

Using Literature in Teaching English as a Second Language: A Case Study of Arda College

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ABSTRACT

English language teaching is becoming more popular throughout the world since English language got the place of a global language. Teaching English as a second language would be more interesting and easy if it is taught through the local colors of understanding. Literature is the best source to make language learning easy and fascinating. For the beginners of English language learner, there are large numbers of stories which can be taught in classrooms. Short stories, specifically children stories, short poems and novellas can be good source to arise interest among learners. Literary texts provide chance to come across different type of emotions, expressions and sentence structures. Literary language enables learners to differentiate between formal and informal language. Literary text can be taught through audios or by showing movies based on literary work with English subtitles which not only will improve their pronunciation and but also will help to improve their listening for English language. Reading literary text during language learning builds a rich vocabulary for a new learner.

Learning language through literature also help the learner to know other cultures very closely, because literature of different languages provide with the platform of various cultural values, rules and regulations, and prepare the mind of readers to accept the differences between cultures and respect the values of others.

This research will help the teachers and students as well which would be mainly focused over the students of English department only. This is an objective research; a survey among the students would be done by the researcher itself, in which short text of different genres of literature would be given to be taught during language learning classes. The data of the research would be calculated by SPSS.

KEYWORDS: English, Language, Literature, Culture, Learning, English as Second Language, Saudi Arabia

INTRODUCTION

Second language learning can be made easy and enthusiastic by adding some creative things in it as study material is the most important thing which teachers are supposed to prepare before entering the classrooms. It is very challenging job to select the study material for the beginners, so that it can make the learning process easier and confident. As this research is centered on literature, as a source of learning English language, a major part of discussion will be focused on different genres of literature. Reading, writing listening are the basic skill to learn English, all these skills can be learned and understand by the use of literature. Literature of a particular language has always had a cultural affect on it, while cultural knowledge and social understanding are not the things which can be avoided during language learning. Literature of a particular language can be studied for many purposes in which cultural knowledge comes on the top which provides a lot of knowledge to the learner of that particular language. Studying literature during language learning also helps the students to enhance their creative thinking skill.

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Background of the Research:

It is seen that there is a fashion nowadays to learn English and most of the students from non English countries are heading toward English speaking countries to learn the language thoroughly by being in the touch of native speakers. This paper emphasizes on including literature in language learning courses so that English language learners can understand the language from the prospective of their native speaker instead of learning the basic dialogues added in the curriculum. In this competitive age of education it comes on the institution to design a course which can give a comprehensive knowledge to the students.

Statement of problem:

Learning a second language through books leaves a empty place in understanding the language acutely until and unless learner is unaware about the culture, tradition, and historical background of the people of that particular language. Although movies, music, and social media now a day's fulfilling this emptiness profoundly yet in classrooms its difficult and inappropriate to play movies specially in language learning classes, so now the question arises how a

language learning class can provide a complete or absolute knowledge to the learner. In this paper the responsibilities of teachers and institution will be discussed in this regard.

Objective of the study

The research aims at:

1. Opening up new platforms in learning English as a second language.
2. Developing interest in literature in learning the trend of different traditional cultures of others inside and outside the classrooms.

Questions of the study

To meet the foregoing stated objectives the following research questions are raised:

1. How can Literature be a rich source of learning English as a second language?
2. Are the students and teachers of Jizan University aware of the importance of the different literary genres which can be taught in classrooms?

Research Methodology:

Participants

The participants sample selected for this study consisted of students at Jizan University the purposive population of the study consisted exclusively of students of translation. The study is done among *Sixty* undergraduate students at Jizan University in Jazan. They are selected randomly for this research.

Instrument

The current study used one tool which was questionnaires. *Sixty* questionnaires were taken for assessment, which was suitable for eliciting suitable response.

