



## INTEGRATING LITERATURE INTO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CURRICULUM: ROLE OF FICTION IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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### Abstract

*Today's global village has assigned a serious responsibility on English teacher's shoulders to enhance the quality of English language skill in their learners. Nehru said, "English is the window of the world". Due to the development of modern means of communication, worldwide relations enlarged and English has become the medium for International communication and also contributed to the National development. In fact English language learners class is with multi-cultural and changeable in degrees of competence. Such classroom environment is lovely task for the teacher to pull up colossal effort from the learners. To augment the language skills teachers need to use advanced creative methods by using the real life related resources. Among integrating literature into English classroom is best advisable method; which gives the fruitful result by increase the English language teaching standards and learner's interest. Carter and Long (1991) said that "both literature and language teaching involves the development of a feeling for language of responses to 'texts' in the broadest sense of the word—in both written and spoken discourses" (pp. 2–3). The scope of Literature in the teaching and learning of English language is being forgotten. This paper discusses how the reading Literature enables the learner to experience the power of language outside the straight jacket of more standard written sentences structure and lexis and also how by using literary texts in classroom can help to deliver natural creative expressions.*

**Keywords:** Globalized, Technocratic, language teaching, Skills, Multi cultural, innovative, class room, colossal effort. broadest sense, scope of literature.

The advent of English as a global language, importance of learning English increased for many purposes. Not only development in Science and Technology hastens the learning of English but also the proficiency over the use of English in every walk of life is being demanded. As Nehru said, "English is the window of the world". Due to the development of modern means of communication, worldwide relations enlarged and English has become the medium for International communication and also contributed to the National development. Further English has become an international commodity, like oil and the microchip, without petrol and computers, the world cannot roll on. The English language has made the world a 'global village' and English language stopped to be the sole possession of one Community in the world.

As the curriculum is designed to teach English to impart language skills among the learners, the materials selected should focus on the communication aspects. The teacher is clearly and fully aware of the need of the learners whom they are attached to. Every student has diverse and different needs and ability in learning. So it is the indispensable duty of the teacher to handle the material as effectively as possible to reap the fruits.

### **I). Why to Introduce Literature in the ELT Classroom:**

Literary Fictional texts are English language skills hub, where learners have a wider scope of opportunities for experiencing multiple styles to express ideas in the classroom as well

as to receive certain inputs to enrich their grasping levels through texts supplementary sources like movies, audio-Text, Music CD's, Speeches, etc. According to Llach (2007), "Literature reading is, no doubt, a communicative activity and literary texts are, who could nowadays deny such thing, authentic examples of language use" (Teaching language through literature: The Waste Land in the ESL classroom. p. 9)

**II). Function of Fiction:** The main functions of the fiction are to entertaining the readers and audience and also educate and inspire them. It is like a mirror image of reflecting the realistic life through characters, way of manners, relevant events, weaknesses, flaws both in person and society. The fictions not only pointing out above of them and also gives appropriate solutions for depend on individual mind set. It also reveals an assortment of human emotions anger, dislike, hatred and affection without pointing any particular individual. For Example William Shakespeare's Hamlet is apt for the above explanation. The entire story moves mainly around Hamlet, Ghost of the dead father king Hamlet, Queen Gertrude, Hamlet uncle, who married his mother after killing his father. Real life setting is located in Denmark; events were also narrated as those were happened. It entertained Queen Elizabeth Audience.

### **III). Fiction as a Material Source for Learning English:**

Literature is the most effective tool to impart the language skills in the learners. Without Literature whether critical or creative let the case be, language cannot flourish. Reading and understanding the prose piece may be easier than poem. Since reading of poems may include a scholarly effort of deciphering and interpreting the complex language devices of figures of speeches, and also easier than reading a raw philosophical prose piece, which is boring. Even when we are in the age of the advancement of technology is prevailing. It may make the entry of students to their classroom change drastically. In all educational institution students said bye bye to text & note books and going to their classroom with laptop and pen drive in near bye future. But still stories mesmerize us. We are very much interested to listen to the stories. Our grannies the bed time stories to children. But we cannot subsume those raw bed time stories as a material for the English classroom, because it contains large amount of colloquial expressions and slangs; they should be modified and the slangs and colloquial expressions must be weeded out and refined with their equivalents to make it as an authentic material for the English classroom. Fictions imperatively foster the language skills by intuitively introducing the syntactic and semantic features to the learners. Vocabulary can be enriched; grammar learnt can be enriched through Literature, as the form of literature concretely gives as many examples as possible for the abstract rules and regulations of the grammar. So it works on the following ways:

**a). Increase LSRW Skills:** Fictional texts offers multiple linguistic inputs. As McRae said "Literary text are representational rather than referential". It would help the learner to enhance all four language skills. Because literature will extends linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, complex and syntax. It can often represent the prose style that can properly stand as best model.

