

IS LITERATURE DYING IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS IN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITIES?

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Abstract

There has been a shift in the curriculum and mandated English textbooks at most of the technical institutions toward a more reference-based and information-based approach. With each new curriculum, literature appears to have faded into obscurity because of a lack of literary substance and a preference for a need-based learning of language. When the emphasis is only on LSRW Skills to improve students' employability, literature looks superfluous, unnecessary, and out of date. Emotional reactions to literature are lost somewhere along the way. With an eye toward determining why it's so hard to get people to respond in a "literary" way, this study proposes ways to enhance non-literary texts by including brief literary extracts that help readers get a deeper knowledge of life, people, and circumstances. Teaching English as a second language by means of literature allows students to get a deeper understanding of the language, their own personal and social experiences, and the culture and history of their own country. literature provides possibilities for multi-sensory classroom experiences and encourages students to think critically and creatively, as well as eliciting a wide range of responses from the students. As students, professors, and industry professionals complete surveys and provide their input, this concept is solidified in their minds.

Key Words: Emotional reactions, sympathetic heights, and a declining literary substance are all examples of this.

Introduction

Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become (C S Lewis)

All professors would want to believe that the current curriculum and required texts in most engineering institutions fail to bring out the literary

sensibility of teachers and students. The literary content of each new curriculum seems to be decreasing, and learners are being pushed toward a need-based learning of language. While these are necessary abilities that help students stand out in the job market, the discussion and recognition of students' emotional reactions to literature has been lost along the way.

Few literary passages are included in professional college English textbooks, so students are expected to answer in a matter-of-fact way. In spite of the teacher's best efforts, few students are able to produce 'literary' reactions to literature — psychological, social, and emotional responses are sorely missing. A lack of appreciation for or understanding of literature may be attributed to a variety of factors, including poor reading habits or even a lack of exposure to literature.

Literacy began to decline in importance as language education and instruction began to emphasise the practical use of language instead. Today's students, particularly those in engineering schools, are more concerned than ever before with developing language abilities that will be useful in the workplace and on standardised testing such as placement examinations. In such a situation, literature seems to be superfluous, unnecessary, and antiquated. Teachers of English are now referred to as "language trainers," whose primary goal is to educate pupils employability skills and prepare them for the workforce. This is why group discussion strategies, presentation skills, resume writing, interview skills, report writing, and so on are so heavily emphasised in language laboratories. These subjects are taught with the goal of helping students get a job in the near future, which is one of the most important factors in determining their success. So, in a setting like this, how can literature fit in? A need-based curriculum may not have room for it. Is it possible to instil a love of literature in kids who have never read a book by Enid Blyton or Hans Christian Andersen as children? It is possible that this short-term crash course in their English Language Communication Skills or Advanced English Communication Skills lab might lead to long-term proficiency in the language..

Discussion

To help students learn proper grammar, vocabulary, and LSRW abilities,

the three JNTUH English textbooks have included several language activities. However, the 'human interest' that literature may bring is lacking. It is possible that a short story by O. Henry or Somerset Maugham, a poem by Tennyson or Keats, a prose piece by Charles Lamb or Francis Bacon would have filled this gap, sparked discussion, and helped students relate to situations, recognise characters' emotions, and comprehend universal human emotions, even in a foreign cultural setting. Only factual and cut-and-dried texts are now read by kids, with little room for creative and literary creativity, which is a major problem. 'The Tea Party' from The Householder by Ruth Praver Jhabvala is the sole literary piece in the three textbooks indicated above that allows space for improving vocabulary, reading between the lines and recognising subtle comedy and soft sarcasm. While the letter written by a son to his father, which criticises the Indian education system for lacking practical exposure, does resonate with students who can identify with it, it does not elicit the same literary or aesthetic responses as a letter from Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* or Jane Austen's *Persuasion*.

