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Incorporating Literature into EFL/ESL Classroom

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Abstract

Occasionally, there has been doubt or uncertainty over the necessity or significance of incorporating literature into language instruction. This study reviews the role of literature in language instruction from the era of the Grammar Translation Method through the current era of Communicative Language Teaching. Additionally, it investigates how literary texts might be included in English EFL/ESL instruction. This study's primary research question is: How does the use of literature affect EFL/ESL learners' language learning, cultural awareness, and critical thinking abilities? The study's main aim is to examine the pedagogical advantages and difficulties of utilizing literature as a tool to improve language competence and enhance educational experiences in EFL/ESL classes. This study is important because it gives teachers useful tips on how to use literature to make a more dynamic and contextually rich classroom. A systematic examination of literature and prior research on the subject was the research methodology employed in this study. According to preliminary research, literature fosters a better comprehension of cultural quirks, increases students' engagement, and improves vocabulary learning. Literature also encourages students to consider other viewpoints by acting as a catalyst for conversation and critical thinking. Considering the findings, the research suggests that EFL/ESL teachers include a range of literary genres and subjects in their curricula. It also recommends adopting cooperative reading and discussion activities that let students engage with texts and with one another. It is recommended that more studies be done to examine the long-term effects of literature on language.

Keywords: Critical thinking, cultural awareness, language acquisition, literature in EFL/ESL, pedagogical strategies

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Introduction

Before the Grammar Translation Method, the main source of information for language teaching was literature.; however, it has since been demoted. Literature's role in language teaching declined with the rise of structuralism and the audiolingual method (Collie & Slater, 1987). However, it experienced a revival in the 1980s, supported by a wave of scholarly publications (e.g., Hill, 1986; Lazar, 1993; Maley & Duff, 1991). Additionally, throughout the CLT period, literature was disregarded in favor of talks and conversations that were more evident and useful in real-world scenarios. According to Maley (2001), this perspective on literature is because there is a paucity of actual data that supports the idea that literary input is important for language instruction. Maley says the current empirical studies on literature and language instruction are limited to action research on small scales.

Furthermore, the reintroduction of literature in language instruction was spurred by applied linguistics (Belcher & Hirvela (2000). Publications that paved the way for literature's comeback were many during this period and included: Burton & Carter (1982); Maley & Moulding (1985); Carter & Brumfit, (1986); Collie & Slater (1987); Carter et al. (1989); Carter & Long, (1991); Grundy & Bassnett, (1993).

This study aims to thoroughly examine and synthesize the body of knowledge on literary text instruction, including research, practices, and pedagogical techniques. The paper seeks to investigate the advantages of literature as a tool for developing students' empathy, critical thinking, and cultural knowledge. To determine the best practices for including a diverse student body, it would also look to assess a range of instructional approaches, including discussion-based learning, creative projects, and technological integration. The review also aims to highlight the difficulties teachers encounter, like dealing with different reading levels and juggling curriculum requirements, while providing suggestions for the best ways to teach literature to foster a love of reading and enhance literacy in the classroom.

For several reasons, it is important to include literature in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. First, literature frequently sheds light on English-speaking cultures, morals, and social mores. This cultural background can improve students' comprehension of the language and its subtleties. Second, children are exposed to a wide range of terminologies, colloquial idioms, and intricate sentence patterns when they read literary books. Their reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities can all be enhanced by this experience. Third, literature fosters critical thinking in learners. Students must read texts meaningfully to analyze themes, characters, and narratives. This develops analytical abilities that are useful outside of the language learning environment. Fourth, literature frequently captures pupils' attention and sparks their creativity.

Relating to their feelings and experiences, may inspire students and make language learning more engaging and meaningful. All things considered, integrating literature into EFL/ESL classes benefits students' cognitive and emotional development holistically in addition to aiding in language learning.

