

## Teaching Literature to Foreign Language Learners as a Medium for Cultural Awareness and Empathy

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### Abstract:

This paper synthesizes and extends research on the growing body of evidence indicates that teaching literature to L2learners can provide a number of valuable outcomes, including helping students to understand and appreciate other cultures different from their own. Literature provides useful examples of syntax and language usage in different genres, introducing a level of enjoyment to the learning experience and encouraging L2 learners to pursue additional readings in the target language. The opportunity for immersion in the target culture takes the students to another level of appreciation of the culture and civilisation of the target language. To determine how these desirable outcomes can be implemented in second-language classrooms, this paper provides a review of the relevant scholarly literature of teaching literature to L2learners in general and as a medium to bridge the gap between cultures in particular. Due to the increase in the pace of globalised communications enables second-language (L2) students to become more proficient and enthusiastic about their learning, teaching literature in the target language has taken new relevance and importance. Examples of the use of literature in the author's Arabic language classes are provided throughout. A summary of the research and important findings are presented in the conclusion.

*Keywords:* Arabic language, Arabic literature, pedagogy, second language learners, cultural awareness, linguistic competency, empathy.