

Literature And Translation For Effective Teaching In Secondary School English Classes Of Arabic Students

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Abstract

This paper specifies that involving literary texts in the teaching class, especially in the context of the Arab world, is detrimental. Since major troubles are attributed to the negative transfer due to linguistic differences between Arabic and English, literary texts can be corrective and therapeutic. They provide the required contexts to socialize young learners with the language in use. The pragmatic function of language dictates much more than contrived examples to come to terms with its intended meaning. Literature-based teaching makes learning more natural than artificial through authentic language and make-believe situations. The flip side is that the language of literary texts may be troublesome, but this inconvenience can be wiped away by literary translation. According to the questionnaire respondents regarding the inclusion of translation in the teaching class, it can be applied without demur since Arab learners mechanically translate explicitly or silently throughout the lesson. As such, the blend of literature and English language teaching with the help of literary translation can be adequate pedagogic support for secondary school Arab learners.

Keywords: Arab Learners; Literature; Skills; Translation; Teaching

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to prove that including literature in teaching basic English language skills is promising. It analyzes the role of literature in the language classroom and calls into question the historic separation between the study of language and literature. Opponents of the marriage of language and literature in English language teaching posit that literary language has confusing metaphorical implications that handicap the teaching process overall. Literary language may be distinguished from ordinary or non-literary language on the grounds of the diverse shades of meaning, the frequent use of abstract entities and the aesthetic function that may be hard for foreign language learners to assimilate. Students of science and technology may find literature irrelevant to their needs either. Accordingly, literature has been excluded from the syllabuses of language teaching programs that apply The Direct Method, Situational Language Teaching and especially Audiolingualism. Paradoxically enough, the combination of literature and English language teaching does not focus on the real spirit of literature as an artistic form devised to communicate feelings, thoughts and ideas beyond the literal meaning of language but to make the process of teaching much more authentic and time-saving.

The inclusion of literature in English language teaching in secondary school Arab classes is condemned for cultural and linguistic arguments. Mahmoud, M. M. A. argues that some students might feel unease with literary texts if they notice that their own beliefs

or culture are denied in the new cultural context (2015). Other critics such as Henry Sweet, in *The Practical Study of Languages, 1964*, think that literature has nothing to do with students who have only rudimentary knowledge of English and their exposure to English literature may lead to frustration and failure (Sweet, 1964). However, other critics vouch for the use of literature in teaching English in Arab classes. Al-Migdadi, M. H contends that incorporating cultural aspects of English-speaking countries is essential for improving the student's understanding of the language and its culture. His study also reveals that teaching English and its culture is not a potential threat to Arabic or Islamic cultural values (Migdadi, 2008). As far as the use of translation is concerned, Deller and Rinvoluceri (2002) do not support the random use of the native language and warn the language teachers of the negative effects of its over-use in the EFL classroom (DELLER & Rinvoluceri, 2017). Harbord also supports the discrimination between L1 and L2, and he admits that overusing L1 makes students trust that word-for-word translation is a useful technique; accordingly, they will work towards transferring meaning in learning L2 (Harbord, 1992). However, Rababah (2003) highlights the importance of using L1 in language teaching. He demonstrates this to professionally characterize the status of the EFL learning situation in Jordan (Rabah, 2003). Shimizu shows that "time-saving" is the major impetus in favor of using LI (Shimizu, 2006). This contention is further corroborated by Turnbull (2001) by stating, "I know from my personal experience that it is tempting to use the L1 to save time" (Turnbull, 2001). Overall, several studies have been conducted either in favour or against the use of literature in English language teaching in secondary school Arab classes, but the combination of popular literature, especially short stories, and free translation has never been posited as a useful pedagogical tool.

METHOD

The research aims at helping Arab learners of the English language to improve and promote their assimilation of the English language as regards the major troubles stemming from the language interference between Arabic and English especially in terms of the negative transfer. The linguistic discrepancies between Arabic and English due to their distinct language families, Semitic and Indo-European respectively, along with the cultural divergence slow down the learning process. As they belong to discrete language families, both languages exhibit grammatical, lexical and pragmatic inconsistencies. However, these linguistic impediments can be moderated if not entirely removed by including literary texts, concise stories and free translation, to ensure much more teaching effectiveness. This contention is testified and sustained by a group of in-service secondary school teachers in some Arab counties through a mailed questionnaire.

The questionnaire involves a sample of 315 in-service secondary school teachers from Tunisia, Sudan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia according to a Likert-type scale where 15 were invalid. It applies to secondary school students. These teachers are experienced with an average of 10 years of ESL teaching. They do not teach pure literature but used it in teaching English as a second language. The results were compiled through a mailed questionnaire. The questions are very clear and consistent with the level of secondary school teachers.

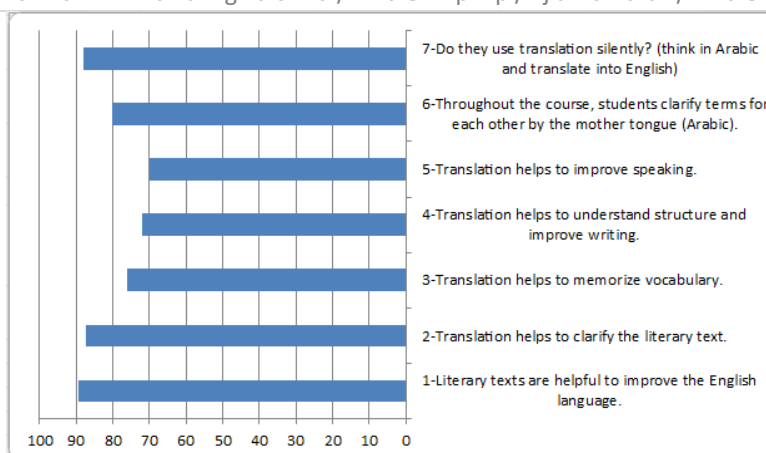


Figure 1. The questionnaire involves a sample of 315 in-service secondary school teachers from Tunisia, Sudan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the discrepancies between Arabic and English on structural, semantic and pragmatic levels. It reveals the reasons for including literature in English language teaching on reading, writing, listening and speaking levels. It discusses the constraints attached to involving literature in English language teaching and suggests literary translation as a remedy for these limitations.