This study aims to explore the possible advantages and disadvantages of integrating literature into EFL/ESL curricula, with a focus on language acquisition, cultural awareness, and critical thinking abilities; evaluate the effects of literature-based activities on students’ motivation and engagement in language learning settings, including reactions to various literary genres like poetry, prose, and drama; and quantify the effects of literature incorporation on students' language

proficiency, including gains in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing abilities, examine how literature may offer cultural insights that help EFL/ESL learners appreciate different viewpoints and cross-cultural understanding. Thus, the following are the main topics of the research questions for this study:

1.What are the alleged advantages of using literature in EFL/ESL classes?
2. What are the main obstacles educators encounter when incorporating literature into EFL/ESL classes?
3. Which approaches to incorporating literature into EFL/ESL classes do EFL/ESL teachers think work best?
4. How does the use of literature in EFL/ESL classes contribute to language proficiency gains?

Literature Review

Students' critical thinking, linguistic proficiency, and cultural understanding are all greatly enhanced when literature is incorporated into the curriculum. Literature offers educators a wealth of resources that may pique students' interest and foster empathy as they work to design meaningful and captivating learning experiences. Ghosn (2013) discussed how literary texts can help develop various linguistic skills, such as vocabulary acquisition and comprehension strategies. The study emphasized the importance of selecting age-appropriate literature to engage students effectively. Grabe, W. & Stoller, F. L. (2002) say: *"Reading literature enables language learners to acquire vocabulary and grammatical structures in a rich context, facilitating deeper language comprehension and retention."*

Additionally, Smith & Smith (2020) highlighted the role of literature in providing cultural insights that enhance learners' understanding of social contexts and emotional nuances in the language. This study suggests using multicultural texts to foster empathy and cultural awareness. According to Hirvela, A. & Du, Q (2013) *"Literary texts encourage students to think critically about culture and society, enabling them to gain insights into the complexities of the language they are acquiring."* Furthermore, A study by Centeno (2021) investigated the implementation of literature circles in EFL contexts, where students collaboratively explore texts. The research found that this approach encouraged higher engagement and improved reading comprehension. Lazar (1993) states: "Engaging with literature can heighten motivation in language learning by presenting language in context and allowing learners to immerse themselves in authentic texts" (p. 14). Moreover, Arif and Hassan (2022) explored the integration of creative writing activities based on literary works. The findings suggested that this approach not only improves writing skills but also nurtures creativity and personal expression among students. Lee (2023) evaluated how incorporating literature affects student motivation and responses in the EFL/ESL classroom. The study concluded that literature, significantly, boosts motivation and creates positive attitudes toward language learning.

Incorporating literature into EFL/ESL classrooms can greatly enhance language learning by providing cultural context, vocabulary, and themes for discussion. For example, the Outsiders" by S.E. Hinton explores themes of class and identity, making it relatable for many students. Additionally, the poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost encourages discussions on choice and consequences, useful for teaching metaphors and symbolism. Moreover, the play "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare is rich in its comedic elements, various characters, and themes of love and fantasy. The play provides numerous opportunities for

engagement and language learning. Furthermore, the short story “The Gift of the Magi" by O. Henry” is a touching story about love and sacrifice. The story is suitable for discussing irony and character motivation.

The purpose of this literature review is to examine different pedagogical methods to teach literature in the classroom, emphasizing the advantages, difficulties, and strategies teachers employ to help students comprehend texts more deeply. The review will clarify the value of literature in education and its capacity to give students the tools they need for both academic and personal growth by looking at pertinent literature on the subject. This study strives to fill the research gap in areas where existing research may be lacking or insufficient. This includes integration strategies, impact on language proficiency and cultural relevance.

The Advantages of Including Literature in EFL/ESL Classes

Literature is seen to be a useful aid for language acquisition. Experts in the field have proposed several advantages for including literature in EFL/ESL classes. Below is an overview of what may be regarded as the benefits of EFL/ESL literature.

Inspiring and genuineness

Because of their genuineness and the significant context, they offer, literary works are incredibly stimulating (Ghosn, 2002; Van, 2009). There aren't many if any, dull topics in literature because it mostly deals with exciting subjects (Maley, 1989a). One of the things that might inspire learners to advance is motivation. Motivation can be attained when learners are allowed to do what they truly like. Experience demonstrates how driven students can be when they read literary books to master the language.

