

The Use of English Literature with Small 'I' in the EFL Language Classroom

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I. Introduction

According to Frye(1964), it has been believed that literature educates the feelings and the imagination of people. The research of the use of

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literature has been increasingly growing. As Collie and Slater(1987) mentioned, there are many reasons of using literature in the classroom such as, its authenticity, and the understanding of other cultures, and so on. However, the instruction on how literature could be used for practical classroom teachers has not been investigated much. That is, since we have tended to focus more on classical literature texts in the language classroom, many students may find it very difficult to understand. McRae(1991) here suggests that materials for language classroom do not need to be limited to these texts if they can motivate language learners.

The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to present what McRae means 'Literature with a small 'l'', and the paper largely consists of three main parts of the discussion. First, reasons for using literature shall be discussed in general. Discussion will then move on to what McRae means by 'Literature with a small 'l'', and some representational materials shall be explained. The second major discussion concerns general principles for the classroom activities and criteria for selecting texts shall be mentioned. The last section illustrates how 'representational materials' can be used in the classroom.

II. Reasons for using literature in the language classroom

Collie and Slater(1987) mention some important reasons for using literature in the classroom. First, literature offers valuable authentic materials which are enduring rather than ephemeral. Recent course

materials tend to include many 'authentic' samples of language materials such as pamphlets, cartoons, and advertisements. Learners need to be exposed to language which is genuine and undistorted as can be managed in the classroom context. Second, literature helps learners to understand the way of life of different countries, so readers can discover other people's cultures, thoughts, feeling and customs. Third, students can be exposed to many functions of the written language. Language enrichment is one benefit often sought through literature. Students can be familiarized with the variety of possible structures, and the different ways of connecting ideas. Fourth, literature can be helpful in language learning process because of the personal involvement it fosters in readers. Involving with literature makes learners to focus on their attention beyond the more mechanical respects of the foreign language.

III. Literature with a small 'l'

There is another question: what sort of literature is suitable for use with language learners? Collie and Slater(1987) mention that this totally depends on each particular group of students, their needs, interests, cultural background and language level. To motivate these factors, McRae(1991) suggests that texts are not necessarily limited to the traditional literature but can include authentic materials, which he calls 'Literature with a small 'l''. The following discussion moves on to what he means by this.

In the language teaching, referential materials tend to limit learners' imaginative involvement; on the other hand, representational materials stimulate the learners' imagination and they can bring imaginative interaction. Literature in language learning and teaching has tended to have a capital 'L'. McRae(1991) proposes to remove this institutionalizing capital 'L' and to show how literature can be used in a practical way in language teaching. Therefore, the term 'literature' used by Jean-Paul Sartre can be widely expanded to representational and ideational materials. McRae(1991) defines this as 'any text whose imaginative content will stimulate reactions and responses in the receiver', suggesting the use of representational and ideational materials in learning of referential uses of language.

He also distinguishes between referential and representational language. Referential language is almost limited to everyday real-life situation use, which is the basis of all second language learners. Whereas, representational language stimulates and uses areas of the mind, from imagination to emotion, from pleasure to pain, which referential language does not reach, where referential language informs, representational language involves.

This distinction can be applied to texts as materials in language learning. Although a text is generally defined as the actual words of a book, a poem, the original words of an author and any written material, in language teaching context, teachers may use a variety of materials if they stimulate more language production from students; examples include illustrations, sounds, songs, advertisements, puzzles and games. Using these kinds of representational texts in the classroom

could be the way of 'real' language teaching, which covers much wider range of discourses and communications than simply conveying information and a range of social skills like turn-taking, politeness strategies.