Procedures

Permission to undertake the study was first obtained from the dean of the college. The teachers on their parts informed the students about the study and asked for their consent and clarified that their participation would not affect their academic grades. After obtaining students consent questionnaires were administered in a group with proper instructions and no specific time was assigned for it.

Literature Review:

The most important thing about selecting the literary genre for the students is to check the level of understanding of the students, if the students are inspired by themselves the it goes easy on teacher to select a material which can motivate them to learn the language more curiously and happily. It's the responsibility of a teacher to give cultural knowledge to the students, otherwise unknowingly people do big mistakes while applying their own culture on others. Katherine, an American citizen, share her experience of Seoul Korea, when she as a teacher went to class and addressed to students. She says she was amazed by the questions asked to her about her age, her marital status and so on she says "I was amazed by their question.....how old are you??? Are you married??? Why are you not married??? Why did you come to Korea??? I was really shocked and overwhelmed after some days I realized there must be some cultural rule both of us are missing." (tapestry 3...Karen Calisi and Susana christie). It is very important to know the cultural concepts for new language learning. Although consideration of lexical, syntactical, structure and discourse analysis are more important points

to be learned yet material for learning can not be ignored or avoided.

Literature used in EFL and ESL classrooms has had several positive effects in many fields. It is seen that people who are fond of reading fiction grasp more command on language than the people who study English as a language. Fiction helps to enhance the knowledge of diverse sentence constructions, diction, and also passive narrations. Readers of fiction go across to real life conversational sentences which sharpens their wit in argumentative language. Since the fictional world of writing still dominated by English speaking people or the people who find English in their family as a native or first language, so there are less chances to have inaccurate construction of sentences. Generally it is seen that something which seems very serious to make the people understand can be easily explained by the medium of a provided situations or by creating a scene where speakers are made to speak the dialogue in such a form that reader starts thinking in the same point of view. Literature is always rich with personal narratives based on first or second hand experiences, this type of literature must have grasp the reader's attention as a theory *Reader Response Theory* advocates the response which is given by readers by reading such type of texts. Reader response theory is all about reader's reaction after reading a text. All the specific text, read in novels or in a literary work generally seen to be compared by the readers with their own life experiences. Reader's response theory can be used by teachers to offer new ideas in class rooms, from elementary level to the higher education. Literature not only helps to improve the reading writing and speaking skills but also provides with the cultural knowledge because every language is associated with its culture.

Literary texts are always full of emotions, compassion, mercy and some other negative thinking. Every literary work has its own purpose of writing and shows the consequences of good and bad simultaneously, so reading a cutting of a newspaper and reading an interesting story of literary text makes different atmosphere in classrooms. Like this literature produces good source and context to organize these activities. Generally, language learning only provides with the overview of a particular language while, literary stories brushes up the insight and critical thinking of their readers. This is the responsibilities of class room teachers to teach language as a social fact where cultural knowledge is a basic thing to understand. If teachers apply this technique of teaching a language then this will be helpful to arrange an actual performance of communicative language by the learners. When nonnative speakers of English learn English language in this literary based classrooms, they find social and historical approach of the language which becomes fruitful while students turn their attention in to the field of writing, it helps them to create an imaginative world but based on the real culture and context of that related country.

Data Analysis:

Result and discussion of finding:

The analysis of the questionnaire *Figure 1* presents that 70% of the students among 45 participants who answer the questionnaire were positive that literature can help to learn language more easily and enthusiastically, while 30% of the participant were negative about it, they preferred to study language in a traditional manner.