Furthermore, since literature is inherently real, it provides genuine input for language learning (Ghosn, 2002; Shrestha, 2008). According to Maley (1989a), literature tackles important topics that are meaningful to the reader personally. Authenticity is a naturally occurring characteristic that is seen as extremely crucial in the current literature on EFL/ESL, in books written by authors. Authenticity is particularly envisioned in novels and plays. In theater, we have dialogue, sentimental statements, pragmatic expressions, and contextualized utterances. In novels, too, descriptive writing combined with other forms of writing enhances students’ capacity for imagination, making text readily engraved on our thoughts.

Reading Practice

Literature is an excellent choice for reading in-depth and extensively. Novels are a wonderful choice for extensive reading. One way to help students read a novel without heavily relying on dictionaries is to assign them a week. An exercise like this will increase their reading speed and promote speculation on what they are reading. Learners, then, acquire the ability to read extensively in a brief time frame. Alternatively, poetry might be the ideal literary work for reading intensely. Poetry works well for intimate evaluation. Students can, then, be given the task of carefully reading each stanza to delve into the text and uncover hidden meaning that is conveyed through literary devices like metaphor, simile, allegory, etc. Students who read extensively may be able to decipher texts' complex meanings.

Globalization and Cultural/Intercultural Awareness

Particularly in the age of globalization, literature fosters cultural and intercultural understanding (Van, 2009; Tayebipour, 2009). A growing concern in the globalization period is about needs and goals that are shared by all people as opposed to personal requirements. Because literature addresses universal ideas, people feel compelled to seize on literature as a source of input for the proficiency of thriving language learners. Globalization demands cooperation, not just in sociology, politics, and business, but also in disciplines relating to language, like ELT. As said by Maley, Literature addresses universal ideas that are shared by all people, such as love, hate, death, and nature (1989a). Language and cultural differences and similarities can advance our understanding of the whole world.

Additionally, teaching literature imparts learners with genuine cultural competency, arming them with the culturally appropriate pragmatic and socio-psychological components and providing a solid foundation for constructing effective identities. This will facilitate their integration into the target culture and improve the overall efficacy with which they engage in that cultural milieu. According to Erving Goffman (1990), these Identities serve as culturally successful and acceptable representations, rather than replacing the learners' true selves. Students have the option to choose whether to showcase their work or deliver a presentation in front of the culture they are studying.

Knowledge of Grammar and Vocabulary

Literature, according to Maley (1989a), covers a wide range of topics and linguistic styles, from formal to colloquial. Additionally, according to Arthur (1968), vocabulary expansion and syntactic understanding can be increased using literary writings. To put it another way, literature uses a wide variety of words, conversations, and prose (Van, 2009). Poetry may be expressive even if its elaborate and exotic grammatical patterns are typically derided. Poetry can be a useful resource for practicing grammar structures at the same time. One such exercise is having the learners convert a poem's intricate structures to Standard English structures. The primary sources are literary writings where intricate grammatical constructions like subjunctives, inversion, hanging structure, etc. appear.

Conversely, extensive exposure to literary books that address both formal and informal language might help increase vocabulary knowledge. One of the best ways to expand your vocabulary is to read novels and short tales. The writers' own reading experiences of books is quite helpful for language learners who are at different levels.

Pragmatic and Sociolinguistic Understanding

According to communicative competence models, literature's authenticity allows it to contribute to the advancement of pragmatic and sociolinguistic knowledge (McKay, 2001). Two of the primary components are pragmatic competence and sociolinguistic elements included in theories of communication skills. Therefore, consideration must be given to this part. Because it is real, the literature contains pragmatic and sociolinguistic information. These two characteristics are more closely linked to "appropriateness" in language and are exclusive to contextualized language, such as literary works, particularly plays and dramas.

Skills of Language

Literature is full of many genuine symbols of language for the development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities, which is quite in keeping with the concepts of CLT (Van, 2009, (Belcher & Hirvela, 2000, Crain, 1993, Knight, 1993, Latosi-Sawin, 1993, Nasr, 2001, Spack, 1985, Stern, 2001, Erkaya, 2005, Fitzgerald, 1993, Vandrick, 1996).

