USING DIASPORA LITERATURE TO TEACH EXTENSIVE AND INTENSIVE READING

Dr. Shaik Iliyas Ali
Assistant Professor of English, Department of Humanities & Sciences, Kandula Lakshumma Memorial College of Engineering for Women, Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh

Abstract

The present paper focuses on using diasporic literature in the language classroom to train the students and develop them how to understand, justify, comment, and criticize the diasporic experiences through assigning reading comprehension activities. The purpose of using diasporic literature is not only to teach reading comprehension but also to explain the pros and cons as well as positive and negative views toward utilizing diasporic literature as a source for learning the language. The students are motivated by creating awareness about literary texts on diaspora. Using diasporic literature and enabling the students to read the various diasporic experiences makes the classroom more practical, emotional, and motivating. The current paper discusses the various methodologies for teaching the language through diasporic literature for students to acquire reading skills and critical thinking abilities.

Keywords: *Diasporic Literature and language teaching, Reading Skills, Teaching Methodology.*

Introduction

English is the global language, and it is the only language accessible all over the world and acts as a link between native and non-native speakers. Most people around the globe can read, write and speak the English language. Hence English can be treated as the connecting language. Most countries like India and Sri Lanka have accepted English as Second Language, but still, they are concentrating more on exploring English as the official language; now, teaching English as a second language has become a challenging task for English language teachers. Many teachers have come up with new ideas and innovative thinking.

Teaching English to students who wish to migrate to foreign countries for various reasons like higher studies and employment has made demand or boon for English teachers to exhibit their talent. Many competitive exams are being conducted to test the students' competency, especially in English, before issuing the VISA for admission into foreign universities. After migrating to foreign countries, the migrants start boasting about their stay in a foreign country. Later after a couple of weeks, the real conflict

between existence and identity begins, and they start sharing their bitter experiences in the form of short stories; few people will bring out the problems faced during their stay in the alien countries in the form of literature called “Diasporic literature."

Concept of Diaspora Literature

The concept of a homeland, the location from which one is uprooted, and accounts of perilous migrations endured due to economic necessity are central to works of diaspora literature. Diaspora, in its most basic sense, refers to a dispersed minority group.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition, the term diaspora has a Greek origin and can be found in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 28:25). (1989). The dispersion of the Israelites across the globe was part of God's plan. The two types of dispersion mentioned in this Oxford English Dictionary entry are "Jews residing scattered among the pagans after the captive" and "Jewish Christians live outside of Palestine."

Defining "diaspora" and "diaspora literature" are discussed, as are the relationships between diaspora writers and ESL students, the benefits of including diaspora literature in ESL curricula, and practical advice for finding and teaching works from this genre.

Literature Review

"The many diaspora communities brought quite varied languages as part of their socio-cultural baggage," writes N. Jayaram. According to him, depending on the circumstances, all of these languages "were eroded and died out; they stayed alive in very restricted areas of life; they were changed and kept; those who are all still awake and in touch with their ancestral roots; or they tried to be revived and revitalized with varying degrees of success" (2004,146).

Although many members of the Indian diaspora have abandoned their native tongues in countries such as Jamaica, in others such as Mauritius, Fiji, and Suriname, "a local variant of Bhojpuri is used in formal sectors, and standard Hindi is used in religious and cultural areas" (2004, 148).

The rationale of the study

The purpose of this paper is to present some contemporary literary works in English Literature by Diaspora Writers that students of the English language may find interesting and pleasant. According to the Study, students of English will feel at ease reading works of Diaspora literature because they contain multiethnic casts and frequently use simpler English. Thus, the primary premise of this study is that reading works by authors from diasporas can assist students overcome cultural gaps and proceeding faster in their second language studies.

This study examines the literature review defining intensive and extensive reading and highlights the benefits of extended reading. The following page defines and describes works written by persons who have moved away from their home countries. The importance of diaspora literature as a resource for broad reading is emphasized in the same paragraph. Following that, the report analyses the research and elaborates on the findings. This final section contains all of the ideas and proposals.

A Perspective on Indian Writing Systems and Poetry in The Diaspora

Those who have read will be familiar with the Indian communities that have spread beyond the " Phase of emigration; the module that followed "Introduction" looked at the several migrant waves that had left the Indian subcontinent throughout the years. Indentured laborers came from throughout India, from places like Western Bihar and the United Provinces to the Madras Presidency. They spoke Bhojpuri in the north, Avadhi, Maithili in the east, and Tamil and Telugu in the south.