The Discrepancies Between Arabic and English

1. Linguistic Discrepancies On A Structural Level

Regarding grammar, Arab young learners mistakenly juxtapose the grammar of English and that of Arabic, thinking that they are equivalent. However, many grammatical features in English if applied by Arab learners in parallel with the Arab language are likely confusing. Building on Ghazala (Ghazala, 2014), the verb "to be" once it acts as the main verb or as an auxiliary can lead to semantic confusion. The same problems are attached to "to do" and "to have". The auxiliary do that makes the negative and interrogative in English does not have a direct synonym in Arabic. For instance, "she does not write poetry" can be transcribed as "لا تكتب الشعر" and "does she write poetry?" as "هل تكتب الشعر". Moreover, to have, especially, as a main verb is polysomic in English. For instance, "she has a car" can be rendered as "تملك سيارة" and "she has to consult the doctor" is transformed as "يجب عليها مراجعة الطبيب" among many other associative significances. Modal auxiliary verbs, also, have many functions in English language that can be expressed differently in Arabic language. To illustrate, "I can speak English" gives "أستطيع التحدث بالإنجليزي" and "you can go out" gives "يمكنك الخروج". Furthermore, Arabic can place the verb before the subject especially in speech whereas the English sentence is nominal. This distinction can result in an awkward transcription: "The boy plays football", as a proof, will give "يلعب الولد كرة القدم" or "الولد يلعب كرة القدم". Many other distinctions such as gerunds, tenses, adjectives, and polite forms can cause great confusion for young Arab learners as well.

2. On A Semantic Level

In respect of lexical variation, Arab learners are in a disadvantageous position to build up their repertoire of vocabulary. Lexical items in English, as well as Arabic, have literal as well as connotative meanings; therefore, strict synonyms between English terms

and Arabic are scarce. For instance, Arabs have about 300 terms for "the sword" such as – البتار – الحسام- المهند-الصحيفة –البارقة-الصارم- البتار. Idiomatic expressions may involve cultural implications in their folds. As an illustration, "adding insult to injury" can be translated as اضافة الاهانة الى الجرح and not مما زاد الطين بلة. And "he has a memory like an elephant" gives لديه ذاكرة قوية and not لديه ذاكرة مثل الفيل, if culturally assumed.

3. On A Pragmatic Level

Pragmatic differences may contribute to Arab learners' confusion as well. Interestingly, pragmatic features are related to techniques of writing that generate meaning departure from the propositional content of the source language text. In *The Palace Walk* by Najib Mahfouz, (بين القصرين ص 33)

ولما فرغن من الفطور قالت الام: عليك يا عائشة الغسيل اليوم وعلى خديجة تنظيف البيت is rendered as "When they had finished breakfast, the mother said, 'Aicha, you do the laundry today and Khadija will clean the house' " (*Palace Walk*, p. 32). The translation does not keep the perlocutionary effect as عليك implies a deontic force and not the future (Bahaa-eddin, 2011). In the same source, Khadija speaking to her mother to signal her surprise about how fat Um Hanafi is من اين تجيها هذه السمنة المفرطة؟ is translated as "how did she get so fat" and not literally "Where did you get this excessive obesity". Notice that من اين in this case is not used to ask for a place but to express exclamation (p. 27-28). Still, Arab learners are not entitled to equate the English and Arabic styles straightforwardly as the slang and colloquial styles in English sound rude in the Arab context. For example, "pig out", which be translated as كل حتى التخمة is ludicrous in the Arab context where تفضل بالاكل "please eat" is preferred. Briefly, the above-stated examples are just a few illustrations that attest to the difficulties that young Arab learners of the English language may come across while trying to fathom the essence of the English language.

Reasons For Including Literature In English Language Teaching

The emergence of communicative language teaching in the 1970s shifted the focus towards the appropriation of authentic materials where the inclusion of literature in English language teaching gained currency once more. Scholars involving, for instance, (Widdowson, 1975), (Carter, 1985) contend that language and literature are not antithetical areas because literature is interested in the study of language in action, namely language used in distinct contexts. Indeed, the main purpose of literature is to help learners to acquire communicative competence since linguistic competence is not sufficient to grapple with the sociocultural nuances of language use.

Beforehand, a literary work can be defined "as a text written in literary language" (Robson & Robson, 1984). (McRae, 1991) distinguishes between Literature with a capital 'L', referring to canonical literature, and literature with a small 'l', referring to texts "whose imaginative content will stimulate reaction and response in the receiver". (G. Hall, 2016, p. 457) characterizes the latter as "stories, biography, travel literature, journalism, play scripts, diaries and blogs". Though in some educational systems (e.g. Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland), canonical 'L'iterature is a part of the English foreign language secondary curriculum, in some respects, including the Arab world, the context of this study, popular literature that is intended to entertain the masses such as songs, folktales, short stories and short poems is applied. Hence, popular literature is much more recommended owing to its simple language, plots and themes.