IV. Representational materials

1. Non-verbal materials

Representational materials can be divided into non-verbal and verbal materials. Words and texts are the basic tools in learning a language, nevertheless representational materials do not have to be verbal. Non-verbal communication, some visual or aural impact will provoke reactions and responses from the receiver. Similar to this in a classroom context, any visual material can influence imaginative collaboration between students and images. The aim of using representational materials in language learning, is to take the advantage of that contact, to develop and to exploit this imaginative collaboration, in words which will express feelings, emotions, judgements and which will reflect a degree of involvement with the images under discussion(McRae, 1991).

2. Verbal materials

Representational materials also include verbal materials such as, comics and cartoons, songs, advertisements. Here, verbal materials do not remain on the merely referential level, but there is a multiplicity of

purposes.

1) Songs

Songs can be very useful representational materials. McRae(1991:35) mentions that the valid reasons for using songs are 'familiarity, accessibility, memorability, the close links between sound and sense, rhythm and rhyme, melody and meaning, as well as simple enjoyable language practice'.

A song's lyrics can be a useful stimulus and an exploitable material for interpretation and discussion. For example, some songs contain a basic element of 'story' which can be used for comparison and contrast with other texts: some songs can cover drama, story-telling and creative writing; and others can be used for social or political discussion. The music itself can also enrich the discussion. For instance, how the music reflects they lyric, how the arrangement, and tone of voice and production. Another advantage using songs is that there are wide-ranging varieties, like dialect, colloquial, local expressions, which may be useful for second language learners.

2) Language practice materials

Many language practice materials may be too mechanical and repetitive but representational materials can contain the possibility of imaginative involvement. For example, the passage(Appendix 1-1) with wrong tenses makes correcting errors fun, while practising tenses. Students can be also asked to retell the story briefly in their own words. Using another text(Appendix 1-2), students can do 'what if'

exercises. For example, after reading the text, discuss 'what would have happened if... Barry had been richer?' or '.... Harold had been poorer?'. Students can be motivated by reading this kind of story and at the same time, they can practice grammar(McRae, 1991).

3) Comics and cartoons

Many teachers use comics and cartoons as the first imaginative materials they use, especially with younger and adolescent learners. However, when teachers use these, they should consider idiomatic use, cultural reference and vocabulary and it can date much more quickly than many other kinds of materials(ibid).

4) Advertisements

Advertisements also have an 'authorial' producer of the message. McRae(1991:37) mentions that 'they are useful in the way they use word-play, point of view, the receiver's affective suggestibility, and they help students to learn how to read and how to understand the propaganda of persuasion. It should examine what the advertisement is trying to do, who and what it is appealing to, whether the words are clear to L2 speakers(ibid).

5) One liners

'One liners' like very short quotations can stimulate class interest in a subject such as introducing a theme or even an author, or in provoking class discussion, like agreeing and disagreeing, interpreting and evaluating subject, etc.(ibid).

6) Proverbs

Teachers can introduce and discuss proverbs in relations to similar 'saying' in learners' mother languages. These could offer misreading which allows for a range of reactions and responses, in the context of L1 and L2 contrast.

7) Idioms

Idioms as a representational text can become a part of students' passive knowledge, students can use idioms depending on a given situation, and when they use it, it implies as advanced sensitivity to language uses, cultures and registers. Learners will gradually develop the familiarity with idioms and the regular use of representational materials will help this(ibid).

V. General principles for the activities

When a teacher decides the texts, the question is now how he or she need to present them based on general principles for the activities. Collie and Slater(1987) mention that to teach literature, teachers have to consider some activities which stimulate students' desire to read and to encourage their response. First, it is useful to use a variety of student-centered activities maintaining interest and involvement of learners. For example, role play, improvisation, creative writing, discussions, questionnaires, visuals and many other activities. Second, pair and group work are well established as means both of increasing learners'

confidence and also of personalizing their contact with it. Third, activities try to help students to acquire the confidence to develop, express and value their own response. Students become familiar with the text when they do a range of tasks and activities centered on a literary text. Fourth, it is better using the target language with the range of activities chosen during the class as much as possible. Lastly, the overall aim is integrate language and literature. Students can benefit from communicative and other activities for language improvement within the context of suitable works of literature.