Figure1:

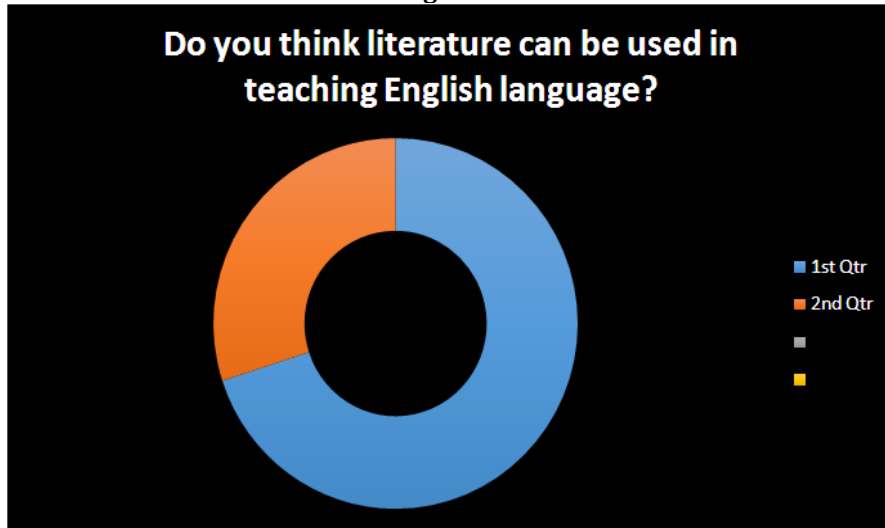
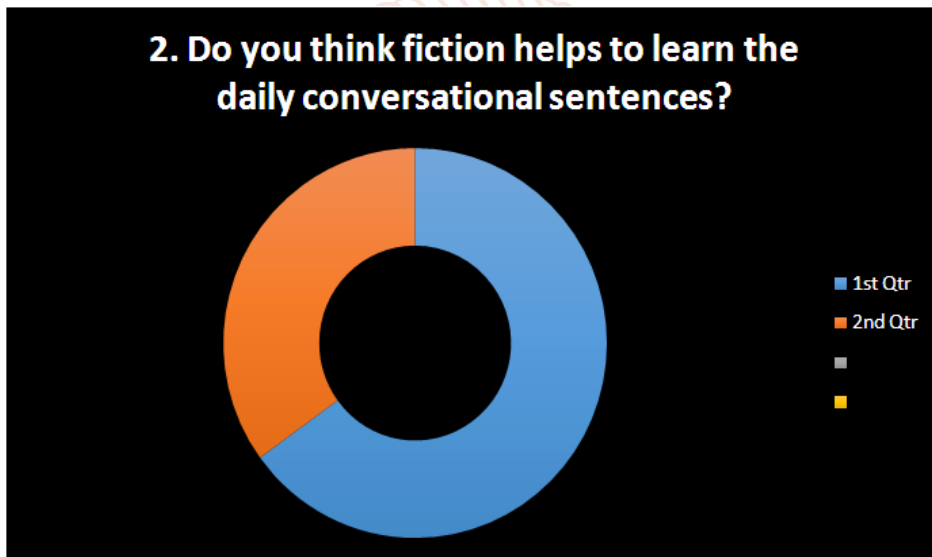


Figure2:

1. The analysis of the questionnaire *Figure 2* presents that 65% of the students among 45 participants who answer the questionnaire were agreed Do you think fiction helps to learn the daily conversational sentences? while 35 % of the participant were negative about this.



3: The analysis of the questionnaire *Figure 3* presents that 51% of the students among 45 participants who answer the questionnaire were agreed that movies play important role in learning English as a second language, while 49% of the participant were negative about this.