Literature generally serves as a medium to transmit culture and overall human values (Tomlinson, 1985). (Collie & Slater, 1987) focused on the positive contributions of language learning through literature in as much as literary texts provide authentic materials exposing the learner to different styles and registers through not only "canonical texts" but also an extensive "range of cultural contexts" (Bloor & Bloor, 2004) to become familiar with many utterances, or occasion sentences. Popular literary works, such as songs, plays, short stories, etc. make it easier to understand and inculcate the transactional and interactional functions of language in a certain context. 89 % of the respondents to the questionnaire validate the imports of literature in English language teaching (See appendix). Despite presenting imaginary settings, the literary world imitates life-like spaces and characters. The reader/learner capitalizes on such literary worlds to be familiar with the language being used naturally given that he/she is deprived of target language exposure. In this context, the use of literature in language teaching is grounded in different levels.

1. On The Lexical And Structural Levels

Literature plays a major role in enhancing lexical items and syntactic structures. Literary texts allow learners to read linguistic items and structures in authentic materials as far as they secure new vocabularies and structures and improve the learners' communicative competence. Along with contributing to world knowledge, choosing books appropriate to real-life experiences, emotions, or dreams of the learner is motivating and amusing (Ur, 1999, p. 89) to promote critical-thinking abilities rather than thinking by using the native language.

2. On The Pragmatic Level

Critical thinking helps learners to explore the social function of language. Literature provides a host of contexts to look at language beyond the formalistic features, namely the interactional functions of language. A sentence such as "Why don't you close the door?" Can be read as an interrogation from a structural viewpoint but it is ambiguous from a functional standpoint as it can be read as a question, request, command, and plea in tune with distinct social situations (Gupta, 2004). Communication comprises much more than simply a knowledge of forms; it depends crucially on the ability to use forms in different contexts.

Long-standing structurally-based methodologies fall short of accounting for the interactional functions. The structural approach focused on learning by emphasizing the study of the formal language system. Communicative language teaching emphasizes natural learning by creating language contexts that facilitate the process of assimilation mentioned earlier. Provided that only by exposure to language beyond the level of structure, language learners can develop an aptitude to create the kind of spontaneous discourse required in real-world communicative situations. (Tarone, Yule, & Yule, 1989) explain, In recent years, there has been a major shift in perspective within the language teaching profession concerning the nature of what is to be taught. In relatively simple terms, there has been a change of emphasis from presenting language as a set of forms (grammatical, phonological, lexical) which have to be learned and practised, to presenting language as a functional system which is used to fulfil a range of communicative purposes.

Chomsky's language acquisition device encourages language practitioners to focus on the learners' active participation in the learning process by creating their linguistic propositions and taking advantage of their mistakes to reach the correct structures. The classroom should play the role of society where learners express their linguistic

competence as "common patterns in using reading and writing in a particular situation" and "bring their cultural knowledge to an activity" (Barton, 2017). What learners do with their assimilation of literate practices is labelled "literacy events" (J. S. Hedgcock & Ferris, 2018).

English language teaching is not interested in a flawless language spoken by proficient speakers in appropriate situations but in language as a social reality. As such, it goes beyond securing linguistic competence to acquire what Dell Hymes calls "communicative competence". Rather than focusing on a sentence as with the structuralists, the teaching process has to deal with a discourse to meet the different language functions and sociolinguistic usages. The discourse of literature is geared to meet this learning need. So, rather than just mastering the ability to generate accurate structures, learners should be able to adjust literacy events to the communicative events and modulate their speech in consistency with the type, topic and goal of them. To this end, failing to master the sociocultural rules of a foreign language in respect of styles, registers and body gestures that differ from one society to another leads to a linguistic limit, misunderstanding and lack of communication.

Socio-cultural differences in different situations are very noticeable between and across diverse cultures. Cross-cultural communication involves an understanding of how people from different cultures speak, communicate, and perceive the world around them. There is a Southeast Asian proverb that says: 'Misunderstandings don't exist; only the failure to communicate exists.' This proverb sounds feasible. 'The essence of effective cross-cultural communication has more to do with releasing the "right" response than with sending the 'right' messages' (E. T. Hall & Hall, 1990). The failure to communicate springs from the ignorance of other people's cultures- their history, religion, art, customs, values and so on. Different cultures have diverse standards and potentials of behaviour in both official and casual situations, for instance, social dealings, conferences or negotiations. A shortage of awareness of and sensitivity to these variances can generate misunderstandings and sometimes even offences. To eschew being offensive, literature helps learners to assimilate both the linguistic and the cultural properties of a language in both contexts, that of situation in particular and that of culture overall. Learners move from getting to know language to coming to use language appropriately.

Literature And Reading

Literary texts provide cultural contexts to get acquainted with the distinct stylistic uses of the English language. First, a glossary can be attached to the text to give the literal meaning of the difficult terminologies to alleviate the learners' anxiety and to build an adequate "schemata" knowledge about the text structures, ideas, and themes that are crucial to understand the text (Lazar, 1993). For example, if learners have never been to a castle, as is the case with many secondary school pupils in rural areas, a text from *Castle and Knight* (2005) by Fleur Star is hard for them to grasp without the pre-reading discussion of the semantic map of the related concepts such as castle, wood, stone and monuments. After skimming the text for a gist, learners will start scanning the text for details about the setting, characters and plot. In this way, linguistic structures and lexical items are not studied in isolation but within a cultural context that makes the reading process enjoyable and memorable. Moving to inference, students have to employ the newly discovered vocabulary while making speculation about the characters and especially the plot and major themes.