VI. Selecting texts

The following discusses how to select texts and materials which are suitable for use with students. Lazar(1993) mentions that when a teacher chooses a literary text, the following three areas should be considered: first, the type of the course the teacher is teaching; second, the type of students who are doing the course; lastly, certain factors connected with the text itself. It is not easy to generalize a group of students when a teacher consider the type of students, nevertheless some criteria like the students' cultural background, linguistic proficiency and literary background should be considered.

VII. Working with a text

The following presents how representational materials could be used in the language classroom.

1. Using one liners

- a. 'If you obey all the rules, you will miss all the fun'
(Hepburn, et al., 1991).
- b. 'Kids learn more from example than anything you say. I'm convinced they learn very early not to hear anything you say, but watch what you do'(ibid).
- c. 'Love is a fire. But whether it is going to warm your hearth or burn down your house, you can never tell'(ibid).

After a teacher introduces these one liners to students and asks them to discuss a kind of the following questions with their partner.

- 1) What do they mean? (comprehension)
- 2) Do you agree or disagree? (discussion)
- 3) Why do you agree or why do you not agree?

At the end of discussion, ask them to make a new version changing some part of the original one liners or to create a new one with a partner based on the same theme of each liner. Then report to the class. This activity may be used as a warm-up activity or as the introduction to similar content. The activity is devised from McRae (1991).

2. Using songs

The possible activity using songs is that the teacher writes the title of the song on the board without mentioning the singer and any information about it. For example: 'The end of the world'(Appendix 2). The teacher asks students to make a pair, they then think on what the lyrics of this song with this title are likely to be about. Students with a partner, they have to make many possible sentences not just one by asking each other. For example, 'what will happen at the end of world?', 'when will it be the end of the world?', 'what do you want to do the end of the world?', 'who do you want to meet if it is the end of the world? Pairs then form groups of four, and combine their ideas, before reporting back to the whole class. Each group presents its own lyrics to the class. The teacher then plays the song to the class and gives the original lyrics of the song after listening to it. At this stage, students can compare their version of lyrics with the original and then the teacher plays the song again. Further discussion is also possible. This activity is devised from Maley and Duff(1995).

3. Using proverbs

In everyday conversation, proverbs are sparingly used nevertheless, foreign speakers have difficulty to express them properly. In relation to this, this activity can be used not only for teaching them but also for practising listening and speaking, using proverbs. A teacher asks students to make a pair and provides the table(Appendix 3-1) which

can be used to make twelve English proverbs(Appendix 3-2). First, students are asked to fill the prediction column of the given table predicting possible proverbs and needed to write the numbers in column A and the letters in column B which they think to make a proverb. Next stage, students need to listen to the radio advertisement for a care which includes proverbs. After listening, students need to fill the listening column of the table to match them correctly. After that, write down complete proverbs with groups and discuss what they think the proverbs mean and when they might use these proverbs. Finally, compare it with similar or contrasting proverbs from the first language of the students. Here, the teacher can explain the origin or some background of the proverbs and it will be helpful for learner to understand the culture of English. This activity is devised from Revell and Breary(1993).

4. Using poetry

Lazar(1993) mentions that many teachers hesitate to use poetry in class however, poetry could be good representation material because it can not only help students to improve language knowledge but also motivate their personal responses through the interaction. To achieve this, the teacher can prepare activities which gently lead students to their own interpretations.

1) Missing words

One of the possible activities is 'missing words' activity in which

students need to write the text of a poem from which certain words have been left out. For pre-reading in the classroom procedure, students need to predict the theme of the poem from its title, 'I Am Becoming My Mother' by Lorna Goodison(Benson, 1992). For while-reading activity, the teacher asks students to make a pair. Students then try to fill in the blanks(Appendix 4) with pair and when they have done as much as they can, compare their versions with other pairs. Next, the teacher asks for suggestions for each missing word and writes it down on the board for discussion. After the discussion, the teacher tells the original answers.

