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LET'S SERVE A MOCKTAIL OF LITERATURE IN ESL CLASSROOMS:
BLENDED LITERATURE

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Abstract

This paper discusses not only significance of literature in ESL classrooms but also presents suppliance claim for the need of an up-graded literature with a blend of classical and contemporary literature. Further, it directs educational departments to review the various aspects and have a thorough understanding with living styles of the present generation and their necessities. It discusses various characteristics of generation z and attempts to display the unmatched content of the learning, its objectives and the outcomes in form of: the teaching inputs – the necessity – the outputs. Hence, it argues and promotes why there is a need to have a blended classical and contemporary literature as the content of ESL classrooms.

Keywords: significance and impact of Literature, characteristics of Generations, teaching inputs – the necessity – the outputs, Call for contemporary, claims for blended literature.

Introduction

A series of debates is need to discuss various facets and utility of literature in English as a second language learning classrooms, time by time.. English Literature can introduce students to a range of aspects of life experiences, not only of the English Language but also culture to mould the youngsters towards a proper and respectful living. It helps in understating different human nature, traits and various characteristics. Literature has been a great source of cultures, ethics, norms and morals which works as raw material of a learning and fostering factory to bring out a finished and useful product of the society.

But, which society are we preparing the learners, present or past? The answer is past because till present day many classrooms literature content has been taken from classical literature. It is working as day and night which meets at horizon for a limited time out of 24 hours. The purpose and the requirements of day and night are entirely different, language and experiences of day time is to communicate and build

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relationship, personally and professionally; and aesthetic pleasurable relaxing experiences for night. Both are necessary for humans to maintain balance between robotic day life and to rejuvenate at night for human life.

Similarly, is not the present teaching content works as old version of learning in the age 5G and 3D? Serve the same which is required. No soft drink quenches the thirst of water. In the present scenario of 24/7 working style which is for some people is to earn bread and butter and to other it's a race for high ranks. This is the generation who needs to carry Corporate Chanakya, (Radhakrishnan Pillai, 2013) in one hand as protection shield and on the other hand needs only rest physically and mentally. Will the learners understand the underlying meanings of Corporate Chanakya with a background of Malgudi Days (R.K.Narayan, 1986) and classical literature with no glimpse of corporate working circumstances?

In this way, the input of the classrooms have become like run against tide to achieve the present world necessities and thus, the outcomes of the learning factory found themselves helpless to cope with globalization contest. But, this is undeniable fact that it the utmost responsibility of educational department to extinguish the ruthlessness smoke of scorching humanity among human learners. It is educational department which not only has to prevent characteristics of mankind

but also inculcate and sustain humanity in learners.

Therefore, it is the time for educational department to work as a pair of shield and spare, simultaneously. One side it has to protect the essence of teaching of a language as a shield and other side , it has to sharpen learners with latest tools the sword of present domain and future endeavors at ease. To achieve this challenge, educational department needs to have a blended learning content of both classical literature to sustain human beings as human beings and contemporary literature to prepare learners to handle present and up-coming life style.

WHETHER TO USE LITERATURE IN ESL CLASSROOMS OR NOT? BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS REQUIRED TO BE CONSIDERED.

McKay (1982) mentions some of the common arguments against utilizing literature. The first one is the lack of contribution of literature to the teaching of grammar which is one of the important goals of language teaching program. The reason for this is the structural complexity and unique use of language in literature. The second argument is that the literature does not help the students to reach their academic and occupational goals. The third one is the specific cultural viewpoints which are reflected in every piece of literature. Grasping and making sense of the cultural perspectives may be difficult for

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the students especially for EFL or ESL students.

According to Povey (1972) reading literature familiarizes students or learners with subtle vocabulary usage and new and complex syntax and through this contribute to the extension of language usage and linguistic knowledge. Another advantage of using literature in language classes is the promotion of language use or communication especially in EFL settings.

The earlier researchers have advocated that literature contributes incontrovertibly in language learning. But, besides, the role it plays to teach and develop Language skills among the learners, the other contributions of literature are the influencing motivational or affective and experiential factors which grooms the personality of the learners and helps them to be a bestowed member of the society. Another benefit of the literature is the encouragement of tolerance for cultural differences and promotion of creativity in the students.