Very often in textbooks, grammar and vocabulary are presented out of context where explanatory examples are contrived to help learners internalize them through exercises involving grilling, memorizing, and practice. This non-natural material cannot lead to generalization in so far as they result in rigid bogus English unable to meet distinct ordinary contexts. For example, providing learners with a set of sentences in the active voice and changing them into the passive one after a given structure is a typical way of presenting the passive voice. However, Nuan Davis contends that the process of transformation should be accompanied by tasks that provide the learners with occasions to explore when it is communicatively suitable to use the passive rather than the active voice (Cited in Candlin & Mercer, 2001).

Applying decontextualized examples is not effective as it fails to make learners aware of language behaviour. For instance, focusing on the linguistic shift from the active to the passive voice does not help the learners to be familiar with the communicative meaning of the passive, that is how and when to use the passive or the active voice. Otherwise, learning the active-passive voice in context would help the learners to use the structure appropriately in social events. For instance, the use of passive voice in the text of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (2005) can be much more useful than applying decontextualized examples:

Pap he *hadn't been seen* for more than a year, and that was comfortable for me; I didn't want to see him no more. He used to always whale me when he was sober and could get his hands on me; though I used to take him to the woods most of the time when he was around. Well, about this time *he was found* in the river drowned, about twelve miles above town, so people said. They judged it was him, anyway; said this drowned man was just his size and *was ragged*, and had uncommon long hair, which was all like pap; but they couldn't make nothing out of the face, because *it had been* in the water so long it wasn't much like a face at all. They said he was floating on his back in the water (Twain, 2003).

The writer opts to leave the agent of the verb vague and unspecified. The agent is mystified when the focus is shifted from the agent (the doer of the action) to the patient, Pap, (the receiver of the action). Learners then get the point that linguistic strategies are backing up the use of either voice. Additionally, the significance of verbs such as "to whale" meaning strike, "to take the wood" meaning to flee, and "ragged" meaning worn out and distort can be inferred from the co-text through the previous associations and the context of situation or the outsider world. (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 5) confirms the contextual introduction of new lexical and syntactic items:

[l]iterature provides a rich context in which individual lexical or syntactical items are made more memorable. Reading a substantial and contextualized body of text, students gain familiarity with sentences, the variety of possible structures, the different ways of connecting ideas . . . The extensive reading required in tackling a novel or a long play develops the student's ability to make inferences from linguistic clues and to deduce meaning from context, *both useful tools in reading other sorts of material as well.* (emphasis added)

The difficulty of linguistic items that go beyond morpho-syntactic knowledge cannot be cleared up while studying them in isolation. The trouble of meaning depends on the enlightenment of the co-text and context of the text along with the instructional assistance of the instructor, which makes "the road map" for the learners' understanding (J. Hedgcock & Ferris, 2009). Likewise, learners need to understand that some words may

be polysemic as they can have distinct significances in other contexts. Literary texts provide the required contexts to introduce their distinct stylistic uses of them.

Literature And Writing

Literature plays a crucial role in the post-reading stage that is devoted to the writing process, as writing is a communicative act framed by a context. It provides the context of writing, serves as a prototype and provides various interesting topics in connection with the major themes being carried by the literary text. Much like the understanding of a literary text, it is unproductive to expect learners to write about things that are outside of their real world without the illumination of the pre-reading activities. Paraphrasing, adaptation and summary writing depend on the background knowledge of the learners. Reading a text from *Things Fall Apart*, for instance, dictates a sort of cultural familiarity with the African context:

The Feast of the New Yam was approaching and Umuofia was in festival mood. It was an occasion for giving thanks to Ani, the earth goddess and the source of all fertility. Ani played a greater part in the life of the people than any other deity. She was the ultimate judge of morality and conduct. And what was more, she was in close communion with the departed fathers of the clan whose bodies had been committed to earth. (Chinua, 1994)

The understanding of the text passes through the familiarity with terms such as Yam (the edible starchy tuber of a climbing plant that is widely grown in tropical and subtropical countries), Umuophia (Fictional Nigerian clan) and Ani (God). Thus, the understanding of the text is much secured by clarifying the literary text's world in advance. Once again, literary works provide contexts and life-like examples to be imitated so that students think creatively in guided and free writing.

1. Replicating The Model

Modelling is a teaching strategy that can be used to introduce students to the goals, forms and functions of different writing types by rewriting the texts being studied (Falvey & Kennedy, 1997). Against the classical approach of teaching, as the focus was set on accuracy at the sentential level rather than fluency, modelling is interested in the practice of reproducing the text in its cultural context. This act of rewriting the text helps students to master a language in different situations. To familiarize themselves with language in its social or situational context, learners are entitled "to momentarily see the world through the eyes of a native speaker or to occasionally behave in ways that conform to native speaker expectations" (Kramsch, 2014, p. 33). Imitating these exemplars helps learners to write coherent and organised sentences to form a meaningful whole.

The literary text is a springboard that makes learners familiar not only with the linguistic cohesion (grammatical and lexical) but also with the pragmatic coherence (contextual). The speaker's communicative intention and the hearer's recognition of that intention help to determine the pragmatic coherence. Learners have to use language not only as a static entity but as a dynamic process. The coherent discourse involves a semantically unified unit as the discourse markers are used to associate different segments in a discourse. It is consistent with the context of situation, too. Taking the examples from (H. G. Widdowson, 1979), the first sample dialogue in (1) is an example of cohesion and (2) is that of coherence.

- (1) a- Can you go to Edinburgh tomorrow?
b- Yes, I can.

- (2) a- Can you go to Edinburgh tomorrow?
b- D.E.A. pilots are on strike.