Moreover, literature serves as a fantastic starting point for writing exercises. Requiring the students to finish a cloze poetry or short stories is incredibly uplifting. We may also invite the students to compose a story's ending on their own terms. Or tell a tale in a novel, novella, or short story from the perspective of a different character. Other Writing-related creative exercises can be created similarly.

For speaking reasons, the events of a poem, novel, or short tale might be related to the learners' personal experiences in real life. This kind of activity prepares the ground for popular conversation themes in language lessons. Facilitating students' free reflection and critical commentary on the events is another way to help them advance in speaking competence.

Furthermore, the students may be exposed to the audio versions of the poetry, short tales, or novels for listening purposes. Furthermore, the melodic components of poetry encourage students to strive for a more natural speaking style. Speaker conventions by following intonation, rhythm, and rhyming rules.

Additionally, novels and poetry, as previously indicated, can offer ideal possibilities for long and thorough reading for reading purposes. It's also beneficial for practicing reading comprehension subskills like skimming, scanning, and identifying the major concepts. Reading for pleasure and information are two aspects of reading literature. Consequently, it fills in the gaps left by nonliterary writings. As a matter of fact, literature serves as a tool for language learning in general, but in content-based training, it can also quicken language acquisition (Shang, 2006).

Analytical Reasoning

Literature may help language learners develop their critical thinking abilities (Gajdusek & van Dammelen, 1993, Ghosn, 2002, Van, 2009). According to Ghosn (2002), literature has the power to alter the perspectives of the students. Langer (1997) asserted that reading literature enables students to consider their life and education. Reading literature may broaden learners' perspectives by enabling them to analyze, comprehend, make connections, and investigate" (p. 607). Among other text genres, literature is a rich source of ideas for critical analysis. In this instance, the teacher’s role in helping students develop these higher-order thinking abilities is crucial. These days, critical thinking is the foundation of education, especially at the graduate level. By using critical thinking, we may learn to be less judgmental and to try to uncover the underlying meaning behind texts. Thinking critically informs Analysis of Critical Discourse in language studies and similar subjects in law, sociology, psychology, cultural studies, and philosophy.

Emotional Intelligence

Reading literary works improves emotional intelligence, commonly referred to as emotional quotient (Ghosn, 2002). Daniel Goleman is a pioneer in the field of EQ. He said that neither IQ nor even multiple intelligences took this aspect of the human mind into account. EQ is especially pertaining to people's capacity for emotional regulation and control under trying circumstances. An illustration of the EFL/ESL context is to what extent learners can manage their anxiety when

faced with high-stakes examinations. Literature is an excellent means of enhancing our emotional intelligence as it addresses attachment, feeling, and emotion.

To sum up, incorporating literature in classrooms serves several crucial objectives that enhance the educational experience. Firstly, literature fosters critical thinking and analytical skills as students engage with diverse texts, encouraging them to interpret, critique, and draw connections between the material and their own lives. Secondly, it promotes empathy and cultural awareness by exposing students to different perspectives, cultures, and historical contexts, thereby broadening their understanding of the world. Additionally, literature nurtures language development and vocabulary acquisition through rich language and varied sentence structures, enhancing students' communication skills. Furthermore, it stimulates imagination and creativity, allowing students to explore complex themes and emotional depths in a safe and supportive environment. Overall, literature in the classroom cultivates a love for reading, encourages intellectual curiosity, and prepares students for thoughtful participation in a diverse society.

Drawbacks

Considering the benefits of literature in EFL/ESL, several academics have proposed the potential drawbacks that literature may have on language instruction. Among the critiques offered are:

Lexis

Some contend that the literary writings' linguistic complexity fuels the flames. According to Robson (1989, p. 25), literature is perceived as having little or no ability to assist learners in becoming more proficient and capable speakers of the language being targeted. Others contend that literary works are replete with antiquated words. Terminologies like "thee and thou" are uncommon in today's English. There is, once again, a counterargument stating that this exclusively applies to classic literature, like Shakespeare. It is not required of teachers to solely employ classic literature. There are a ton of contemporary literary works that can serve as the origin of the information.