One more practical illustration of the best use of literature and the requirement for upgradation of literature is the present contents of ESL syllabus at various level of learning. Rudyard Kipling's poem 'If' is the best piece of literature for every era of learners due to its evergreen meaningful and motivating message. This promotes soft skill of intrapersonal to deal with the challenges in life. On contrary, Robert Frost's poem 'Road Not Taken' appears as recapitulation one to three times during the

learning tenure Moreover, in present scenario where decision making has become the part of group involvement in both personal and professional activities. Hence, the message of the text is stoppage of progress.

Thus, it is clear that literature as a teaching tool plays an impeccable role in Language classrooms. In addition, it shapes learners' behavior. But, the contretemps is, which era the learners are experiencing through classical literature to deal which world? Do you we find those flamboyant experiences of life which are unobtrusive to present world are supportive? No, these will something like replacing soft drinks to water. It is like expecting protagonists of classical literature to deal with the computer world. Similarly, when the then time society finds incompetent to deal the world of microchips, how can current evolved generation be fruitful from fossilized culture?

EXISTENCE OF THE TERM 'BORING CLASS'

Day by day the challenges of the language teacher have been increasing immensely in various aspects of language teaching from the comprehending of the teaching text to handling the real pedagogical classrooms experiences. At the end of the day, a language teacher wrap-up the indifferent and unsatisfying teaching experiences because his/her learners were passive and disconnected with the teaching content during the class. Why the learners do not

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find themselves connected with the content? This answer is either the content is obvious to predict or dry as of other 4/5 core subjects of their curriculum or left with unimaginable world.

Teaching language does not stick to teach language skills but also to provide life skills to meet their future requirements. Presently, the purpose of every ELT teacher is to rear the upcoming generation as a complete compact of advanced corporate society. The objective of formal education is to fabricate learners as future resourceful personnel who not only be magnanimous human beings but also competent members of the society; and to achieve this, literature is the best option to dole out the aim of teaching English as a language as well as establishes experiences of present and upcoming life. But, the question is, will the classical conduct and departments fabricate present generation for future endeavours? The reply is 'No'.

The teaching classic literature in Language classrooms is out-dated now. The long journey from the taught to the teach has made the classrooms rolled on in the similar and sometimes same kind of learning experiences from classical literature which neither cope with the expectations of the present generation nor satisfied the teacher who after an attempt to inculcate the classical characters conduct expects well-mannered & polished behaviour from the learners. But do they really are? The answer is 'No'.

This research paper discusses the reason why the answer is 'NO'; and to find out the reason of the earlier negative reply, we need to understand and compare the characteristics of present generation / learners to the literary classical content which are discussed below:

THE CHARACTERISTICS

Steve Robertson (2018) has well described the most prominent characteristics of Generation Z as:

1. Gen Z is technologically advanced and knew how to use a Smartphone from an early age.
2. Gen Z representatives have never seen the world without the internet and thus have affinity for texting and messaging on mobile apps or online platforms, sometimes even over in-person, face-to-face communication.
3. Another characteristic of the Gen Z population is that they absorb tons of new information every day. Gen Z kids spend several hours a day in social media or searching the internet for information.
4. According to infographics by Upfront Analytics, Generation Z perceives information visually, so marketing campaigns that are targeted at Gen Z revolve around storytelling, explainer videos, and other forms of visualization.
5. Being independent, self confident and autonomous are also some of the key characteristics of Generation Z. They do not rely on their parents as much as previous

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teen generations did. The reason is that the internet and technologies allow Gen Z to start earning money at much earlier age than their parents.

6. As Millennial Branding reports in their research of high school internship programs, 72% of modern high school students are thinking of starting their own business in the future. Meanwhile, 76% hope that their future jobs will be derived from their hobbies.

7. This generation has been accused of having an attention span shorter than its predecessors, however it is actually an evolved 8-Second Filter. This 8-second filter is helping them to curate their feeds and focus on what matters to them, and although you must work to become a part of it - once you have grabbed their attention they tend to remain loyal.

8. Gen Z is environmentally aware. They value the eco-friendly and healthy lifestyle much more than any previous generation. Maybe this generation will actually have a positive impact on the environment.

9. Multitasking is also one of the positive generation Z traits. Due to their extraordinary ability to process and absorb lots of information within seconds, Gen Z kids can easily handle several tasks at once. Do the mentioned characteristics matches with the characteristics of classical literature?

