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TEACHING AND DEVELOPING LANGUAGE THROUGH POETRY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO *THE DAFFODILS* BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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ABSTRACT

Literature can play a significant role in teaching and developing language skills in the language classroom. Literary texts are rich in language and are deeply rooted in the culture, people and society. They offer an opportunity to use and learn the authentic language in different contexts. Literature provides leaners with a wide range of language patterns in a creative and varied styles. This paper highlights the integration of poetry in language classroom to hone the different language skills and also for developing grammatical and lexical knowledge of students at the undergraduate level. Poetry which is considered highly rich in language offers a rich opportunity for learners to develop their language in a unique way. This paper provides activities to teach language skills and grammar with special reference to the poem "The Daffodils" by William Wordsworth.

Introduction

Literature and language are closely related. It is through the knowledge of language and linguistics that different writers are able to create the great works in literature like novel, drama and poetry. Literature is constituted by language and it represents one of the most recurrent uses of language. Brumfit and Carter emphasized the role of literature as "an ally of language". (1) This signifies the role of linguistic knowledge in producing the literary works in different genres of literature. The language of literature is authentic as well as interesting for any lover of literature. It has the power of moulding the emotions and feelings of a common reader. It develops the cultural understanding of readers by having a cross-cultural communication with a text. As pointed out by Northrop Frye, "So you may ask what is the use of studying the world of imagination where anything is possible and anything can be assumed, where there are no rights or wrongs and all arguments are equally good. One of the most obvious uses, I think, is its encouragement of

tolerance." (77) He further states that, "It is clear that the end of literary teaching is not simply the admiration of literature; it's something more like the transfer of imaginative energy from literature to the students" (77) Thus, using literature in the language classroom not only develops the linguistic knowledge of students but also is useful in promoting the cultural harmony across cultures and languages. Reading literature widens the mental horizons of readers for the better understanding of the world.

The debate whether we can use literature for teaching language has a long history. There were arguments which were against about using literature for teaching language. However, with the paradigm shift from traditional methods of teaching like grammar translation method to communicative language teaching, English language has developed novel methods and techniques of teaching language. The use of authentic language, supplementary material and developing the communicative competence of learners has shaped the attitude of teachers. Hence, the importance of using literature

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for teaching language has increased. The integration of literary texts in the language classroom has myriad benefits. As pointed out by Povey, "Literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax." (187) Henry Widdowson also advocates the use of literature in the language classroom. He states that, "Literature and poetry in particular, has a way of exploiting resources in language which have not been codified as correct usage (164)." This encapsulation of Widdowson has a marked effect in using literature in the classroom. McKay is of the same opinion where he highlights the advantages of using literature in the language classroom. In this context, he is of the opinion:

Whereas literature has traditionally been used to teach language usage, rarely has it been used to develop language use. Yet the advantage of using literature for this purpose is that literature presents language in discourse in which the parameters of the setting and the role relationship are defined. Language that illustrates a particular register or dialect is embedded within a social context, and thus, there is a basis for determining why a particular form is used. As such, literature is ideal for developing an awareness of language use. (530)

Thus, using literature in the language classroom is of great use for developing the language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). It can be also exploited to develop the grammatical and lexical items among the students. Moreover, literature provides a rich opportunity for teachers and learners to nurture their creative, imaginative and cultural understating of learners. Reading literature develops the critical thinking of learners in diverse ways. Hence, the use of literature is apt to use in the language classroom to develop the language sills of the learners.