Grammar

Reading is a laborious process since literary texts have intrinsic grammatical difficulties. One of the primary complaints made about EFL/ESL literature is that Literary writings, according to McKay (1982) and Savvidou (2004), are distant from the Standard English standards, which may cause issues while learning the language. There is a claim that Literary works can have a great deal of intricate structure that deviates much from Standard English. The inconsistency of syntax is especially noticeable in (ancient) poetry. Poetry is typically written in a style that departs from the conventions of speaking or even writing, which makes it extremely difficult to comprehend them. Keeping all these points in mind, we should keep in mind that this complexity may serve as a practice tool, particularly for learners at the intermediate and higher levels. Put differently, attention should be paid to the syntactic complexity of above intermediate levels to serve as a language practice resource.

Semantics

The definition of several terms has altered, including the word "gay." For language learners, these meaning shifts may potentially be a barrier. Thus, this is seen by some academics as a literary

text trap. In a similar vein, though, we contend that these semantic modifications are seen as an addition rather than a barrier to the learners' prior knowledge of semantics. No harm is anticipated from them if they are not obstructing language acquisition. However, you must give learning these terms priority.

Phonology and Phonetics

Similarly, some practitioners think that deviations from the standard phonetic and phonological system are common in literature. Certain words have undergone slight or significant alterations in their pronunciation. This might lead to miscommunications. For language learners, these contradictions might be difficult. As an illustration is the word "love," which in ancient English was pronounced /lūv/. However, the writers think that even these fluctuations can be fascinating for language learners, and ultimately, they will become aware of these phonetic or phonological alterations.

Material Selection

Choosing literary books is typically challenging for educators and students alike. Teachers should be cautious regarding the language competency, age, gender, and prior knowledge of their students in this regard to ensure that children or young adults are exposed to several literary text genres as compared to adult learners. The learners' gender and background knowledge should also be carefully examined while choosing the resources. Consideration should also be given to elements pertaining to the text itself. For instance, what is the genre of the work, who is the author, whose main literary school it is from, is it short or lengthy, is it from escapist literature or interpretative literature, is it old or current, and so on?

Carter & Long (1991) contend that by choosing a suitable book for a suitable set of language learners, all the issues inherent in literary texts may be resolved.

English Literature and Academic

Many language instructors concluded—along with McKay's (1982) argument—that literature doesn't really meet the demands of students in academic settings or specialist subjects like biology and zoology. The aesthetic qualities of literary works are subordinated in favor of pedagogical objectives. As Maley (1989a) subsequently makes clear that this isn't always the case though, since literature may serve as a motivational resource to encourage students to investigate many text formats. Shang (2006) further suggests that literature may potentially be used in content-based training sessions. Literature may be a helpful stimulus for learning even if it cannot directly meet the demands of ESP/EAP courses. It can accelerate the process of acquiring a language.

Concepts and Notions in Literature

Certain types of issues may also arise from unfamiliarity with literary genres and traditions (Maley, 1989a). One way to do this is to introduce beginners to literary genres which are full of awareness. When these literary ideas are not understood, the writings become confusing and difficult to comprehend. Choosing the texts that best fit the learners' present and potential level of understanding is one way to address this issue. Literary knowledge can eliminate difficult literary canons or impart these novel ideas and thoughts in literature before assigning the students to read the relevant literary work.

Culture Obstacles

By using McKay's (1982) argument, we may emphasize how difficult it is to understand literature since it is so heavily influenced by certain cultural conceptions. Now, language instructors and resources writers are faced with the difficult decision of whether to depict L1 or L2 culture. Tomlinson (2001) believes that localizing the textbooks is one approach to fulfill the requirement to personalize the instruction, with captivating L1 themes and subjects. However, others (Brown, 2007) align themselves with the opposing side and think L2 culture is necessary for EFL/ESL, where language is both culture and language. This dilemma has grown increasingly controversial with the emergence of English as an International Language (EIL). Nonetheless, the author thinks that by handling both L1 and L2 cultures in a contrastive manner, learners will be able to distinguish and understand the distinctions more clearly. To respect all cultures, it may be quite enlightening for our language students to make use of contrastive cultural studies. McKay (1982) proposes three strategies to eliminate language and cultural complexity issues: using texts that have been condensed, specifically for the aim of language learning, using simple texts, or texts that are suited for the learners' level and naturally more readable than others, using writings written by young adults because of their lower stylistic complexity