Nowadays, the language teachers and the learners have become the two sides of a

coin. Here, in a language class, learners are experiencing a kind of imaginative life merely to attain few old-fashioned morals, culture, values and ethics which they are not going to use out of the classroom. Moreover, in the very next core subject class they are being prepared to be more practical and deal with present and futuristic world. Are we not pressurizing the well grown generation who are the natives of the digital and gadget world and moves on skates and formula one to have an experience of walking through the shrubbery? We cannot deny the fact that this generation is very well known as the Generation Z because they are living a very practical life style and are ambitious to grow faster and achieve what they need with the help of gadget and internet world.

NEED OF UPGRADATION

When upgradation in other fields of education is consummately advancing, then why not the literature texts or content? International and National Educational Boards, Institutions, Organizations and Teaching Fraternity have been working on and insisting to prevail and promote quality education and prepared our future budding learners for the world of future. Hence, directs teaching fraternity to follow and adopt educational theories in their teaching plans and effectuate them which is really essential to standardize and rationalized education system.

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Standard agencies such as NCERT, UGC, AICTE, NBA & NAAC for quality checks in education system and renovating the teaching system from black board instructions to virtual presentations, then, why not the content of literature for ESL classrooms? Then the parallel question arises for segregation of English as language and literature. Although both are two sides of a coin; and together strengthen the learners' efficiency and prepare them to handle personal, social and professional life.

Bloom Taxonomy which was proposed by Benjamin Bloom, an educational psychologist at the University of Chicago. It is a classification of the different objectives and skills that educators set for their students (learning objectives); and hence, has been recommended as the destined pillars of learning objectives by the entire educational departments of the world. These 6 levels are being used to structure the learning objectives, lessons, and assessments of every learning course. The attention need to be paid to its very first level which deals with the cognitive facets: Remembering Retrieving, Recognizing, and Recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory. This primary classification level constructs the learners' further actions i.e. Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating and Creating. Hence, what inputs or experiences are being provided in the form of learning content for the present generation to

remember, to retrieve or to recollect out of classical literature? This generation has to deal the scenario of present chameleon world where every thought, act and decision is unpredictable and dependable on the demand of the hour.

The argument is not about why the classical literature is part of language curriculum but why only it is the part of teaching content prescribes for 21st century's generation? Presently, many departments of classical era or literature is being taken as 'once upon a time'; and it is true. We cannot push back present learners from sky creeper living style to become habitants of meadows.

CALL FOR CONTEMPORARY LITERATURES OF ALL LANGUAGES OF THE WORLD WHICH ARE RELEVANT FOR ESL PRESENT DAYS CLASSROOMS; AND SERVE A MOCKTAIL TO OUR LEARNERS.

THE DEFINITION

The main difference between a cocktail and mocktail is that cocktail is a beverage that requires mixing either one type of alcohol with juices, soft drink, and other fruits or mixing multiple alcoholic drinks with juices or ice tea and mocktail is any mixed drink that does not have alcohol. (Wikipedia).

"The 21st century has become the era of multi-media where books and newspapers

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are being replaced by television and the internet. Young men and women are looking for new and faster ways to entertain themselves that does not require as much effort as reading and thinking. Reading has become a chore you have been told to do by your parents or your teachers; it is no longer seen as activity young students enjoy doing. The outcome of this is that the multimedia world is rapidly growing while the literature era is slowly fading away”.1 (Fatma, 2010)

Through teaching English students just couldn't engage with the subject matter but preparing them to face the present and upcoming challenges of the world. At a time when the common aim of those in education, certainly the majority of us, is to prepare pupils for a world that evolves at the speed of fiber-optics, the role of literature and its importance in equipping our pupils for the future which has never been more predictable but surely expect an advanced version of lifestyle.

Learners are encouraged to express their opinions, feelings and opinions and make connections between their own personal and cultural experiences and those expressed in the text. Another aspect of this model is that it helps learners develop knowledge of ideas and language – content and formal schemata – through different themes and topics.

Conclusion

When a five years old child can create own story out of the surrounding world of a garden, think about its potentiality of the learner and thus, serve accordingly. Classics, or novels that are generally accepted as exemplary works of fiction, teach students a great deal, but contemporary literature has the potential to prepare learners to deal present world. The main aim of education is to prepare present generation to face present scenario and be ready for future, in addition to this aspect, the learners must be groomed to be part of well cultured human society. Hence, this paper recommends a blended literature for Indian ESL Classrooms.

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