In (1), the cohesion is secured by the formal device of the ellipsis. Otherwise, in the case of (2), coherence is attributed to extra-linguistic factors, namely the contextual aspect: "an airplane does not fly as there is a strike going on". The discourse knowledge of the world outside the text generates unity of meaning. Literature provides life-like examples that make learners use extra-linguistic factors in the process of meaning-making. The following text from *Things Fall Apart* (1994) is a case in point:

His body rattled like a piece of dry stick in his empty shell. So he began to plan how he would go to the sky'. But he had no wings, 'said Ezinma'. Be patient, 'replied her mother'. That is the story (p. 96).

On the surface level, the text is well-formed grammatically, but it is thematically ill-formed. The text is connected by the referential pronoun "he", the causal conjunction "so", and the continuity of tense, the simple past. However, it is difficult to see a link between the themes of the above clauses especially "he had no wings", "Be patient" and "That is the story". The violation of the maxims of relation and manner in "Be patient" and "that is the story" indicates that participants actively cooperate to achieve coherence. The speaker and the hearer, thus, collaborate to keep the communicative process going. As meaning involves linguistic and situational factors where the context of language use is crucial, literary texts provide learners with the linguistic as well as the situational contexts to assimilate the newly-acquired language data, and fathom the manifold levels of meaning, the morphological and phonological patterning as well.

2. Literature Provides Topics For Writing

Literature can be a useful tool to improve writing in case the focus is shifted from the literary text as a static linguistic material to be read in context as a discourse being used to communicate oblique and explicit themes. Under the guidance of the instructor, a close look at the literary text makes the learners aware of the various writing strategies applied by the writer. Their understanding of the content material provides them with critical thinking that the process of writing needs badly. Undoubtedly, the language of literature improves the linguistic input that will be transformed as feedback in the process of writing.

Taken that literature is not only about words but overt ideas and implied themes, the grapple with the literary text leads learners to sort them out. They will be helpful as subject matters to improve writing. Learners are licensed to side with or against the implied messages carried by the text. They can also write summaries of the text or certain paragraphs in a competitive classroom atmosphere. They can step into the roles of major characters in some sort of role-play to appropriate the newly-acquired vocabularies for their expressive purposes. The assimilation of the cultural context of the text will encourage learners to rewrite, paraphrase and appropriate the stylistic devices being used in the text. For instance, proverbs and old saying in *Things Fall Apart* such as "when a mother-cow is chewing grass its young watch its mouth" (70-71), and the saying "if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings" (p. 8) are "the palm oil with which words are eaten" (p. 7). In Igbo culture, palm oil is a cultural artefact. It is served at special parties and ceremonies. Hence, proverbs are the oil that lubricates the communications nexuses and nodes. Learners' familiarity with the use of proverbs in Igbo culture motivates them to contextualize these linguistic structures in diverse communicative events.

Literature And The Speaking-Listening Skills

As it is mentioned by Lazar (1993), short poems, songs and plays foster listening and speaking activities. One of the major setbacks that should be dealt with in advance in the pre-reading or pre-listening activity is the illumination of the connotative association of the stylistic devices involved in poems or plays, including the metaphor, the simile, the metonymy, the synecdoche among many others. Indeed, "students may find it difficult to unravel the connections between apparently dissimilar objects or concepts" (Lazar, 1993). The understanding of the reader (or the listener), therefore, rests on the conceptualization of the world of the text as well as its cultural context that comprises different beliefs, attitudes and values. Accordingly, the instructor has to clarify the associative meaning beforehand by engaging the learners in some tasks as in the case of matching exercises between the denotative and connotative meaning of certain stylistic figures as well as multiple choices tasks to opt for the right stylistic, emotive or collocative associative meaning. As an illustration, the poem of Emily Dickinson can be useful:

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,
 And Mourners to and fro
 Kept treading—treading—till it seemed
 That Sense was breaking through—
 And when they all were seated,
 A Service, like a Drum—
 Kept beating—beating—till I thought
 My Mind was going numb—

This poem can be initiated by familiarizing the learners with the associative meaning of the term "funeral". An activity as follows can be helpful to relieve the learners from the hardship derived from the term funeral:

Table 1. Associate The Following Terms With Their Denotative And Connotative Meanings

No	Terms	Small letters	Denotation	Capital Letters	connotation	Numbers+small Letters+ capital letters
1	Funeral	a	To hit a surface and make sound	A	Cemetery-like space or central gathering space for mourners	1+b+B
2	Brain	b	A religious ceremony	B	Mental collapse	2+c+C
3	Mourners	c	The organ inside the head responsible for thought	C	Death beat	3+d+D
4	Drum	d	Persons attending the funeral	D	Army of lamenters celebrating the life of the dearly departed	4+c+C

It follows that such an exercise will be giving the learners a clear idea about the connotative association of the funeral in comparison with their own culture. It turns out an easy task to understand that the implied death in this funeral is metaphorical implying the mental breakdown of the poet. Henceforth, the poem provides an authentic context to raise the awareness of learners about the sociolinguistic function of language, which is the use of language in diverse social settings.

Subsequently, listening and speaking activities can be integrated while dealing with a poem or a dramatic text. Many activities can be applied to understand the gist of the poem and the figurative meaning of the stylistic devices. Learners can listen and fill in the gaps or listen and identify who is speaking, his/her accent and tone. They can also listen and classify different intonation patterns and stress uses that are clue-bearing to display the social and cultural identity of the speaker. Learners will practice speaking throughout while dealing with these activities.

Drama can play a crucial role in improving the mastery of listening-speaking skills as the context of a dramatic play helps the learners to apply their linguistic knowledge not only on the level of language per se but also language as a social behavior. (Baldwin & Fleming, 2003) argue: children need forms through which to explore and respond to text socially, emotionally, physically, morally, spiritually, culturally and cognitively. They need the opportunity to access text and express their developing understanding of texts, through art forms, involving the use and creation of visual images, movement and sound. Drama as a multi-sensory medium can provide an experiential structure for exploring text visually, auditorily and kinaesthetically.