To sum up, incorporating literature in the classroom, while beneficial in many ways, does present certain drawbacks that educators must consider. One of the most significant challenges is the potential for students to feel disconnected from texts that may not resonate with their personal experiences or cultural backgrounds, leading to disengagement and a lack of interest in reading. Additionally, the diverse interpretations of literature can sometimes conflict with prevalent educational standards or curricula, making it difficult for teachers to navigate differing viewpoints and encourage inclusive discussions. Furthermore, the time required to delve deeply into literary works can limit the breadth of content covered in the curriculum, possibly sidelining other important subjects. Lastly, the reliance on traditional literary forms may inadvertently exclude modern narratives and voices, leaving some students feeling marginalized. Balancing the rich experience of literature with these complexities is crucial for fostering a truly inclusive and engaging classroom environment.

Methodological Approaches to Teaching Literature

The methods used by Maley (1989a) to teach literature:

The literary analysis method

Maley (1989a) states that in this method, we concentrate on the texts' literariness, considering elements like the storyline, personality, significance, drive, psychology, context, etc. By using this strategy, we ought to be aware that our students are at a level above the intermediate levels and should have mastered them by now. Additionally, students must possess an understanding of literary norms.

The stylistic methodology

According to Maley (1989a, p. 11), this method focuses on literature as "text." This method closely matches the requirements that EFL/ESL teachers have for their language lessons. Unlike the previous method, this one provides a description. And linguistic study before arriving at interpretations.

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Methods Used by Carter & Long (1991)

The Linguistic Model

This strategy, as its name suggests, focuses primarily on literature for the objectives of language development and awareness. Stated differently, this approach solely recognizes the linguistic and discursive qualities of literature as a means of achieving the aesthetic component of literature (Lazar, 1993). However, caution must be exercised to ensure that the linguistic facet is not vitiating the enjoyment of reading literature (Lazar, 1993). This method of teaching literary works is comparable to what Maley (1989a) refers to as stylistic.

Literature as a Cultural Model or Content

This paradigm holds that literature is the ideal medium for communicating the cultural concepts connected to the language, such as its history, literary theories, genre theory, author biographies, geographical characteristics, traditions, politics, the arts, etc (Carter & Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993).

Reading for Personal Development or Enrichment

Lastly, this method makes use of the students' personal experiences to draw them into literary works (Carter & Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993). Here, students are not expected to memorize new vocabulary or focus just on the language elements but value the literary experience connected to the students' own personal experiences encounter.

Amer's (2003) methods for teaching L1 narrative texts in literature for EFL/ESL students

The Story Grammar Approach

This method is predicated on the notion that the reader and the text engage in conversation. Put another way, the reader becomes aware of the organization of the text. It is directly related to textual analysis's use of genre awareness and how gaining information helps one comprehend things better. Knowing the difference between two distinct text kinds, e.g. encouraging students to distinguish between narrative and expository texts can improve their understanding of text genres and idea development within a text.

The Reader Response Approach

The foundation of this method is the idea that literature should be taught for its own sake rather than to improve language skills. It is comparable to the critical literary approach of Maley (1989a). As stated by Ali (1994), this method has its roots in constructivism, which holds that each person creates their own interpretation of reality when it comes to writing. Put another way, no two people react to a particular text the same way. According to RRA, we can therefore have several readings of a text rather than just one accurate interpretation (Amer, 2003). There are several approaches to implementing RRA in literature classrooms, as stated in Amer (2003), such as Writing Prompts (Pritchard, 1993); Response Journals (Sheridan, 1991); Reading Logs (Benton & Fox, 1985; Carlisle, 2000); Writing and Critical Questioning (Probst, 1994; Hirvela, 1996); Introspection (Davis, 1989); Playing roles, acting out scenes, and composing letters (Elliot, 1990; Baxter, 1999); and Rewriting Stories from the Perspective of Another Character (Oster, 1989)

Although SGA emphasizes the cognitive side of learners and RRA emphasizes the emotive side, Amer (2003) contends that these two techniques shouldn't be seen as entirely distinct from

one another and should instead be employed sparingly, considering the students' language proficiency.

