

Language through Literature

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Abstract

Language and Literature form a separate domain for study and research. There is a stark line between these two areas of study but they both aid and enhance each other. Literature relies primarily on language. Language plays a pivotal life in our day to day. It is through language that we mainly communicate our ideas and feelings. Learning or acquiring a language is a process and it does not happen overnight. There are many factors which enable in acquiring language. Literature is one of the mediums to teach language.

Keywords: interaction, dramas, acting, performance, global language.

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Introduction

Literature gives happiness to the ones who read it with diligence and care. Literature starts with wisdom and ends with delight so literature has a dual purpose. The ELT classrooms had become tedious and monotonous because of the rote learning. The main goal of the facilitators is to finish the portions and make the students revise it. This brings out very good results in the final exam but the students are not able to retain anything substantial. In this case literature adds a new revival to the ELT classroom. Literature provides a joyful learning experience for the students.

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to expound the ways in which language can be taught through dramas and plays.

Hypotheses

The following are the hypotheses of this study.

- (1) Why do teachers do not encourage literature in language classes.
- (2) Is there a possibility that involving literature will divert the students from learning language?
- (3) Literature can be an effective tool in language classes.

Research Questions

- (1) Does the handling of language classes through drama help the student to strike an effective conversation?
- (2) Language is a means of communication and will dramas help the students to socialize in a better way?
- (3) Can dramas help the students to understand the components of language and to comprehend the things around them?

Review of Literature

L. Smith (1983) discussed about the five senses that can enhance the language learning in a learner. Richard (1976) discussed about enhancing language learning through drama.

Discussion

McRae (1994) says that literary texts are representational rather than being referential so it appeals emotionally to the learner. It also widens the imagination of the students. By teaching Language through Literature the facilitator can make the language classrooms lively

and can make the students actively participate rather than being passive listeners. There are different genres in Literature and the literary texts can be taken according to the interest of the students. This kind of collaborating literature with language will involve the students.

Performance can grab the attention of everyone. Every literary text has an aspect of performing it. Dramas and Plays can grab the attention of the audience and it demands hard work and commitment. Dramas connect and move emotionally. If we observe the young children they mostly imagine and engage in pretend plays. Communication and conversational skills improve when a child develops a scenario. This can also be applied for high school children because dramas help them to communicate and to look at the world from different perspectives.

From the beginning of ages dramas had been an elite form of art. It is considered to be timeless and authentic, so using drama enables the students not only to convey their ideas and emotions in real conversations but also makes them a good listener. A frustrated cartoon character once remarked: “Everyone learned to talk, no one learned to listen!” Once the American actor Robert Duvall was asked if he would give the interviewer an acting lesson, he replied “basically it’s I talk, you listen. You talk and I listen. And four of these things have to be working.” Using drama in language classrooms not only makes the students a better speaker but also a better listener.

Dramas also increase the fluency of the students. While practice the students constantly listen to the lines and repeat the lines this helps to improve the spontaneity in students. Fluency is one thing which every student aspires as soon as he/she is introduced to the language. Language classes are monotonous with drills with will eventually bore the

learners and in one way drills in language produces pseudo reality and make the student to lie. While encouraging the students to participate in drama can provide a happy and joyful learning experience for the students. Dramas can make even the very passive student in the class to involve and learn.

Dramas enable the students to learn according to their style and level of understanding. Every student has their own way of learning. A high calibre student gets bored in class if the drills are repeated and if the teacher runs through the portions the slow learners will find it hard to keep the track. Drama appeals to the student in his/her own level of understanding and discerning things. Dramatisation helps the students to absorb language in their own style. If a student's language skill is limited even then the student is given opportunity to communicate in non verbal cues such as expressions and body movements.

The primary purpose of communication is to convey one's feelings, emotions and ideas to others. Language constructs the self. Though in dramas one is asked to get into the shoes of the character there is always a tint of individuality and originality added to it. A person conveys the dialogue in the way he wanted to convey it. If students are not expressing their own feelings, then their conversation is meaningless. Teaching the students the importance of self gives them a foundation on which to build their language. Through dramas students can construct their self which will help them to convey their ideas and feelings to others.

L. Smith (1983) suggests that the language learners should use the five senses when learning and using a new language. The first is the sense of self; the others are a sense of audience, of relationship between self and audience, of setting and of goal. While we use our

native language we use all these senses involuntarily but we forget to use this in the new language. Drama can shape the student in all these perspectives.

Dramas and plays revive the class. The facilitators should find suitable plays which will involve all the students; be it a small or a large group. Dramas provide optimal speaking practice in real life context. Roles should be assigned according to student's ability. Plays can be altered and can be adapted for one's own situation and this makes the students to relate with the story line. The facilitators can ask the students to design the invitations and posters which will also be an English lesson.

The student's imagination is highly pulled and the student will be able to confront the real life scenarios in an uncomplicated way. Dramas and plays are principally for performing and performance calls for body language, facial expression, eye contact, gestures and the way the dialogue is delivered. Language has stress, intonation and so on. The students though gain fluency in language they fail in imbibing the style and mechanics of language. Drama can be an effective tool to help the students acquire it.

Though drama is a combination of fun and learning; there are certain practical inconveniency in establishing and exercising it in classroom ambiance. The teachers are mostly constrained with the classroom goals and nothing beyond it. Their primary duty is to finish the portion and get good results in the final exam. The facilitators and the learners should downplay the final exams and concentrate on something beyond it because Learning is not being successful but becoming successful.

English as a Global Language

Now English had become the global language. “English a language from nowhere, is set to conquer the world.” English at present is not a language of one or two nations but it has become the phenomena of the world. Every single sector is entwined with English language. Internet and technology stand as best examples of it. “English has few rivals and no equals.” English in the present era stands alone without being limited to a particular culture. English has become Culture- neutral. English is serving a multitude of fortes. Among all English for communicative and interacting in social contexts is considered necessary. Anyone who is able to speak fluently in English with an international accent is welcomed in any parts of the world for employment.

English had become the mantra to open doors in the Global world. Everyone aspires to gain fluency over English. To speak in English, one feels ‘superior.’ In this global scenario one meets people from different places in their work place and English is the medium of communication. To interact in English is a herculean task for many since they are not given an opportunity to communicate effectively. Language classrooms are very passive. So once the pupils pass out they face a serious difficulty in confronting the huge masses of the global world. They feel inferior and are reluctant to interact since they feel they would go wrong.

Role of Teachers

Teachers can do the scaffolding and students can work on every other role like being the characters, directing, designing posters for plays which will also be an English lesson. Teachers should find suitable plays which will involve all the students; be it a small or a large group. Teachers can also participate but teachers should down play their superiority and

should give students the chance to interact. Teachers should assign roles to the students depending on their language ability. Teachers should not only encourage the students with high learning ability but also encourage the students of limited language ability to also take up roles. Teachers should not force students into roles which they find difficult but rather give them the choice to choose. Teachers should play the role of facilitator by giving guidance to the students and allowing the students to interact rather taking the upper hand.

Summation

Literature can be used as an efficient tool in Language classrooms. It helps both objectively and subjectively. Literature and Language they play equal parts and one is not superior over the other. They enhance, enable and sustain each other. Language through Literature blurs their distinction and asserts that at the end of the day learning and acquiring knowledge is all that matters. Integrating dramas and plays in language classes will help the students to improve their language skills and it does not bore the students with rote learning. Incorporating plays and dramas will make the learning lively and effective.

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