To facilitate students' discussion, the teacher does not stress to find the 'right answer' as to offer a plausible suggestion and this step-by-step approach could be helpful for learners to understand meanings from the language. This activity is modified from Maley and Duff(1995). To extend the activity, each group makes its brief interpretations of a poem and decides which one is the most appropriate. Students answer comprehension questions and about the meaning of certain words or phrases in the poem(Lazar, 1993).

2) False words

In this activity, students need to find out the false words and replace them with word which they think would be better. There are four words in the poem(Appendix 5) which were not in the original. The poem is from 'This is Just to Say' by William Carlos Williams(Benson, 1992).

Aside from these activities, Maley and Duff(1995) also present the

following activities using a poem.

3) Alternative words

'Alternative words' activity is that students need to choose the correct one from the given choices. It may be helpful for students to work from language towards meaning and, by concentrating on parts of the poem. The text is from 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' by Robert Frost(Hewett, 1972)(Appendix 6).

4) Jumbled lines

'Jumbled lines' activity is that students need to put the lines which are out of order into the original order(Appendix 7). The lines in this activity are jumbled only within each stanza not to cause too much difficulty. The text is from 'The Sick Rose' by William Blake(Benson, 1992).

VIII. Conclusion

In conclusion, as Collie and Slater(1987) emphasized that there could be important reasons to use literature in language classroom. These could be in terms of authentic materials on understanding different cultures, thoughts, and feelings. Students could also be exposed to many functions of the written language by using literature in the language classroom. Reading literature could also make the language learners to focus their attention not only in the technical aspects of the

foreign language but also beyond the more technical aspects of the foreign language. Regardless of these advantages, the focus has been more on classical literature which may be more difficult to language learners. Therefore, the discussion about what McRae suggests 'Literature with small 'l'' has been suggested in this paper. He emphasized that the representational materials could motivate language learners more to learn the target language aside from using literature in the language classroom. In the classroom, these representational materials can be used with a variety of student-centered activities and the possible way of using these texts has also been discussed. It could be very useful to language teachers to be exposed to these kinds of representational materials for them to know how to use them in the classroom activities.

Appendix 1-1

I walks down the street one day when I seen something strange. There was a man had a conversation with a dog. The dog is big and black, probably an Alsatian, and it looked as if it understand everything the man is talking about. 'My wife don't understand me,' I had heard the man say. 'She is being bad to me for years and I'm going to leave her. You understand me, don't you, Bengo?' The dog wagged his tail in sympathy and looked at his boss.....(McRae, 1991)

Appendix 1-2

Barry Masters and Harold Minton had very little in common. Barry came from the backstreets of Wolverhampton (an industrial town in the Midlands of England) while Harold was brought up in rural Kent, an affluent area south of London.

Barry's education was one of crime and violence. He spent most of his teens in borstal for assorted crimes, ranging from snatching handbags to selling drugs.....(McRae, 1991)

Appendix 2

The End of the World by Skeeter Davis

Why does the sun go on shining

Why does the sea rush to shore

Don't they know it's the end of the world

Because you don't love me anymore.

Why do the birds go on singing

Why do the stars glow above
 Don't they know it's the end of the world
 It ended when I lost you love

Appendix 3-1

Using proverbs-Correct answers for the activity

1. Silent is golden.
2. Never rains but it pours.
3. Lovely weather for ducks.
4. Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves.
5. Everhting comes to he who waits.

Appendix 3-2

Fill the following table by matching column A and B.