Van's Methodologies (2009)

New criticism

This method conceptualizes literature without considering the author's goals, and the surrounding elements like the text's historical, social, and political context. The texts that are analyzed in this manner are typically accepted from classic literature, which has lengthy passages unrelated to the immediate demands of the students.

Structuralism

This method often concentrates on a text's language and structural elements. In other words, the concern here is the form of the text. This method approaches literature with a scientific mindset.

Formalities

This method uses language understanding to provide an aesthetic experience. With this method, the conventions of language are addressed.

Reaction of the Reader

This method bases the interpretation on the reader's interactions with the text. Stated differently, the meaning is accomplished by means of the reader's engagement with the text.

Language-oriented

This strategy makes interaction with the material, using a variety of techniques, including cloze processes, brainstorming, summarizing, jigsaw reading, etc.

Critical Thinking

Its foundations are found in critical philosophy and critical education, particularly in the work of Freire. The primary goal of this method of teaching literature is to develop students' critical awareness so they won't accept things at face value. Students should understand that texts always have a hidden meaning that is governed by social and political motives.

The Integrated Approach of Timucin (2001) and Savvidou (2004)

In addition to the aforementioned strategies, Timucin (2001) and Savvidou (2004) suggest an integrated approach to teaching literature in which some or all of the aforementioned strategies are methodically balanced. Apparently, this alternate method has great potential for EFL/ESL education. Timucin (2001) used a comprehensive strategy. Including stylistics and a language-based approach in the context of Turkish EFL. He investigated how the learners felt about this integrated strategy and how much it fit with their preferences. The findings of his investigation showed a strong correlation between the researcher's methodological strategy and the learners' enthusiasm, engagement, and understanding of the literary materials. In 2004, Savvidou provided the six phases in her integrated model: readiness and expectancy, concentrating, initial reaction, making progress – I, making progress – II, personal reaction and interpretation.

Each of these phases helps to improve the way literature is taught in EFL/ESL programs. As stated by Duff and Maley (1991), there are three primary justifications: linguistic, methodological, and inspiring to use such a comprehensive method of teaching literature. A more modern integration model for using literature in language classrooms is suggested by Derakhshan, Rezaei, and Khatib (in press). They explained how task-based language teaching stages may be applied to literature as an input for language lessons through a "Whole Literary Involvement" experience.

Integrating AI in the Teaching of Literature

Teachers are increasingly turning to Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance their teaching methods as technology advances. AI may provide a range of options in the field of literature, from creating tailored reading suggestions to offering analytical tools that facilitate students' engagement with challenging works, Brown (2021). This section addresses the advantages and disadvantages of using artificial intelligence (AI) in literary instruction.

Applications of AI in Literature Education

Individualized Education

According to Jones & Smith (2022), by analyzing students' reading choices and behaviors, AI can provide them with personalized literary resources that suit their interests and ability levels. These customized experiences can improve understanding and sustain interest.

Automated Evaluation and Feedback

AI aligned tools may give students instant feedback on their writing and understanding, making the evaluation process more effective. Students are encouraged to hone their critical thinking abilities using programs that assess textual analysis.

Interactive Educational Settings

Chatbots and virtual assistants with AI capabilities can produce engaging educational materials. By facilitating text-related discussions and offering immediate access to other resources, these technologies can enhance the educational process, Miller (2023).

Improved Text Interpretation

Students may now examine texts in new by utilizing technology that uses Natural Language Processing (NLP). AI is capable of deciphering intricate narratives, recognizing themes, and even connecting literary methods to how they affect readers.

Difficulties and Ethical Aspects

Even though AI has a lot of potential advantages for teaching literature, there are a few issues that need to be resolved:

Access Equity

Learning experiences differ because not all students have equal access to AI technologies. For AI in education to be successfully implemented, fair access must be guaranteed.

Roles of Teachers

The job of educators may change as AI becomes more prevalent. Instead of viewing AI technologies as a replacement for conventional teaching techniques, educators must modify their pedagogical approaches to work in tandem with them.