Using Poetry in the Language Classroom

The role of poetry and its usefulness in language classroom lies in the fact that poetry is rich in unusual ways of ordering words, or it attributes particular, imaginative meanings to words or combines sounds in a musical, non-ordinary ways. The language teacher should exploit the deviancies of the poetic language in order to raise the language awareness of the learners towards the way in which language can be adapted or changed to fulfil the different communicative purpose. Widdowson is of the opinion that "poetry is useful language because it represents language use…". (172) Using poetry in the language classroom exposes the learners with the practical use of language in the different context. They are able to discover the phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantic use of the language. They learn the connotative/literary meaning of words apart from the denotative/literal meaning of words. Learners become aware about the distinctive and deviant use of language in poetry. Apart from that the learners will be able to appreciate the stylistic features of the poem. Hence, they are able to develop their critical and imaginative power through the use language. They get to understand the aesthetic use of language by learning similes, metaphors and allusions.

Using poetry is one of the popular genres of literature due to short length, perfectly suitable for a single classroom lesson, their peculiar structure, and their characteristic linguistic features (unusual syntactic patterns, polysemy of words, alliteration, etc.) poems become favourite tools for language teachers. The evocative character of poetry, its imagery, its appeal to feelings and personal experience makes it very interesting and enjoyable for the second language learner.

Teaching of The Daffodils in the Language Classroom
This paper focuses on the use of poetry to teach language with special reference to a poem "The Daffodils" by William Wordsworth. How poetry can be used as a source to develop different aspects of language among the learners. Activities can be designed to expose learners to the language of poetry and exploit it to develop their basic language skills of the language i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing and also make them aware about grammar and vocabulary. The researcher will provide a lesson plan to show how the poem can be presented in the classroom. The limitation of the lesson plan will be that it can not be used in any situation. It can be modified as per the different situations and contexts. It depends upon the teacher

to modify it as per the classroom setting, background of learners and the attitudes of students.

The Daffodils

> I wandered lonely as a cloud
> That floats on high o'er Vales and Hills,
> When all at once I saw a crowed,
> A host, of golden Daffodils;
> Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
> Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
>
> Continuous as the stars that shine
> And twinkle on the Milky Way,
> They stretched in never-ending line
> Along the margin of a bay:
> Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
>
> The waves beside them danced; but they
> Out-did the sparking waves in glee:
> A poet could not but be gay,
> In such a jocund company;
> I gazed- and – gazed but little thought
> What wealth the show to me had brought:
>
> For oft, when on my couch I lie
> In vacant or in pensive mood,
> They flash upon that inward eye
> Which is the bliss of solitude?
> And then my heart with pleasure fills,
> And dances with Daffodils.

About The Poem

The Romantic poet William Wordsworth's "I Wondered Lonely as a Cloud", also known as "The Daffodils" is one of the most famous and lyrical works. The poem was composed in the year 1804. It was inspired by an event on 15th April 1802 when Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy came across a "long belt" of daffodils while travelling in the Lake District of England. It was first published in 1807 in "Poems in Two Volumes" and a revised version was published in 1815. Wordsworth is often termed a nature-lover. And the Romantic Movement that he started with Samuel Tailor Coleridge is mainly characterized by the love and celebration of nature and beauty.

This poem is a representative of Romanticism in English literature. The title of the poem reveals the loneliness of the poet after the death of his brother. But the sight of golden daffodils makes the poet happy and excited. This makes him appreciate the beauty of nature and considers it as the greatest gift of nature. The memory of the daffodils gives him the pleasure and relieves him when he is alone, bored and suffering from restlessness.

The structure of the poem is very simple in form and language. Four stanzas of six lines each makes the entire poem 24 lines long. The rhyme scheme for each stanza is ABABCC, where the first (A) and the second (B) lines rhyme with the third (A) and the fourth (B) respectively. These are followed by a rhyming couplet (CC). The poem is also rich in its use of figures of speech. And finally, it's a great example of a 'real poem', that is 'a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings', as opined by the poet himself. As, the poem expresses the feelings of the poet himself, it is a subjective poem, one of the most important characteristics of Romanticism.

