Integrating Language and Literature in English Teaching: A Critical Study

Swagatika Panda
Department of Basic Science, Aryan Institute of Engineering & Technology, Bhubaneswar

Mitarani Dalei
Department of Basic Science, Capital Engineering College, Bhubaneswar

Shilpa Parida
Department of Basic Science, NM Institute of Engineering College, Bhubaneswar

ABSTRACT
Now days we find teaching techniques are always on the verge of showing something new. This study deals with the role that teaching literature can have in the training of English language. It is necessary to establish a general background of education for all sorts of learners. Among the foreign languages, English is the most important. In the spheres of education, English has occupied a special place. The teachers use a variety of teaching methods like translation, rote-learning of grammar rules, diagramming, parsing, précis writing and composition. Some favour the memorization of the literary gems of Anglo-Saxon culture. Others seem to forget that they were teaching EFL, and acted as if they were instructing native speakers in England, the U.S. or Canada etc.
KEYWORDS: *Facilitator, Integrated-model, Language, Literature, Rote- learning.*

I.   INTRODUCTION

So far as my title is concerned, we have to focus on the practical aspects of certain methods. In my view the following criteria may be incorporated for using the language and literature simultaneously in teaching:

a- Using literary texts only as resources for language teaching.
b- Using literature for cultural purposes.
c- Teaching literature for its own sake.
d- Teaching literary stylistics

The above stated approaches really fail to achieve the goal. The present various methods used is current teaching literature is neither helping the trainees nor to respond better to a literary text nor is able to reinforce their proficiencies .I this context I would like cite Hall(2005) who has made the following observations about the practices of teaching literature in second language situation: Literature is too often viewed by the second language educator as a source of activities, as material with too little concern for the wider curricular issues which can help us understand what is going on when a student reads (or fails to read) literature … both foreign language teaching and communicative language teaching have often missed (different) learning opportunities in using literature in ways which fail to co ordinate the literary and the linguistic. (p.47).

When it comes to teaching of literature in higher levels, Hall continues to explain that literature is typically used more traditional ways in University Foreign Language Education. Literariness is emphasised, while linguistic elements are underplayed. Therefore integrating the teaching of language and literature, that is the 'integrated model' is here suggested as alternative. Such integration will help the learners develop their language proficiency as well as literary competence. This 'integrated' model addresses the following issues:

•   The selection of literary texts that are judged as appropriate to teach in the required educational levels or of standard of education.

•   The development of tasks that can improve the linguistic and literary competence of the learners.

•   The attempt to use a student—centred approach in the teaching –learning process.

The fundamental difference between the 'integrated model' and 'language through literature' is that the former pays attention to meaning while the latter is concerned with the language alone, that, is, Maley's idea of using literature as resource for language teaching. The 'integrated model' takes into account the conventions that are required for reading literary texts, without which one cannot speak of interaction with the text and with other readers. In this context we find in Carter and Walker (1989)state, teaching literary text "should result in literary experiences" (p.6) and the linguistic exercises must not be an end in themselves , but should rather serve literary goal. This is what the "integrated model" wants to achieve, unlike "language through literature" approach.

Integrating language and literature in teaching the language trainees is a justifiable practice. A major point that has to be emphasized primarily is that "there is no such thing as literary language" (Brumfit and Carter, 1986:6) This idea is also shared by Hall (2005) who says that "literature is made of, from and with ordinary language, which is itself already surprisingly literary" (p.10) and that "paradoxically, the study of literary language has indirectly provoked a better understanding of language use as a whole…..."(p.10). There is also a lot of views over it that literary language is "all in all totally the language we use and encounter in everyday life" (Hall, 2005:10).People with such views resist the introduction of literary texts into language learning classrooms. Therefore the advocates of literature in language classrooms need to offer that these charges are irrelevant (Hall, 2005).

With the advent of communicative approach in ELT in the 1980s, there have been some reservations about the use of literary Texts. This is because literary language is seen not to provide conventional and appropriate kind of language that is required for conveying practical everyday messages. It is suggested that the artificial division between language and literature could have evolved as a result of the ideas in *New Criticism,* which considers the language of literature to be the best and focuses on the formalistic and technical aspects of literature (Hall, 2005).However, as Brumfit and Burke(1986) exclaimed ,"…we can never divorce literature entirely from concepts , because we normally use language …Nor can we separate literature from our own natural awareness of linguistic form…(p.173).

In this connection, Mc Rae (1986), in his *Literature With a Small 'I'* argues that literary texts are useful for second language teaching. He states that 'referential' language communicates at one level only, but 'representational' language " opens up, calls upon, stimulates and uses areas of mind , from imagination to emotion, from pleasure to pain, which referential language does not reach"(p.30. Accordingly, Mc Rae argues that the use of representational language learning materials creates "personal between text and reader, between the readers themselves, between teacher and students…." (p.3).