Ethical AI Use

It is impossible to ignore the ethical ramifications of data security and privacy in AI systems. To protect students' privacy, educators need to be aware of how these apps gather and use student data Ortega, (2022).

To sum up, AI has the potential to revolutionize literary education by improving engagement, evaluation, and individualized learning. Teachers must, however, overcome obstacles pertaining to fairness, changing roles, and ethical issues. Best approaches for using AI in literary instruction while upholding pedagogical integrity should be the focus of future study.

Methods

This study's approach entails a methodical review of the literature and research that has already been done on the topic. First, the researcher uses scholarly databases to perform a thorough literature search. A selection of pertinent research and publications is then read. Key information is taken from each source after pertinent elements have been chosen. A thematic analysis of the gathered data comes next. This might cover the advantages of using literature, difficulties teachers encounter, and creative teaching methods. Assessing the calibre and dependability of the examined research critically is the last phase. This entails evaluating the original research's techniques, conclusions, and suitability for usage in various educational contexts.

Discussion

Considering the study's research questions, teaching literature in EFL/ESL classes has several advantages, such as improved language proficiency, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. Nonetheless, it necessitates giving significant thought to the choice of texts, and instructional techniques, and handling any difficulties. Teachers may design a rich, interesting, and significant language learning experience by utilizing literature.

In addition to helping students improve their language proficiency, literature instruction in the classroom is essential for encouraging critical thinking, empathy, and cultural awareness. The approaches, difficulties, and possible approaches for improving literature instruction are summarized in this article. The paper also clarifies how AI may be used to teach literature in the classroom.

According to recent research, teaching literature can benefit from the use of a wide range of pedagogical techniques. Reader-response theory, for example, promotes student involvement and ownership of learning by highlighting the significance of their individual responses to texts. On the other hand, conventional literary analysis that emphasizes historical settings and authorial purpose is still important, especially when it comes to assisting students in comprehending the wider ramifications and societal effects of literary works. Combining these approaches in an integrated manner might result in a more comprehensive educational experience.

Beyond scholastic success, literary study has many benefits. It has been demonstrated that exposing learners to a range of viewpoints and nuanced personalities helps them build their

emotional intelligence. Through literature conversations, students may develop empathy and learn to mindfully manage both personal experiences and social challenges. Additionally, literature may facilitate interdisciplinary learning by relating textual topics to debates about ethics, history, and culture.

Teaching literature is not without its difficulties, though. Teachers frequently struggle with a narrow curriculum and the demands of standardized testing, which causes them to prioritize superficial understanding over in-depth examination. Furthermore, pupils' varied backgrounds may lead to differing degrees of text accessibility, requiring alternative instructional approaches. Another major obstacle to inclusive literary instruction is resistance to particular works because of varying cultural values.

Teachers are urged to use more inclusive and diverse literary selections that represent a range of perspectives and experiences in order to address these issues. Opportunities for professional development that emphasize modern teaching methods can provide educators the skills they need to effectively engage students. In the digital era, integrating technology and multimedia resources encourages participation and presents opportunities for further investigation.

To sum up, teaching literature in the classroom is still an exciting and vital endeavor. By implementing creative teaching strategies, taking proactive measures to resolve issues, and creating a welcoming atmosphere, teachers may spark a love of reading that supports students' general growth and gets them ready for critical interaction with the outside world. The findings of this study, mostly, agree with the findings in the previous studies.

Conclusion

The primary goal of this study is to examine the pedagogical benefits and challenges of using literature as a tool to enrich educational experiences and improve language proficiency in EFL/ESL classrooms. The role that literature plays in EFL/ESL lessons was covered in this paper. The benefits and downsides of employing literature in language instruction were extensively considered and discussed. The researcher of this article holds the belief that literature, despite its potential flaws, may be used to teach languages. Literature offers a stimulating drive for language learning and instruction due to its spectacular characteristics that are not found in any other literature. Lastly, to demonstrate these qualities in practice, a few of the primary techniques were proposed for teaching literature. Useful, hands-on teaching methods can be identified with these models.

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