Figure3

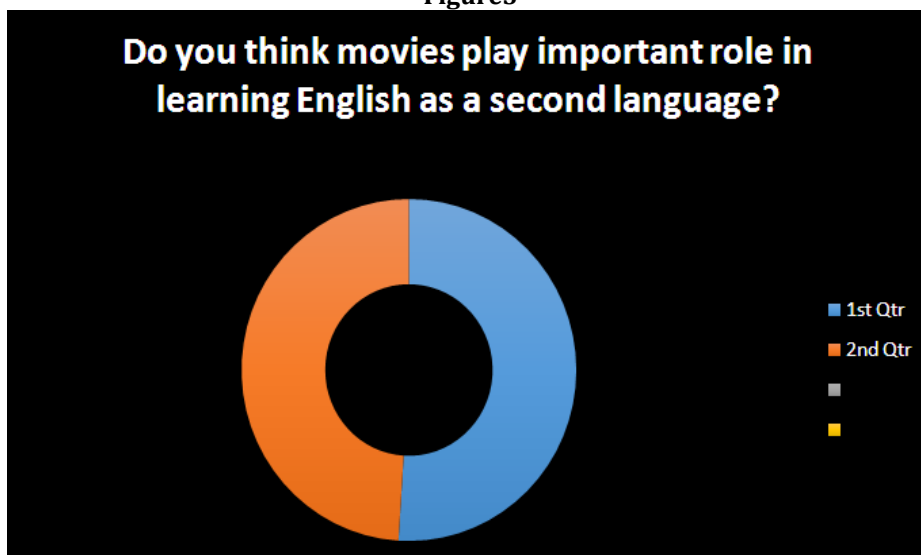


Figure 4:

2. Figure four presents the analysis of the question four in which they were asked “**Is reading prose; such as novels, short stories and essays are a good source to improve writing skill?**”. Students found this question different, 45% of the students among 45 participants who answer the questionnaire were agreed that **reading prose; such as novels, short stories and essays are a good source to improve writing skill**, while 20% of the participant were negative about this, and rest 35% of students were uninterested to give the answer.

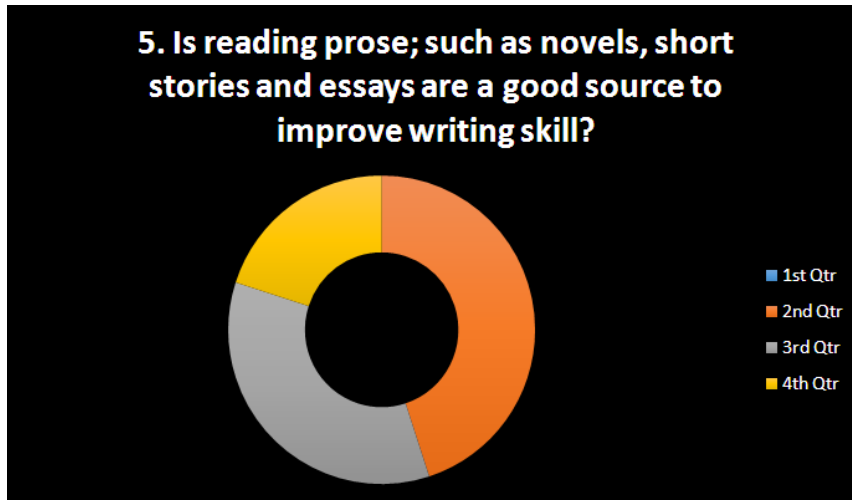


Figure 5:

Figure 5 presents the analysis of the question five in which they were asked “*Do you like culturally diversified class rooms*”. Students found this question uninteresting, 35% of the students among 45 participants who answer the questionnaire were interested to study in a culturally diversified classroom, while 10% of the participant were negative, they wanted to study with their nationals only, and rest 55% of students were uninterested to give the answer.