What has been reviewed above indicates that the division between language and literature is not real. The 'integrated model' does not consider literature teaching as different from language teaching. It rather assumes that literature teaching helps in creating learners that are holistic in their understanding of humanity, and at the same time in developing their language. The question is, however, what is the approach that helps to integrate language and literature teaching? The 'integrated' model uses insights from the reader-response theory and task-based teaching for this purpose. The rationale behind using the reader-response theory is that it is accessible to each student, in the sense that he can make his own interpretation of response texts and discuss his response with others. In the process, the student is able to attain language skills, consciously or unconsciously. The student's engagement with literary texts creates satisfaction, in terms of increased 'self-knowledge', and motivates him to more.

What do we learn from Reader-Response Theory? Reader-response Theory has influenced research in education and re-examined relationships between teachers and students, issues of texts selection, and methods of teaching. Actual classroom practices have been revisited in line with the reader-response theory. The theory made its impact not only on the first language, but also in teaching second or foreign languages. Let's analyse some implications that given below for classroom teaching, which are particularly useful for foreign language teaching:

(a)   Teaching becomes student-centred
The basic principle of reader-response, in which every reader has his own interpretation, makes literature teaching concurrent with EFL practices which involve process-based and learner-centred teaching (Kramsch, 1985; Carter and Walker, 1989; Elliot, 1990). This approach, which allows for a discourse perspective on the teaching of literary texts "is not only consistent with reading comprehension research and literary theory, but also restores classroom students to their full creative role as a community of autonomous and responsible readers" (Kramsch, 1985:364). Such a situation will create a classroom where students find in literature something that is relevant to their life, and where creative and reflective thinking become the room. The role of the teacher changes into that of a facilitator. He is not supposed to give lectures to the students about "correct" interpretations as there is no fixed interpretation in reader response approach.

(b)   Inseparability of "form" and "content"
A change that can be realized in the teaching of literature as a result of the introduction of the reader response approach is that "form" and "content" are not and should not be dissociated in the process of meaning creation (Rosenblatt, 1970). Traditionally, the meta-language of literature as an end in itself has been taught separately from the study of the text. But with reader-response, meta- language is used as a means to understand the literary texts and for further reflection (Ali, 1994).Genres, conventions, metaphors, etc., become no longer a separate set of terms to be studied by the students, but vehicles that facilitate reading and enable a more mature response. **(c)Group discussions are encouraged**
The reader-response theory states that no two responses can be identical. The aim of literature teaching is to initiate students in a literary 'interpretive community' (Fish, 1980). The interpretation that a student makes

about a text is not the end of the process. The other students in the classroom, the teacher and even subjects outside the classroom are involved in further refining responses. In fact, it is here that the teacher's role of facilitating discussions and arguments becomes very important. The literature classroom then becomes a site for argument and compromise among the members rather than a dormant place where one gives and others receive interpretations without posing any question.

(c)   Studying literature for literature's sake
In the context of this discussion, 'studying literature for literature's sake' is used to show that literature istaught for the values that it has, and to differentiate its meaning from using it only as a resource for language teaching. The major preoccupation of texts such as *Literature in the Language Classroom* (Collie and Slater, 1987) and *The Web of Words: Exploring Literature through* (Carter and Long, 19 87) seems tobe with the mere attainment of language skills. Reader-response approach, on the other hand, promotes the teaching for its own sake. However, the multiple dialogic processes that takes place in class between the reader and the text, between teacher and student, and among student readers makes the foreign language classroom more meaningful, and thus making the acquisition of language more a genuine engagement with the text. By applying the reader-response approach in teaching encourages students to interact with the text, express their responses, and discuss with others. This helps them to better comprehend and interpret literary texts, and acquire improved language skills, thus justifying the benefits of 'the integrated model'.

Insights from task-based Language Teaching
The reader –response theory is put into classroom through tasks. The principles of task-based language teaching enables students to process the information that is required in order to give their responses to texts.

It is the 'integrated model' combines the ideas that are found in the reader-response theory with that of task based teaching. It has been some years since the notion of 'task' made its impact in ESL/EFL. Task-based teaching "refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching" (Richards and Rogers, 2001:223). The approach evolved as a branch of communicative language teaching, inwhich learners themselves discover the system for learning.

II.   CONCLUSION
The main aim of this paper is to review literature related to study. It justifies teaching literaturethrough an 'integrated model'. The model uses insights from reader-response theory. The model uses insights from reader-response theory and task- based language teaching approach. The task-based language teaching and the concepts that embodies and its possible applications in integrating literature and language teaching.

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