Nurturing the communicative level of learners is grounded in staging authentic materials involving realistic contexts rather than rigidly rehearsing some structures. The ability of learners to communicate naturally in the classroom and in the end, in social contexts can be enhanced by some classroom communicative activities in terms of multiple choices, information gaps and productive responses. This process can be put into practice by focusing on dramatic texts. Drama means "action" or "deed" from the Greek *dran*, "to do" (Kennedy & Gioia, 2005). Hence, drama is a useful device to study language in action and improve the communicative competence of learners.

The dramatic text provides an opportunity for learners to express themselves through verbal expressions and gestures in role-play activities. Role-taking makes learners aware not only of the linguistic structures but also of the sociolinguistic discourse. However, dealing with cross-cultural encounters, learners apply their speech styles to the target language and this may lead to linguistic infidelity as regards the social and cultural transfer. Therefore, learners have to be sensitive to the different speech styles and registers of the target language. This extract from *The Death of the Salesman* (1949) by Arthur Miller could be a useful proof to note: Willy: Did Biff say anything after I went this morning? Linda: You shouldn't have criticized him, Willy, especially after he just got off the train. You mustn't lose your temper with him. Willy: **When the hell did I lose my temper?** I simply asked him if he was making any money. Is that a criticism?

Linda: But, dear, how could he make any money?

Willy [worried and angered]: There's such an **undercurrent** in him. He became a **moody** man. Did he apologize when I left this morning?

Linda: He was **crestfallen**, Willy. You know how he admires you. I think if **he finds himself**, then you'll both be happier and not fight any more.

Willy: How can he find himself on a farm? Is that a life? A farmhand? In the beginning, when he was young, I thought, well, a young man, it's good for him to **tramp around**, take a lot of different jobs. But it's more than ten years now and he has yet to make thirty-five dollars a week!

Linda: He's finding himself, Willy.

Willy: Not finding yourself at the age of thirty-four is a **disgrace!** (p. 5 emphasis added)

Many structures and vocabularies can be studied in this text such as the underlined structure of the interrogative form, the doubly underlined ones of blame and obligation respectively stated in the text and the vocabularies in boldface type. The dramatic text provides a make-believe situation where learners can use their social formulas appropriately. Different cultures may express attitudes differently. Teachers should be alert to the possibility of contextual constraints in the teaching process. In this case, it is Linda that blames Willy and gives him instructions, which may be awkward in certain patriarchal societies as the case in Arab culture. In addition, not finding one's self in American society at the age of 34 is a disgrace, which is a common trait in other societies, especially in poor countries. Likewise, distinct cultures use diverse linguistic strategies to express the speaker's displeasure. The expression, "when the hell", is widely used by English-speaking people but is avoided by others such as Arab-speaking individuals. All these linguistic structures and linguistic items are likely to be singled out in this passage to raise "the awareness" of learners about "their usage in literary discourse to convey distinctive messages" (H. Widdowson, 1975, p. 76) through the learners' practice of speaking and listening activities in the role play.

The Constraints Attached To Involving Literature Overall In English Language Teaching

Admittedly, using literature in English language teaching has acknowledged several pressing constraints. Many linguists such as (Topping, 1968) argue that literature should be excluded from the ESL curriculum because of its structural complexity, lack of conformity to standard grammatical rules, and remote cultural perspective. Responses to the inclusion of literary texts vary from pleasure to anxiety and frustration owing to the hardship related to the cultural references in the text (Lazar, 1993). Thus, literature reflects culture, but which culture it reflects as those literary texts are written by different authors from different Anglophone countries with diverse cultures. In this respect, learners may be perplexed by many cross-cultural differences as regards inexistent objects, idiomatic expressions, social relationships, customs, humour, jokes and taboo language. For this problem, (Lazar, 1993) asserts that teaching culture would be a waste of time. He purports that to overcome this problem, teachers should "select literary texts which are culturally universal or, at least culturally neutral, and which allow us to concentrate exclusively on language" (66-7). Though he suggests other strategies to cope with these setbacks such as providing explanatory notes or leading learners to infer the cultural references, his strategies remain speculative and unsatisfactory.

1. Literary Translation As A Remedy for Literature-Related Constraints

One of the solutions that can be added to come to grips with the problems raised by a literary text is literary translation. It is axiomatic that this procedure should be avoided in junior classes as it is mentioned by some linguists such as Lazar (1993). About 87% of the respondents to the questionnaire believe that literary translation is useful to clarify a literary text (See appendix). With the help of the instructor, learners have to delve deeply into the text to fathom its unique cultural specificities. (Duff & Maley, 1990) argue that at odds with the grammar-translation method that focuses on samples from the literature of the target language to study and consolidate the grammatical rules and lexical items without any interest in the literariness of the text, literary translation majors on the pragmatic use of the newly-acquired structures and lexical items while foregrounding the cultural differences between the source language and the target language, namely the

linguistic and extra-linguistic factors related to the meaning (p. 3). Hence, the instructor should be aware of "the lexical", "grammatical" and "cultural" "interference[s]" that may distort the essence of the source text (Parks, 2007, p. 2).

2. Lexical Interference

Lexical interference may lead to clumsy translation and deviations. To testify to this inclination, this extract from (Conrad, 2005) is useful:

He throws dust into everybody's eyes; he throws dust into your eyes, honourable sir; but he can't throw dust into my eyes. He is a big fool, honourable sir. I laughed contemptuously, and, turning on my heel, began to walk on again.