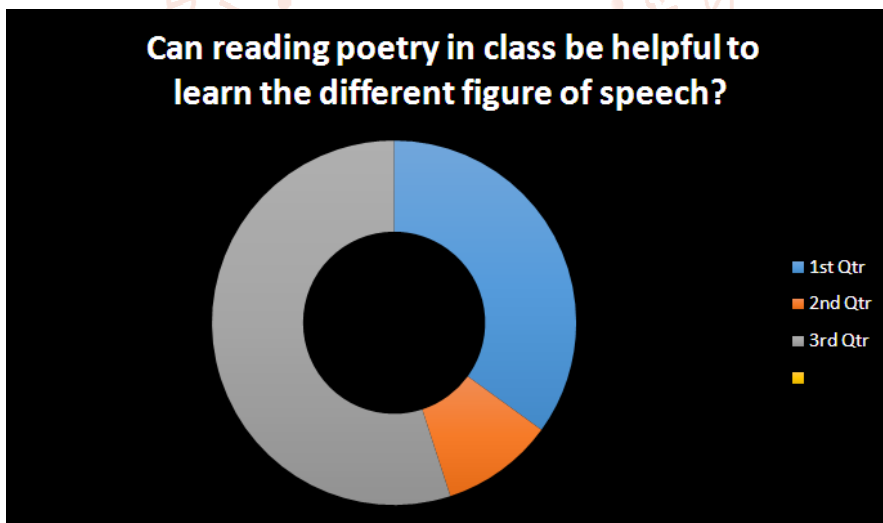


Figure 6:

3. Figure 6 presents that 82% were positive when they were asked “Do you want a class where teachers use literary text in teaching English language? they were interested to learn English language with the help of English literature, while 18% of the participant were negative or ignorant about the using of literature in ESL class rooms

Conclusion:

English language has taken place of being the first global language so cultural knowledge of English language becomes an essential part of learning. Many theories of learning can be applied in classrooms to fulfill this purpose of teaching literary text in ESL classrooms reader response theory plays an important role in learning. Although reader-response theory is a developing field of literary studies but it's very useful to assess about our own reading style. Through reader response theory a classroom teacher can make number of activities to be conducted classrooms. A literary text can be given to the students to read aloud and then every student can be asked to explain the text in their own words, this

process will not only open the way of writing style yet by reading aloud text, students would improve their reading skill and also by repetition of the same reading in a lecture they will learn the style of that particular author. By rewriting the text, students would be able to relate their own experience with that specific text which will open the way of new ideas and new ways of writing style. This job can be done by a group of the students in which every group will discuss and edit the text four or five times before coming to the teacher; as a result a good writing style can be expected from the students. Generally, course material provided in language learning lacks passion, enjoyment, intellectual and critical thinking.

Major findings of the research

To summarize, it can be mentioned that using literature in teaching English language is a good thing for all the students for upcoming days when all world is getting smaller because of the technological developments, and cultural knowledge of each other is becoming demand of the day, while going to that country for educational or job purposes. It can be proved a good source to familiarize plurality in the mind of the learner if it is applied in early stage of learning language.

Suggestions and Recommendations:

Present research suggests that language learning can be made more interesting and enthusiastic by using literary work as a source and side material of teaching. Different genres of literature play different role in understanding the language: for example poetry can be used while teaching figure of speech, and essays written by Bacon and steel can be used while teaching essay writing to the students. A conversational language of a drama can be useful while teaching basic communication in English language.

Recommendations for further research

This research recommends that students and teachers both should try to get benefit of literary use to understand and to make understand the perspective of each other in a friendly environment of classrooms. Teacher is the most important and inevitable part to develop the positive attitude among the students, so it's the responsibility of the teachers to be more attentive while dealing with the student of distinct cultures and groups. Teachers should check the material of study before entering into the classrooms. Using literature in English classrooms can be helpful to learn:

- How to build relationship and fraternity with the culture and context of new language.
- How to deal with the topics of cultural issues.
- How to develop the critical thinking skill among the students.
- Be open minded to cultural discussions.
- Listen to students patiently and let them use conversational language of text inside the classroom.

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Internet Links:

- [1] <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural> (11-1-17)
- [2] *A Critical Examination of Anti-Racist Education* (12-1-17)
- [3] <http://www.ihep.org/programs/the-alliance.cfm> (3-2-17)
- [4] <http://www.myacpa.org/sc/scma/>(11-1-17)
- [5] <http://www.ijme-journal.org> (2-2-17)
- [6] <http://www.kame.or.kr>(11-1-17)