The passage "Satya Nadella's e-mail to his employees" from the textbook, *Fluency in English* given by JNTUH, is a good place to start (R 16). Students' reactions to the material have been mostly negative, with many expressing disappointment that only Microsoft staff are being 'motivated' by it. The *Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost is utilised as a reading practise in the same section. For kids, the topic of being at a crossroads in life, experiencing conflicting feelings, and finally making choices and the consequences they involve is universally relatable. Students are deprived of feeling the emotions, empathising with the narrator, and instinctively apprehending the scenario in the first text, which serves the aim of language learning. There's nothing like teaching something tough and

open to several interpretations, something that may open pupils' eyes and minds to a wide range of possibilities. As an example, Kalam's Presidential address from the same textbook appears predictable in content and offers little in the way of cultural challenge while Double Angels, a short Christmas story assigned to students for reading practice in the same chapter, offers plenty of opportunity for cultural curiosity, emotional appeal, and sensitization.

As a result, how can one add a literary depth to an otherwise dry text?

1. tough or exciting? To what extent should textbooks, which tend to focus on facts rather than feelings, handle the universal themes of love, war, and loss? There are many ways to make textbooks more engaging for students, but the representational aspect may be used to get them involved and stimulate their imaginations and cognitive capacities as well as assist them develop empathy and creativity. Students and teachers may find the article What Should You Be Eating in the JNTUH (R18) textbook quite matter-of-fact, but it can be enlivened by using related literary material such as Charles' Lamb's Dissertation Upon Roast Pig or a JAM Session on Fast Food Culture Among Youth. This can be done in a variety of ways. A Common Faults activity may be made fun by reading aloud a poem like Nissim Ezekiel's A Farewell Party to Ms Pushpa TS or A Very Indian Poem in Indian English, or by having students look for errors in English on signboards.

2. Teachers of English might ask themselves a few questions and keep a journal of their experiences while utilising literary and non-literary texts to teach the language. According to a survey of English instructors in Hyderabad, the following questions were asked:

1. Use of both literary and non-literary texts: what have you learned?

2. How have students reacted to a piece of literature? It differs from a non-literary text in what ways?

3. Adding literary content to non-literary text has been shown to increase motivation levels.

4. If you're looking to improve your language abilities, what do you think is the best way to go about it?

5. When teaching literature, how can you include all four of these skills?

6. What are the problems in teaching a literary work in terms of semantic, syntactical, and cultural aspects? Is the text more fascinating and difficult because of these?

7. How can you guide pupils toward an intuitive knowledge of people, events, and so on, and help them sense the subtleties and complexity in their depiction? "

8. The following is how the educators responded:

9. One of the reasons they favoured literature was that it provides a more intuitive knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and syntax via its use of analogies. With regard to language instruction, if the teacher was given a set of guidelines, they had to work within those guidelines, which they found enjoyable. When it came to reading modern literary works, students found it simpler to relate to them than older works.

10. There has been a paradigm shift from literary texts to a fast-track course in language competency among students today. Due to linguistic or cultural barriers, students who come from non-literate backgrounds find it difficult to enjoy literature.

11. Teachers believed that by incorporating literature that is relevant to the textbook topic, they might increase motivation and spark interest in their students.

A scientific work, for example, may be used to help students acquire

technical language or to improve their writing skills. Learning language via literature may be done through an intuitive rather than prescriptive approach.

It is possible to better combine LSRW skills via literary works. Figures of speech, rhetoric, paralinguistic elements, vocabulary, sentence patterns, and more may all be found in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. Non-literary texts may also be used to produce the same effect, although the motivation and interest may be lower.

12. Cultural or language barriers may make the text more difficult to understand. It's possible that a poetry will turn out to be a dictionary at some point. The instructor must assist pupils in overcoming these hurdles and developing an empathy for the job.

In technical universities, texts recommended do not allow much possibility for comprehending subtleties in personalities or circumstances. However, this may be accomplished by supplementing literary works that provide this kind of opportunity.

It was also taken into account how students reacted to learning a language via literary and nonliterary sources. Questions included: 1. What do you think is more interesting in an English classroom: a short tale or an academic essay?

Poems may either make you 'feel' something, or they might turn you off to it.

Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, Grammar, or Writing, which of these is your favourite?

Does a short story/poem resonate with you on a personal level?

How well are you able to relate to characters in fiction?

How important do you think it is to develop a love of reading early in life?

Responses from students are included below.

1. Students liked short tales over scientific essays because they piqued their attention and curiosity, and they were able to connect to them more. However, they also noted that the two may be connected.