He throws dust into everybody's eyes can be translated as يذر الرماد في عيون الجميع. The word 'dust' is translated literally as التراب while the equivalent expression in Arabic is يذر الرماد العيون where 'dust' is translated into الرماد, that is ashes indeed. Explaining the association of dust with الرماد, (Lahlali & Abu Hattab, 2014) contend: this choice could be justified by the cultural as well as ecological contexts that are different for both languages. If we take the English idiom *to throw dust in the eyes*, its associative meaning is based on the effect of dust once thrown in someone's eyes blurring their vision and impeding their ability to see. The same sense is expressed in Arabic by using the equivalent of ashes rather than dust. Dust is, therefore, not expected to blur vision and hide reality in the Arabic context. Taking the English setting into consideration, you can rarely talk about deserts or dust storms. (p. 6)

Honourable Sir can be translated literally as السيد الشريف, whereas in Conrad's context, it means السيد المحترم, صاحب السعادة, صاحب الفخامة. The use of these terms of address is socially determined (Farghal & Almanna, 2015). Hence, it depends on the context regarding age, gender, position and social status to accord the relevant title in the Arab world. The term "fool" is a false cognate with فول which means beans. Also, fool denotatively implies crazy, silly and stupid which can be translated as احمق, غبي, مجنون respectively. In Arabic, it is often connected with مجنون. At last, the idiomatic expression "turn on my heel" literally means يدور حول كعب, while contextually it signifies يغادر بسرعة. Furthermore, the instructor/translator should be wary of the effect of collocations as the source language and the target may have distinct collocation assortments. For example, the term "secondhand" in *The Wedding of Zein* (1968) by Taib Salih collocates with women. The text reads: "Do you mean to say that his honour the Headmaster, when wanting to marry another wife in addition to the mother of his children, should marry a *second-hand woman* ?" (Emphasis added, p. 85). However, in the English language, it usually collocates with already-used objects such as clothes. Thus, with some lexical items, there is partial correspondence between the source language and the target language, so the instructor/translator has to be context-sensitive to avoid producing funny interpretations of the source language.

3. Grammatical Incompatibility

Grammatical problems, on the other side, are derived from the fact that Arabic and English do not have the same language family since Arabic is Semitic while English is Indo-European. Accordingly, they do not have the same structure. The basis of the Arabic language is a three-consonant root. Verb forms, nouns, adjectives, participles, etc. are formed by putting these root consonants into a fixed vowel pattern, modified by simple affixes (Swan & Bernard, 1987, p. 142). For instance, رسم meaning to paint, رسام meaning a painter, رسم meaning a paint. However, the English language does not follow

a regular pattern in the word-formation process. Moreover, both languages do not have the same word order as the Arabic language follows the verb-subject structure, especially in writing and the nominal structure whereas the nominal structure exclusively is followed by the English language. Many other translation shifts such as tenses, modal verbs and articles are different that should be borne in mind while translating.

4. Cross-Cultural Differences

The instructor/translator has also to care for cultural differences since language is a part and parcel of a culture that is "the totality of the beliefs and practices of a society" (Eugene Albert Nida, 2001). As translation is not a mere rendition of terms but a communication of meaning, cultural differences shouldn't be overlooked to avoid exoticizing and alienating the text. The instructor/translator takes issue with culturally specific terms and cultural gaps through different translation strategies such as loaning, calque and cultural substitution. In this guise, translation is an "intercultural transfer" (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998).

5. Free Translation As A Tool To Overcome The Challenges Of A Literary Text

As the instructor is not initially interested in translation in itself but in the contribution of literary translation to come to terms with the challenges of a literary text in English language teaching, fidelity and formal equivalence are side issues. As far as formal equivalence is concerned, the message is foregrounded, that is, its form and content, and there should be a close similarity between the source text's and the target text's message (Eugene A Nida, 1964). Admittedly, literary texts have different purposes and distinct audiences. The instructor hereby should be aware that his goal is to help young learners to develop their competence in the English language not to be professional translators. Nothing more than a gist translation of the text is required for the learners to easily understand the text in as much as the meaning is of great worth. Respectively, the instructor/translator can guide his/ her learners to make a free translation of some parts of the literary work to improve their reading comprehension ability in a limited period of time. Bahddine assumes that free translation, aims at an accurate representation of the original texts, paying little attention to the form and structure, also it must result in a version fluent and natural. But free translation does not mean to delete or add anything unnecessary to the original. (Hassan, 2014).

Simply put, free translation is preferred to secondary school learners as it keeps the content at the cost of the form, which is possibly a requirement at the university level. It permits a longer paraphrase of the source language as well. It does not commit the learners to translate every single term. Afterwards, the motivation of the pupils is ensured by the mere understanding of the cultural references of the source language.

Free translation of some parts of the literary works has to be assigned in the pre-reading activity to prepare the pupils to deal with the difficulties of the linguistic and, especially, the cultural references being involved. The task of translation can be done in group work or in pair work in a competitive classroom atmosphere to motivate the learners under the surveillance of the instructor to produce authentic and quasi-natural versions. To bridge the cultural gaps, domestication can be applied. Domestication helps to bring the source text closer to the target language culture where "the foreign text is imprinted with values specific to the target-language culture" (Venuti, 1995).

a. Domestication

Domestication makes the text accessible to Arab learners as it fills the cultural gaps and decodes the cultural-bound terms. It is useful to deal with explicitly stated taboo

language and euphemisms to avoid transgressing the social barriers in a conservative society given that the category being dealt with are young learners. With ongoing practice, translation phobia will be reduced and learners systematically discover the appropriate use of lexical items in distinct contexts.