LESSON PLAN

Name of the Teacher:

Number of students:

Level of the students: Undergraduate (BA 1st year, General English)

Date:	Duration: 45 minutes	Medium		Level	Lesson No:
Lesson Aim: (General)	Teaching of the Poem "Daffodils"	English		Undergraduate (Heterogenous)	
Lesson Aim	1. Teaching of summary of the poem, vocabulary and pronunciation.				
Specific objectives:	1. Students will be able to read the poem with appropriate pronunciation and tone.				
	2. Students will be able to know the background and summary of the poem.				

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3. Students will be able to know the meaning of difficult words and their parts of speech

4. Students will be able to now the correct pronunciation of words.

Assumption:	1. The students might find it difficult to read the poem. 2. The students might find it difficult to understand the poem. 3. Some students will be hesitant to recite the poem in front of their classmates. 4. Students might find it difficult to understand the meaning of difficult words.	
Anticipated problems:	1. The students may remain silent. 2. Some students may feel shy. 3. Some Students might feel demotivated.	

Time (Duration of 45 Minutes.):	**Stage & Aim**	**Interaction and Pattern**	**Teacher's Activity**	**Learners' activity**	**Materials:**
5 (Minutes)	**Step 1. Warm up:** Do you like flowers? Yes or No. Can you identity the following flowers on the given cards/pictures?	Teacher's talk 40%, students' talk 60%	Students will listen the responses from the students.	Students will listen to their classmates.	Laptop/Mobile Phone/ Language Lab, worksheets/ Smart Board.
20 (Minutes)	**Step.2** Teacher will now introduce the topic to the students.	Teacher's talk 40% Student's talk 60%	1.Teacher will briefly talk about the life of the poet. 2. Teacher will now ask the students to read the poem. 3. Teacher will now read the poem himself/herself. 4. Teacher will now discuss the summary of the poem. 5. Teacher will ask some questions to the students based on the poem.	1. Students will listen carefully. 2. Students will read the poem (some students will read the poem) 3. Students will listen carefully to their teacher. 4. Students will listen carefully to understand the summary of the poem. 5. Students will respond to the questions asked by the teacher.	

			6. Teacher will clear the doubts of the students (if any)	6. Students will listen carefully.	
15 (Minutes)	**Step 3.** Now students will be asked to do the exercises given in the worksheets. (Activities are given below.)	Teacher's talk 50%	1. Instructions will be given regarding the exercise.	1. Students will answer the worksheet.	
		Learners' talk 50%	2. Teacher will assist the students wherever students will face the difficulty.	2. They will respond and discuss the answers with a teacher.	
5 (Minutes)	**Summing Up**	Teacher's talk 80% & Students' talk 20%	1. Teacher will make conscious to their students about the further understanding of the poem.	1. Students will listen carefully to the teacher.	

Activities Based on Step-3 of the Lesson Plan

1. Teacher provides the following handout to the students about the poem and asks the students to pronounce the following words:

a. Jocund

b. Bliss

c. Glee

d. Solitude

e. Pensive

f. Flutter

g. Couch

h. Gaze

i. Float

j. Pensive

k. Toss

l. Gay

m. Solitude

n. Sprightly

2. Teacher asks the students to tell the meaning of the following words and their parts of speech:

1. Jocund   :

2. Bliss   :

3. Glee   :

4. Solitude   :

5. Pensive   :

6. Flutter   :

7. Couch   :

8. Gaze   :

9. Float   :

10. Pensive   :

11. Toss   :

12. Gay   :

13. Solitude   :

14. Sprightly   :

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Conclusion

To conclude, we can say that poetry can be a great source for language teachers to develop the language skills and grammatical knowledge among students. The genre of poetry is rich and interesting for teachers and students. Teachers can exploit a poem to teach any skill depends upon the aims and objectives of the lesson. However, it is important for a teacher to select a poem which is interesting and motivating for students. It is also important for a teacher to make the best use of the material by designing the activities which are of great interest to the students. Otherwise, there are chances that the poor activities will lead to a boring class as well as the demotivation of students.

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