Poems were more relevant to students in all of their emotions, whether they were unhappy, joyful, or in conflict, according to the students. One should not be critical of poetry since it represents the poet's feelings and allows the reader to experience them, they said.

Learning new terms was fun for students, and writing allowed them the opportunity to express their ideas without restriction.

As they were able to 'universalize' their feelings by connecting to a tale or poetry, it resulted in a Cathartic effect.

One of them even remarked, "I am them in my brain."

It is much easier to appreciate and comprehend literary works if you have read a lot as a child. It aided in the development of more well-rounded individuals capable of contributing to society.

The question of whether or not literature is necessary for language instruction has been a raging one for decades. Can't we take snippets from economics, history, or science to achieve the same thing?? Is there any text that will do the job? It all depends on how one sees the text—as a challenging work that requires students to develop their comprehension, analytical, and language skills, or as a literary work that enables students to gain a deeper understanding of life, people, and situations and inspires them to reach higher levels of empathy.

The content and language of a book may be used to enhance one's life and one's ability to learn a language. Learning

a new language with the help of literature may accomplish both of these goals. It allows you to improve your vocabulary and grammar while also learning more about yourself, other people, and the culture and history of the country you're from. It's a rewarding experience to study literature, since it may lead to the creation of new ideas and ethical viewpoints. There is something honest and engaging about literary works of all lengths, whether they be little poems, short stories, epics, or novels.

improves one's ability to communicate in a foreign language, while also serving as an example for students to follow. Literature, according to Carter and Long (1991), serves a three-dimensional role in a classroom setting. As a cultural paradigm, where the literary work is seen as a product, it may be used in classrooms. An examination of a text's social, political and historical context may be done using this method. Literary trends and genres can also be examined. This is a teacher-centered approach, not one that emphasises language learning.

ii. Learner-centered language model — This method emphasises both the learning of grammar and vocabulary and the examination of stylistics.

Personal development model—iii This is a more student-centered approach that emphasises the importance of the process. Literature may have a profound effect on individuals because of its ability to elicit strong sensations and thoughts in its readers.

These are the three models that English instructors use in their lessons. Unlike literature courses, where the cultural model is more prevalent, language classes are more likely to utilise a language model to teach grammar or vocabulary. When the learning objective is literary instruction rather than language instruction, the personal development paradigm comes into play.

Conclusion

Students are able to 'experience' literature rather than just read it since it is made up of actual stuff. It is possible to breathe life into one's vocabulary, grammar, and syntax. For this reason, literature is more powerful and transformational than any other medium. According to those who have studied human emotion and cognition, literature may play a key role in helping society better comprehend the lives and minds of individuals. Because of this, Mikaela Warner explains, "I study literature because I feel there is power in tales. Literature is both a solitary experience and a shared one. Because of its complexity, understanding and describing humanity would take an unlimited number of words. That's the fun of literary studies: there's always something fresh to learn." The act of immersing oneself in a fictional universe aids in the development of empathy and the capacity to see things from another person's perspective. Using literature as a teaching tool helps students develop critical and aesthetic reactions, as well as an understanding of current values. A student's life is enriched by literature, which helps them develop a variety of perspectives on life, a deeper understanding of oneself and others, and a sense of belonging to a larger community of human emotions, experiences, and issues. Understanding various cultures, being aware of differences, and cultivating an attitude of tolerance and understanding are all things that may be accomplished using this method. Creative and critical thinking abilities are cultivated, as well as a willingness to examine oneself and one's assumptions. "Multi-sensorial classroom experiences" (Rahayu 2011) and appeal to learners with varied learning styles may be found in literature as a source of learner motivation. One of the best ways to improve one's grammar and linguistic abilities is to use this resource.

the grammar and language of an argument. You don't need any formal

training to pick up these talents; they may be learned on your own by reading a lot.

An English teacher may have to follow the prescribed curriculum and adhere to the prescribed content in textbooks, but in an English classroom, the teacher can bring in a literary feel by augmenting a non-literary text with a literary one, by infusing a literary dimension to the text, and thus making it an invaluable motivational resource and an effective stimulus for language learning.

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