As such, the cliché that translation misrepresents and inhibits students from thinking in a foreign language is unreliable as interpretation is a translation per se. Particularly with secondary school pupils, young Arab learners translate to each other constantly and mechanically as it is attested 80% of the respondents confirm this reading and 88% approve that students translate silently before speaking in English (See appendix). It is argued that translation is considered "the fifth skill and the most important social skill" since it upholds "communication and understanding" (Ross, 2000). Respectively, literary translation can be applied in the pre-reading activities briefly to pave the way for learners to assimilate the linguistic items and their contextual use as the major goals of the lesson. Their linguistic and social awareness of the target language motivates them to practice reading, writing, listening and speaking.

b. An Illustrative Example

The following text from *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway can serve as an example: He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish. In the first forty days, a boy had been with him. But after forty days without a fish the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally *salao* [to be unlucky in fishing], which is the worst form of unlucky, and the boy had gone at their orders in another boat which caught three good fish the first week. It made the boy sad to see the old man come in each day with his skiff empty. (p. 1)

A free translation of the above text can be as follows:

كان يا ما كان في قديم الزمان، كان هناك رجل اعتاد الصيد لوحده في مركب شراعي صغير في البحر. وقد مضى عليه أربعة وثمانون يوماً دون أن يصطاد ولو سمكة واحدة. وقد صحبه فتى في الأيام الأربعين الأولى ولكن بعد ذلك طلب والدا الفتى منه أن يذهب في قارب آخر لأن الرجل حظّه قليل. أطاع الفتى أمر والديه وذهب في قارب آخر واصطاد ثلاث سمكات في الأسبوع الأول. حزن الفتى لرؤية

الرجل العجوز يعود خالي الوفاض كل يوم. (Adapted from Lahlali and Abu Hatab, 2014).

Some grammatical structures and lexical items can be contextually introduced through this excerpt from *The Old Man and The Sea*. The translator adds *كان يا ما كان في قديم الزمان* which is translated as "Once upon a time" as a stock phrase to narrate a past event, especially in fictional tales. *قارب صغير* can be translated also as "sailboat or *مركب شراعي* that can be detected from the context later on in the text. The old man can be translated *الصيد العجوز* and the empty skiff can be translated *بخفي حني*. Structurally speaking, the text can help Arab learners to distinguish between the simple past and the past perfect by tracing the axis of time in the storyline. Semantically, learners can fill a semantic map of the term ship where distinctions and clarifications can be made between ship, boat, vessel, craft and skiff. In a similar vein, terms such as "salao" and "empty skiff" can be introduced in other contexts by learners regarding the Arab culture to the stories of *الصيد المنكود الحظ* or the unlucky hunter.

Listening and speaking activities can be staged by this text as it sounds like a tale. So, listening for a gist or details along with inferential listening can be applied where learners will be encouraged by their downright understanding of the text to interact using the source language (English).

The post-reading can be reserved for the productive task as the learners may endeavour to make back-translation or to write about the major characters and their cordial relationship. They can write about the sea rules between anglers, and people in the sea, in contrast with the social behaviour on the earth. The text also can be transformed into a dialogue between Santiago and the young lad to be played by learners, integrating speaking and writing activities.

Relevant Literary Texts To Offset The Attached Constraints

Likewise, literature-inducing problems can be dealt with by selecting less difficult literary texts, especially popular literature such as children literature, songs and short stories. The stories should be compatible with to the Arab learners' cultural contexts and speech community, specifically in rural areas where learners are badly-equipped and disadvantaged. Children literature is easy-to-read books. Among these stories, *Black Ear*, *Blond Ear* by Kaled Jommaa, *Sawa, Sawa* by Rose Shomali Mosleh, to state just a few. These stories are inherently easy to grasp or rather do not result in excessive puzzlement. They involve authentic discursive practices rather than artificial situations, as is the case with the grammar-translation method.

The Ineffectiveness Of The Grammar-Translation Method

The grammar-translation method focuses on contrived artificial data replicating reality to make out of them overgeneralization, where a pedagogic problem is attached. First, it does not promote communication in the target language. Then, it teaches learners artificial English that has nothing to do with real situations, producing just "fluent fool[s]" able to speak a foreign language well, but does not understand the language's social and philosophical content (Bennett, 1993). The more learners are exposed to authentic materials, the more they use language properly and increase their proficiency. Literature provides these authentic materials to improve the learners' structural and communicative competence, especially in the case of senior secondary school learners. Writers stage meaning and reality into their texts but the literary language and the cultural references can cause many problems for young learners.

Literary translation as a pre-reading activity can cancel out the problems related to the use of literary texts in the classroom. As it is recommended, it can relieve the anxiety related to the literary language and the cultural references associated with the literary text. It is just a pre-reading activity aiming at decoding the linguistic and cultural clues of the text to make it accessible to young Arab learners. Learners will be capitalizing on the authentic material of the text, and all the linguistic data to be introduced are going to be studied in the target language (English). In this sense, as translation with Arab young learners is unavoidable, literary translation will serve as a facilitator to ensure the success of the subsequent activities in the while and post-reading stages.

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, literature, and particularly popular literature, can be applied even in a secondary school as an effective didactic tool. It exposes young Arab learners to the

type of language that they badly need or will be desperate for it afterwards. Through authentic language in make-believe situations rather than artificial data, the learning process becomes more natural. Literary texts are selected in consistency with the learners' age and level of accuracy. Free translation of some parts of literary texts is helpful for young learners to contextualize the newly-accepted lexical items and linguistic structures to assimilate the social interactional rules of the target language and to deal with the major troubles attributed to literary language.

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