A	B	Prediction	Listening	Proverbs
1. silence 2. everything comes 3. lovely weather 4. pennies 5. rains	a. ducks b. golden c. he who waits d. pours e. pounds	1b	1b	Silence is golden

(Revell and Breary, 1993)

Appendix 4

Original text: I am Becoming My Mother

Yellow/brown woman
fingers smelling always of onions
My mother raises rare blooms
and waters them with tea
her birth waters sang like rivers
my mother is now me (....) by Lorna Goodison(Benson, 1992)

Missing words text: I Am Becoming My Mother

Yellow/brown woman
fingers smelling always of _____
My mother raises rare blooms
and waters them with _____
her birth waters sang like _____
my mother is now me (....)

Appendix 5

Original text: This Is Just to Say

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which

you were probably
saving
for breakfast (...)

by William Carlos Williams(Benson, 1991)

False words text: This Is Just to Say

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the box

and which
you were surely
saving
for breakfast (...)

Appendix 6

Original text: Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though:
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must things it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake

The darkest evening of the year (...) by Robert Frost(Hewett, 1972)

Alternative words text: Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His (place, house, garden) is in the village though;
He will not (make, like, see) me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My (wild, faithful, little) horse must things it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen (river, stream, lake)
The darkest evening of the year (...)

Appendix 7

Original Text: The Sick Rose

O Rose thou art sick,
The invisible worm
That flies in the night
In the howling storm, (...)
by William Blake(1757-1827)(Benson, 1992)

Jumbled text

That flies in the night
The invisible worm
In the howling storm,
O Rose thou art sick.

〈국문초록〉

영어읽기 수업에서의 실용적인 영어읽기 자료의 활용

영어를 가르치는 수업환경에 영문학 자료를 사용하는 것에는 많은 장점이 있다. 첫째로 영문학은 진정한 의미에서의 영어 읽기 자료를 제공하며 또한 영문학적인 수업자료들은 다른 영어권 국가의 문화와 사고방식과 여러 다른 관습에 대해서 배울 수 있는 계기를 제공하여 준다. 또한 여러 다른 사고방식을 연결하는 기능을 학습하게 되며, 개인적인 영문학에의 참여를 통하여 영어 학습 과정을 촉진하기도 한다.

그러나 이러한 여러 장점에도 불구하고 고전적인 영문학 자료들은 영어학습자들에게 이해하기에 너무 어려운 부분들이 있음이 시사된다. 이러한 점에서 McRac(1991)는 고전적인 영문학 자료에만 읽기 자료를 국한시킬 것이 아니라 실용적으로 영어학습자들을 동기 부여 할 수 있는 실용적인 측면에서의 영문학 자료들을 제시하고 있다. 예를 들어, 제시 순서를 변경한 다양한 형태의 영시, 영어 소설과 에세이, 광고에 나오는 문구, 노래에 나오는 가사, 영어속담, 영어 속어 등이 이에 속한다고 할 수 있다. 또한 이러한 자료들을 구체적으로 어떻게 영어 수업 시간에 활용할 수 있는지와 여러 다양한 수업 활동 자료 들을 제시하고 있다. 영어를 가르치는 교사와 영어학습자들에게 이러한 실용적인 수업 활동들은 목표 언어를 배우는 데 유용한 자료가 될 것이다.

주제어 : 영어읽기 수업, 실용적 영어읽기 자료

〈Abstract〉

The Use of English Literature with Small 'l' in the EFL Language Classroom

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There could be many advantages of using the English language in literature class. Firstly, English literature provides authentic reading materials. In addition to this, it also gives an opportunity to learn culture and way of thinking of people in English speaking countries. Lastly, reading the English literature could promote the processes of English learning. Despite all these advantages, classic English literature somehow seems to be too difficult to understand for EFL language learners. Therefore, McRac suggests to use and read more practical aspects of English literature to the EFL readers. What he called as literature with small 'l'. For example, English poem which is presented in different verse order, English novel and essay, advertisement, lyrics of the song, English proverbs, and idioms. This article also presents ways on how to use these materials in the real English language classes which could be useful to teachers and language learners.

Key words : English literature, Practical reading materials, Practical classroom activities

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