**b). Acts as a Motivating Factor:** It is proved that the habit of reading books can open one's mind. It will turn up on dimension of your creative thinking. Clear understanding of various

authors' texts can be a greatest source of inspiration cum motivation to start up the career as a writer or to write at least our personal experience as a story; sometimes such habit inspires you to become director of the films. While reading especially biographies and auto-biographies like Australian Aboriginal writers text "Wild Cat Screaming", Tamil Dalit Woman writer Bhama's "Karukku" and Arundhati Roy's "God of Small Things" etc.

**c). Provide Cultural Knowledge:** It is a link towards culture which sustains the expression of any language there it makes the learning of language skills easy. For instance, the Fictions of Mulk Raj Anand gives the clear picture of Indian Landscape and the life of the people of India. Even in the Past and present day's fiction of the writers like Jashuava's -Gabbilam (Bat), Bhama's-Sangati, Arundhati Roy, Aravind Adiga, Chitra Benerjee Divakaruni, Anith Nair, and Anjana Appachana etc.. Portrays the social system of India and so it may be easy for the learners to learn the language through fictions.

**d). Encouragement:** Using Traditional teaching method to narrating story always boring. As a Language teacher need to adopt new methods and implementing them in the classroom always gives a positive vibrations to the learner; like the interactive storytelling method makes the involvement of the students to ask questions, take part in act out scenes, and also helps to build rapport and can increase engagement of the learner.

**e). Stimulating Imagination:** Irrespective of the age group the habit of reading stories would help great developmental benefits. Definitely it will help to explore the power of imagination, increase attentive listening skills ability, while listening to successful characters in stories automatically their mind start imagining the alternative similar story simultaneously. For instance, "Pride and Prejudice" is one of the most popular novels in English literature by Jane Austen. The entire story and character are made up narrative with human characters real life and setting too. Each part in this novel shows Jane Austen's imagination. After reading this kind of fiction, definitely the learners inspire him/her self to represent the issues or problem of the contemporary period through their imaginative characters.

**f). Expression of Own Ideas:** As Joan Didion said "I write entirely to find out what I am thinking. What I am looking at, what I see and what it means. What I want and what I fear". It is very very true. Human body filled every day with emotions, various opinions, ideas and full of thoughts by different circumstances or by reading popular fictional writers books. This state of mind needs a plat form all of them to get off from inside. The best form of expressing them is writing fictions. Students can get this way of thinking through Integrating Literature in language classroom.

**g). Creating Curiosity to Infer meaning:** The reading of literary texts creates lot of curiosity in readers to understand infer meaning of writer perceptions. Writers also write their perspectives and interpretations by using different literary devices. Among inference is one of the devices which are commonly used in literature. The major purpose of this device is to present the context effectively. Writers underlie their perceptions and arguments by using phrases. Through reading fictions the inference skills will be enhanced. Such abilities always generate curiosity in language learners. This will help the learners to enjoy the script by understanding the characters

more deeply and themes and figurative language. This strengthens the abilities of the learners academically and otherwise also by filling the gaps in understanding language. For an instance, Socrates is a man, and all men are mortals. Its logical form of inference is used to say that Socrates is mortal.

**h). Creating Critical Thinking:** To attain Constructive criticism good critical thinking skill is very essential. To develop such quality can be possible by reading fictions and mystery books. To compete in this competitive world every student must become master in two skills very urgently i.e. English language skills and Critical thinking skill. In this fast-changing world or for work place these two are considered as employability skills. To develop efficacy of critical thinking is possible through reading literature. Introducing literature into English language curriculum could help the learners to develop not only language proficiency and also good critical thinking by conducting discussion on theme, characters role, motives etc....

**i). Develop Learners Creativity and Innovation:** Creativity and Innovation are the two sides of the same coin, while creativity deals with the ability to think in different ways; innovation helps in putting the new ideas into practice. So fictions may guide some learner's creativity and Innovation through their reading of successful writers.