In the 20th century, speakers of Punjabi and Gujarati emigrated to the United Kingdom from India and East Africa, respectively. This program should stress the wide range of migrant backgrounds, languages spoken, occupations held, and religious and philosophical tenets held by the migrant population. Along with this, we gain insight into the multilingual and multicultural past of the Indian diaspora, whose members speak languages as varied as Hindi, Bhojpuri, Tamil, Malayalam, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali, and Telugu. This means that the English-language representation of Indian diaspora culture fails to do justice to the wide range of circumstances under which people of Indian descent have been uprooted from their homeland.

Bhojpuri and Hindi in Trinidad are two languages spoken by members of the Indian diaspora that have evolved from their original forms. His article discusses the evolution of Bhojpuri and Hindi in Trinidad.

Teaching Diaspora Literature to improve reading skills

In this present paper, I have developed an innovative idea of incorporating diasporic literature in the English classroom so that the students can be trained to develop how to comment, criticize, and justify the literary text by themselves based on diasporic experiences narrated by an author. Using diasporic literature as a tool in the language classroom, the teacher can motivate the students to read and gain awareness of literature. When the students start reading the literature, they enjoy immense pleasure and try to analyze the various bitter experiences of the migrants. At the same time, the teacher can also show attention to teaching reading skills to develop critical thinking among the students by using diasporic literature. The usage of diasporic literature enables the students to improve their reading skills, and reading the diasporic experiences of migrants makes the classroom lively and motivating. In this paper, we can come across

some new methodologies to teach language through diasporic literature for acquiring reading skills and critical thinking among students.

Language learning is an art, and it is a continuous process. Initially, language was taught through grammar, but in the past decade, few teachers have developed a new method, i.e., teaching language through literature. Nowadays, language learning through literature is a fully integrated program through which teachers can teach grammar, spelling, paraphrasing, vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking skills**,** and creative writing or critical thinking as well in the language classroom.

Teaching language through diasporic literature is one of the tools that can be implemented in the classroom to develop reading skills and critical things among engineering students, especially who wish to migrate to foreign countries. For example, students will feel trouble understanding the day-to-day vocabulary used in a foreign country because the English used by native speakers varies from that of non-native speakers. Hence, the teacher has to teach reading skills separately from other skills so that the students learn correct spelling and develop sentence formation through keen observation. The student may be asked to read the paragraph and asked them to identify new vocabulary in a paragraph.

Hopefully, this will serve as a hint for students to pick up useful new words for everyday conversations and writing. Here, the student can read literature that introduces them to new words and concepts while providing opportunities to practice and perfect their sentence construction skills. You may have the kids read the piece without any punctuation or words and have them rate how crucial they think those elements are to comprehending the story. You could also try creating a sentence or paragraph describing a picture using the new language you've learned. Vocabulary is important, but these exercises will help your child become a more well-rounded writer by incorporating language arts skills into their everyday writing.

The ultimate goal of any literature writing curriculum should be to educate students in written and spoken communication skills. With literature-based instruction, your student will gain a deeper understanding of and a more sustained enthusiasm for creative and diaspora writing. Reading lessons are taught through actual books, supplemented with definitions, vocabulary lists, questions for further reflection, and other reading-based exercises. Actual books can spark a love of reading and the beginnings of a student's love of learning by exposing them to works of literature rather than simplistic tales.

Extensive Reading through Diaspora Literature

Diaspora literature includes the concept of a homeland, a location from which the displacement happens, and descriptions of difficult trips performed due to economic

compulsions. Diaspora is indeed a minority community that lives in exile. According to Cambridge Scholars (2008), "the notion of diaspora, in particular, has been fruitful in its attention to the significant push of individuals around the world, whether such migrations have been via choice or duress." There is a problem in coming to grips with the diaspora. Thus conceptual categories are introduced to demonstrate the diversity of connotations the word elicits. Diasporas are classified as follows by Robin Cohen (1997):

- Victim Diasporas
- Diasporas of labor
- The Imperial Diasporas
- Diasporas of Commerce

The author sees a common factor in all sorts of diaspora: individuals who live outside their "natal (or imagined natal) territories" and acknowledge that their ancestral homelands are deeply represented in the language they speak, religions they adopt, and cultures they create (Cohen, 1997).

