety of expressions. The nuances, beauty, literary wit in literature help students learn language. Rather learning language through dry exercises, one can learn language with all its nuances through literary texts. The most innate human experience can be attained through careful understanding of literature. It will help learners to communicate without losing the emotive aspects. The symbolic and metaphorical representations in literature help students achieve better competency in language. Literature is the most powerful transformative and it gives an effective transformation to the language learner.

Literature will help learners recover from the influence of their mother tongue. The richness of English language is powerfully shown through artistic works of literature. And the bliss of literature lies in the versatility of English language. Thus, no one can deny the truth that literature enhances English language competency. ELT classroom can fulfill its goal with the artistic handling of literary subjects. The critical and aesthetic response through language is stimulated through literary genres. Literature helps for perfect transportation towards language.

Words, phrases, and sentences are enhanced through communication with literature. Language is the thought and literature is the heart. Anyone who wishes to enhance their language ability may create a deep understanding with literature. The Oxford Concise English Dictionary defines literature as "written works, especially those whose value lies in beauty of language or in emotional effect." Literature portrays ideas, thoughts and feelings. The aesthetic values in literature will induce creativity and the words learned through blissful reading will stay in the memory. Anything that is artistic needs no careful attention and hence language learnt or acquired through interest will never decay and they could easily be grabbed at the time they are needed.

Literature will help language learners to fix words contextually correct. Learning vocabulary is different from learning how to fix words contextually correct. And the latter one is very important. For instance 'A boy is jumping out of happiness' is less contextual than 'A boy is frisking'. Literature with all its creativity and aesthetic potentiality enhance learners' competence to fix words contextually correct. A person's ability in the selection of his words while speaking or writing will show his interest towards reading and listening. When he tries to speak and write it is very difficult for him to restrict some of the rare words which can apt the context. This production of language will show him an ardent aspirant towards literature. In this aspect language is, in no doubt, a tool of literature.

There is a mutual understanding between language and literature. Literature is depended on language and language is depended on literature. Language used in literature is different from language used in ordinary sense. Learners' understanding in



literature depends upon their capability in interpretation of language. Literary genres like drama, poetry, short stories will enhance language competence since they are creatively imbibed where words and sentences are unconsciously drawn. And this paves way to learn language without any conscious effort.

Macgregor (1970) stated: "It is in literature that the student is most likely to find words used memorably with force and point. It is there that he will find words used in their widest range of contexts, and there he will find words passionately or delicately conveying emotions; learn to see wholes greater than the sum of their parts."

Literature plays an active part in language acquisition. When a student enjoys a poem, along with the sense of the poem he learns poetic touch in the words and he unconsciously uses the words in the right context.

The materials gathered for literary texts are authentic and when authentic materials are used to teach language, language will be attained properly. The basic knowledge about vocabulary will get its standard through the authentic language used in literature. Literary language has real-life contexts too. The actual language usages in literature help the learners to develop their competency in English in the real-life experiences. A lot of connotations, phrasal verb, collocations and idioms can be properly taught through literature more than exercises.

The syntactic and semantic relationship can be learned and taught through literature effectively more than tiresome exercises. The productive skills of language learners will also be enhanced with these creative texts. The powerful thoughts of great literary writers have given beautiful renderings to literature. The readers of literary texts cannot escape from being influenced with all the phrases and words used by great writers. Economy, versatility, word usage, metaphorical representations, etc can be attained through literature. More than all these great interest which will be aroused by literature will enhance language competence.

Literature improves higher vocabulary. Literature has a lot of diverse elements which will introduce a lot of new words. Especially, while

reading poems many symbolic meanings of words can be determined. Language users will learn the ways to use symbolic words effectively. Idiomatic expressions can also be learnt. This not only helps for speaking but also for writing. A lover of literature cannot restrain himself using some new words which will show him a successful performer of language.