**j). Changing Negative Attitude in Language Learning:** Now a day's English is considered as very common language all over the world; when natives and Non-Natives are using it as spoken language. In most parts of the world people are using English like any other native language while listening, speaking, Reading and writing. To say directly English language has been playing a pivotal role and based on its services people are calling it as working Language at international level. But the attitude of the English language learners is completely different. The researcher's findings on EFL learners reveal that the educational factors made them panic. These conditions influencing learner interest due to it they are not able to acquire English language skills in the required manner.

It is already high time and situation is demanding to bring changes in methods of teaching English language to the students. Various factors turn affect for the development of such attitude in students; such as educational, social factors, learner's interest and other factors. As a teacher the educational factors can be changed by inventing innovative and creative teaching methods, introducing appropriate curriculum design, i.e. in syllabus if the fictional stories are introduced they feel like to listen way of expression by characters, motivating through character role, different words are used in various context, sentence formation and awareness of different types of lexical or discourse forms etc....could possible to observe also feel free to involve in learning EFL. Through literary fiction teacher can make the students take up the role play activities, word play fun games etc... all these methods gear up the interest in learners interest and pull down the panic attitude towards language learning.

In the literary critical theory too, there was a steep change in the twentieth century from authorial intention to the reception theory. When Ronald Barthes in his Essay, 'The Death of Author' questioned the place of author and authorial intention in analyzing a literary work of art, the theory of authorial intention disappeared. And the critics gave prominence to the reception

theories and placed the readers in the central position while analyzing a text. There is another shift in the critical tendency of the twentieth century from historical and sociological criticism that concentrated mostly on the extrinsic features of the text to the intrinsic features in the name structural analysis and deconstruction, thanks to the linguistic innovation and invention propounded by Noam Chomsky and others. The structural approach gained currency in the twentieth century after the publication of Ferdinand de Saussure's approach gained currency in the twentieth century after the influential work in the field of linguistics *A Course in General Linguistics* which was posthumously brought out in 1916. Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Lévi-Strauss and others manifested the theoretical view of structural analysis of the literary work of art. When critics like T.S. Eliot, Walter Pater and others concentrated on the with the language devices employed by the writers on the production of the literary text. The structural the production of the literary text. The structural school of criticism, according to Anne Jefferson "concerned with the general grammar of literature which will only partially be visible in any work" (Qtd. Sethuraman 23) Structural analysis of the fictions may largely help the learners to comprehend the linguistic devices like Morphology, semantics and syntax of the English language and the careful and skillful use of a prose piece like fiction also concentrates on the aspect of phonology. The rest of the section of this study explains about how to do things with fictions in the English classroom for the communication skills for which English language is studied.

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#### **IV. Fictional Text:**

Meena is waiting for Shiv in her small room, lying in the bed reading. Already this has become her room. What used to be Shiv's study table is now covered with her things: books, magazines news papers, clothes, a hair brush, an alarm clock. The ceiling fan hums furiously.

Meena is transparently pleased to see him; Shiv finds something touching about this. Whatever she thinks feels is there on Meena's face, not just faithfully mirrored, but multiplied in intensity--- as if her face has captured the potent essence of very passing emotion. Kamala has given Meena lunch and been to check on cast is itchy; and she feels dirty, she wants a proper bath.

Shiv switches on a cooler; it was drained of water months back. There is blast of warm air, and then the cooler settles down a deep bass drone, harmonizing with the ceiling fan.

He pulls the crutches out of the plastic bag and Meena tries them out. They are too tall for her. He fiddles with the screws and adjusts them so they are just the right height. Shiv is amazed by his success; theirs to call an electrician to change a light bulb.

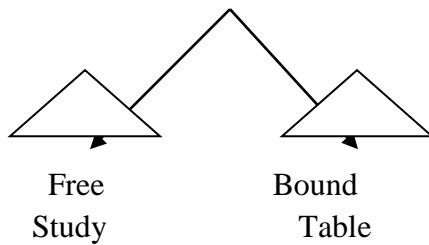
Meena I like a child with several new toys--- first the crutches then the tube like plastic bag the crutches came in, perfect, she says to cover the cast when bathing; and most of all, the chocolate-chip ice cream. The Shiv tells her he has applied leave, and that he will be at home to look after her.