Though in an age of technological innovation that has made travel simpler and distances shorter, the concept of diaspora has shed its original connotation, it has also arisen in a healthier form than the old. Initially, it is focused on people who are connected to their homelands. Their longing for the country and their strange devotion to its traditions, religions, and languages give rise to diaspora literature, which is primarily concerned with the individual's personal or community's commitment to the motherland.

The diaspora writers participate in a cultural exchange that is exchanged fairly, much like interpreting a blueprint of reality for numerous readerships. Furthermore, they are endowed with memory bundles and communicate an amalgamation of global and national threads representing real and imagined experiences (Singh, S 2008).

Intensive Reading through Diaspora Literature

This paper proposes that adopting intensive reading with undergraduate students in English classes provides another alternative for catching and retaining students' interest in the reading process. Teachers in the field might take advantage of their students' increased interest in broad themes to introduce them to new literature relevant to their students' daily lives. Students of English as a second language can use their own life experiences to relate to characteristics of diaspora literature and expand on the content of diverse novels. As a result, if students can study real information, they will activate their

existing knowledge and increase the terminology they need to comprehend unfamiliar language in other settings. Students' enthusiasm and drive to read in English will grow greatly if they are taught to employ various reading strategies to interpret unknown words using context clues.

Uses of introducing Extensive & Intensive Reading with Diaspora Literature

Students will feel more optimistic about reading new texts. They may become more personally invested in the reading material, and their imaginative reactions will significantly improve. As a result, they would be better able to understand what they read across the board, and also, they will develop a more positive outlook on reading as a whole and begin to look forward to it instead of dreading it.

Students will expand their use of both passive and active vocabulary as a result of reading diaspora literature. They will become more adept at recognizing and correcting grammatical errors and employ a wider range of sentence structures in their writing and speech. Generally, they become more proficient in writing and speaking.

Students developed a more optimistic outlook on education, demonstrating personal improvement. They grew in their general awareness of the world and their capacity for empathy toward its inhabitants. They could think more clearly, had a broader range of imagination, and were more self-aware.

Developing Reading Tasks through literature

The students are asked to select one paragraph of their own choice from the prescribed diasporic literature and asked to read two or more times which may serve the students to develop and build reading skills. As in the listening activities, it is best to move from extensive to more intensive tasks. With each subsequent read, the ESL students will gain a greater understanding.

- Questions about general comprehension
- Consider pre-reading suggestions.
- Skimming/Scanning: Skimming is when you read an article quickly. Scanning is used when you need to find specific information.
- Detailed comprehension questions: "Which paragraph says...?", "What do you think?", "Find a word that means...", "Find today's vocabulary," and "How is the vocabulary used?"
- Comprehension questions generated by students
- Complete the sentence: Give the students the beginnings of certain key phrases from the article and ask them to accomplish them from memory.

- Create a title page for the given article/each paragraph.
- Summarizing: For each paragraph, students construct a sentence summarizing it.

Conclusion

Diasporic Literature can serve many purposes in the language classroom as the concept of a homeland, the location from which the exile originates, and accounts of perilous migrations forced by economic necessity are central to works of diaspora literature. Diaspora refers, generally speaking, to a dispersed population of people who are members of a marginalized group. Through this literature, a teacher will not only teaches the literary text but also they can use it as a necessary supplement for teaching grammar, reading skills, and developing critical thinking among the students, especially by making them read the diasporic books, short stories, novels, etc.,

Mostly, people in both traditional and modern cultures have always worked and lived near their families, making preserving the necessary community, ethnic, and ethnoreligious identities easier. Introducing the diaspora studied at the graduation level may help them train to face post-migration issues.

Hence, a section on diaspora literature should be included in the Extensive Reading component of a Reading Skills undergraduate program. It is also recommended that reading material from the diaspora be chosen by location or continent, as students will find the surroundings of the literature more identifiable, and the program's goals will be more easily met. That is why Telugu diaspora students should read works by South Indian diasporic authors. This exercise would considerably improve the students' reading comprehension. This study aims to provide some food for thought for ESL practitioners.

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