The ELT teacher can introduce some literary texts in the English classroom. With the careful reading of the texts students will acquire words along with the context. And those words are not ordinary usages but above. When students are asked to summarise what they read just then, words and sentences will automatically take an active participation in the actual summary. Whatever he learnt from the text will help him to finish his summary. His difficulties like taking halt while speaking and trying to fix sentences and words contextually will be solved.

Extensive reading in literature enhances,

- Pleasure in reading and understanding Language.
- Competence in using context specific words.
- Development in acquiring vocabulary and sentence formation.
- Creativity in language usage.
- Systematic ability for speech production.
- Personal interest for reading and language acquisition

Nunan (1989) pointed out that "The insight that communication was an integrated process rather than a set of discrete learning outcomes had created a dilemma for syllabus designers".

For better competence in language the better understanding with the subject is needed. This better understanding will enrich the competence and energise the language potentiality.

Students' exposure to literature will enhance their competency in communication. For somebody to be competent in a particular language he needs to be exposed to all the relevant studies about it and this is why students' exposure to Literature-in-English is very necessary to enhance their communicative competence in the English language.



Literature will enable knowledge to be expressive and to give better interpretation with better selection of words and sentence formation. The semantic and syntactic acquisitions are possible through reading something with heart. Literature has to be read with heart and emotive aspects could be felt and this tendency will enhance English competency. After reading a literary work one will express his views about what they just read with all the words and sentences they acquired unconsciously. Learning Word collocation is highly possible through literature. The genres of literature will develop all the four skills: Listening, reading Writing and speaking.

When a second language learner tries to write about a piece of literature which he read some years before, words and sentences along with the figures of speech he read in the text will help him to finish his works without any halts and struggles. And his writing will portray himself a person who is a voracious reader.

Language is an instrument which will help to communicate ideas and thoughts with emotive aspects. Literature is the soul of instrument. It will make the language teachers' task easier.

It is must to recognize the words of Sanusi:

'Language is used for phatic communion, that is, as a social regulator; for ceremonial purposes; as an instrument of action; to keep records; to convey orders and information; to influence people; to enable selfexpression; and to embody and enable thought.'

Every literary student must have felt the sense of forgetfulness during the literature classrooms. The emphatic elements we found in literature will take one to another world. Learning is taking place unconsciously here. This unconscious effort is the main tool to learn and acquire something without any strong effort. And when it comes with learning language through literature definitely the purpose will be attained.

Language competence must attain its performance. Performance is kindled by literary tools and aesthetic experience. Many literary works have created poets, critics and writers. A reader will be a writer as it is stated by Emerson in his 'Death of an

Author'. Writer or speaker everyone can enhance their language competency through literature.

English textbooks should value great writings from literature to build language competency for students in all the levels. A literary man has formulation of thoughts and a power to shape his intuition into the insight of word correspondence. In this way language will be learnt without any conscious effort.

Role play, creative-response, creative writing, etc can be handled by language teachers in the ELT classroom and the source for the practice can be drawn from literature. Creative ability is very important for language formulation. Literature will enhance this creativity and help to enrich language ability.

Language is more than sound production. The pragmatic element is very essential for the success in language competency. The soulful presentation of any art lies in deep meditation. When someone wants to convey something the pragmatic element should be carefully handled. Conceptual usage of words and sentence formation is essential to be a successful communicator. Literary genres help to experience pragmatic elements in the language.

When a student is asked to enact a literary writer or an artist he will immediately dive into the pool of creativity and disguise himself the mere person. In this way he can attain the mere language that is needed to portray him the artist. He carefully selects words of the original and uses that in the entire situation and through this he will master the language to its perfection.

Some interesting things of literature in ELT

- Students will learn about allusions and too many references of language along with its culture.
- Famous sayings and phrases can be learnt with their context
- Literary writing will enhance creativity which is essential for a language competence.
- The emphatic elements will give unconscious learning.
- Different learning and teaching techniques can be attained through literature.



- Students' observation in learning new words and phrases will help them attain language competency.
- Independent thinking and confidence will be energised through literature.
- Language learners will learn language with its background.

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