The spoon that has been moving regularly between the bowl of ice cream and her mouth pauses. She looks up into his face through a long unruly curl that hangs over one eye. Even Meena's face, he sees is capable of keeping a secret or two. But her look, though it is a playful guardian too Meena, his yet to be discovered ward, at least for a few weeks. (Adapted from Githa Hariharan)

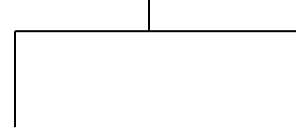
**V).Vocabulary Items:** Word power determines the language usage ability of a person. The more words you know faster you can speak or write, so it is necessary for the second language learners to know more words. The words in the prose piece can be taken out and graded and taught in terms of the phonological aspects, and morphological aspects as the learners require. In the text there are compound words, words which have two or more free morphemes brought together with or without a hyphen like 'study table', 'plastic bag', 'ceiling fan' and so on. Also there are many complex words; words that have a free morpheme and two or more bound morphemes like 'clothes', 'magazines' and so on. The morphological analysis shows as follows.

**Compound words**

Study Table

**Complex words**

Magazines

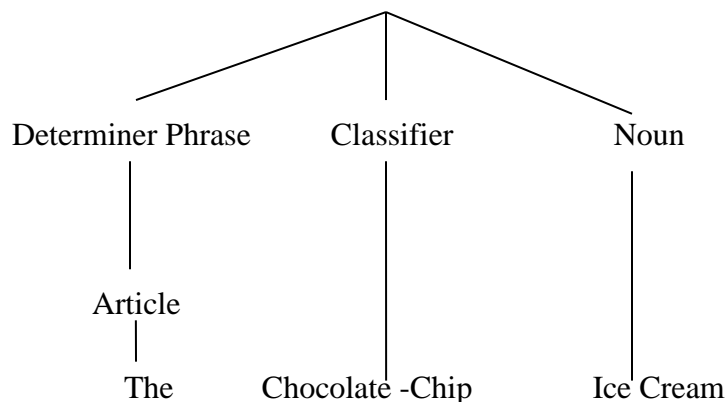


Magazine -s Plural Morphemes

Likewise there many complex and compound words that can be diagrammatically taught to the ESL learners. In the same way teacher can teach the analysis of the noun phrase and verb phrase. For instance text has a noun phrase for collocation is the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing. In simple terms it can be defined as “conventional word combination” (Swan243). For instance, we use that phrase in our normal speech, ‘strong tea’ and ‘heavy wind’. It is not normal to say as ‘strong wing’ and ‘heavy tea’. So the non – native learner who studies English as second language has to take efforts to learn the right collocation to attain the mastery level of the use of English language. The passage selected has a collocation, ‘warm air’. The teacher has to teach what the collocation is, and he has to compile the correct collocation like the word, ‘air’ collocates with adjective ‘hot’, ‘chill’, ‘crisp’, ‘cold’, ‘clear’, ‘clean’, ‘fresh’ and ‘pure’. The teaching fiction is the right way of learning collocations.

We can meticulously compile the words having prefix and suffix and analyses the structure of the words concerned form the study of the prose piece like fiction. For the primary level of the learners we can start the practice form listing out the words and then they can be arranged in groups and give drill in practicing the word concerned so as to reach the maximum exposure of vocabulary, sine vocabulary consists of the important part in our speech. For instance the text has a noun Phrase, The chocolate chip ice cream that can be diagrammatically be shown as fallows.

The Chocolate – Chip Ice Cream



## VI). Conclusion:

The present study focuses on teaching and learning language through literature. Reading literature is entirely different from studying literature; for the purpose of learning language we study literature rather than read it. Turker (1991) says, "A literary piece is not an end itself but a means of beginning a creative process in the minds and emotions of the students" (p. 303). The method suggested above can be used with other forms of literature. However it should be remembered that any kind of discussion of a work is subjected to its characteristics, for each general of literature is unique and therefore demands varied treatment.

The main points discussed in this study are that literature should not be excluded from learning a language. A meaningful programme in English literature fosters the development of comprehension ability at the primary level and when guided properly by the teacher it helps the learners to attain all the linguistic skills required for the learner to communicate effectively in a country like India where people are varied as far as the language is concerned. The material so selected should be carefully dealt with. As the fiction we selected for the purpose of importing language skill may contain colloquial expression. And that colloquialism must be refined and the material should be graded; the students can positively attain the skills.

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