



Literature as A tool for Effective Content Delivery

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ABSTRACT

The paper "Using Literature as a tool for effective content delivery" has been written keeping in view the Verbatim stated by The AICTE Act, which reads "To provide for the establishment of an All India Council for Technical Education with a view to the proper planning and coordinated development of the technical education system throughout the country.

The promotion of quality improvement of such education in relation to planned quantitative growth and the regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the technical education system and for matters connected therewith." This paper begins with the introduction of English and its importance, and also Literature and its importance. In addition to understanding the importance of literature the paper throws light on the texts used in the curriculum. The paper supports Drama /Role Play as a technique to enrich the student's communicative competence in English through literature. This paper justifies that Literature is the tool for qualitative development of Engineering Students, i.e. at the end of the course the students attain not only a degree but also become emotionally connected to the society.

KEYWORDS : English, Literature ,Communicative Competence, Emotional Competence, Textbooks, POs

English Language is referred as a "Global Language". This language is our major window of the world. English Language is not a language of national or cultural or class identity: it has become the language of technology and communicational necessity. All disciplines in the world have stored their knowledge and information using this medium. Learning this language makes one gets access to this knowledge and information, and also job opportunities anywhere in the world. In other words s/he becomes employable. English has become an International currency of Science and Technology. Employment opportunities throughout the world, the Media, and Internet Levelling Status that goes with a command of English has made English a sought after commodity.

The best way of learning this language is by reading the works of the Masters of Literature. One can never deny the fact that this medium can better be acquired by reading poems, novels, short stories etc. Literature plays a pivotal role in the teaching of language, as it provides the teacher with the resources which would create zeal to learn among the learners. Students start experimenting with this language. Literature is a flexible platform where number of activities can be developed. As observed by Riwes Cruz

"Paradoxically, Literature as aesthetic recreation can be considered a much more 'authentic' source and can inspire more authority in the use and enrichment of language than English textbooks or even than direct samples of language"

Literature defined as "The Mirror of Life". It has been observed that Literature and Life are always in the each other's company. This bestows a rostrum for students to improve their communication skills through experiences and expressions. The beauty of reading literature lies in the fact that the pupil develops emotional connectivity besides acquiring communicative competence. This competence has become an imperative criterion/standard for academic, professional and personal growth and success of engineers.

Reading Literature, students realise the fact that great writers: William Shakespeare, John Milton, Donne etc. have contributed thousands of words to the English Vocabulary. This provokes students to start thinking in the target language. Irma Ghosn observes "It also seems to me that through the medium of literature we provide young EFL learners with language experiences that will not only motivate and foster oral language but also deepen their awareness of the target language in its written form".

Engineering students are those who link science with society in future. Here, Literature becomes the best tool where the students link the World of Technology to World of Reality. To do this, teacher has to create a platform where they express their opinion. At first, teacher should not be judging the students ideas. Conversation is the most important one in English Language Classrooms. Conversing with fellow students or teachers in target language is a must to develop their communication skills. When they do so, and this results in the development of emotional connectivity among the peers in the classroom. They enjoy working in groups. Finally; a sense of collaboration is developed. It is really important at this point to instil confidence in the students. This is because the class is a mixture of students coming from two different mediums. The teacher has to motivate pupil to work in groups, help the students to accept others ideas. This definitely leads to a sense of collaboration. To express one's opinion, one has to read.

Francis Bacon emphasises "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man." Literature educates, entertains and bridges a gap between the classroom and society.

C.S.Lewis expresses "Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become."

Linguistic competence is gained reading the works of people from different disciplines. This helps the students to see things objectively. The students should be motivated to read some works which delineate and enlightens human lives.

Literature helps the students in improving their imagination and creative thinking which in turn helps them to have a better understanding of the situation of human life. Students derive diverse responses hidden in the literature that helps them understand their identities and purposes in this life.

Reading literature helps the students to understand the contents in their textbooks. Textbooks become stimulus to development of LSRW skills. The textbook prescribed for engineering students is **Mind-scapes**. This textbook to some extent acts as stimulus to generate response from the learners. For example, if we take the Unit I of this textbook, Environment Consciousness, a great deal of discussion can be augmented with few questions:

1. Why do you think people today are very concerned about the environment?
2. How has climate change affected human race?
3. What endeavours are being taken to limit the adverse effects of climate change?

Every unit in this textbook has got some pictures which gives students opportunities to work in pairs, discuss possible steps to be adopted to change the situation. Every module of this textbook has beautifully focused on language learning: i.e. grammar and vocabulary. This definitely helps the students gain communicative competencies.

In addition to language learning, creative thinking has become prerequisite for the students who prepare for campus drives. For this, the student has to go much beyond reading the syllabus prescribed by the university. English teachers every I Semester face this challenge of preparing their pupil to develop their employable skills. The two factors that are very important to develop these skills: 1. Linguistic competence and 2. Emotional competence.

Teacher has to prepare materials for modules. For this, the teacher takes the help of literary texts: poem, prose novels/short stories. Teacher discusses different patterns in these texts. The students pay attention to the way that the language is used. The students have more benefits while learning language through literature. In literature, language used not only persuades but also promotes the attitude and the style. Vocabulary building, grammar rules and stylistic analysis involves meaning interpretation of the text. This results in creative thinking in the students. Emotional connectivity is plays a vital role in preparing a student employable. This can be instilled by the teacher in English Language communication skills laboratory. Here, the teacher uses Drama as a powerful tool. It is known fact that drama/role play has got the potential to empower the students and teaches cooperation, empathy, develops decision making skills, promotes knowledge exchange, helps them shoulder responsibilities. Role Play/Drama helps the students develop organisational skills and management skills, encourages self acceptance and acceptance of others, builds confidence and self-esteem. ()

The most important benefit of this tool is that it develops imagination which is "The Need" to make a better world. Imagination when added to dreams would definitely make life beautiful. From all this the author would like to conclude that Literature is a tool for effective content delivery. This can be justified by reading the Program Outcomes defined by National Board of Accreditation.

PO 6. The engineer and society: Apply reasoning informed by the contextual knowledge to assess societal, health, safety, legal and cultural issues and the consequent responsibilities relevant to the professional engineering practice.

PO 7. Environment and sustainability: Understand the impact of the professional engineering solutions in societal and environmental contexts, and demonstrate the knowledge of, and need for sustainable development.

PO 8. Ethics: Apply ethical principles and commit to professional ethics and responsibilities and norms of the engineering practice.

PO 9. Individual and team work: Function effectively as an individual, and as a member or leader in diverse teams, and in multidisciplinary settings.

PO 10. Communication: Communicate effectively on complex engineering activities with the engineering community and with society at large, such as, being able to comprehend and write effective reports and design documentation, make effective presentations, and give and receive clear instructions.

PO 11. Project management and finance: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the engineering and management principles and apply these to one's own work, as a member and leader in a team, to manage projects and in multidisciplinary environments.

PO 12. Life-long learning: Recognize the need for, and have the preparation and ability to engage in independent and lifelong learning in the broadest context of technological change.

Out of 12 outcomes 7 outcomes can be developed in English theory/ English Language Communication Skills Laboratory. **PO** s 6, 7, 8 can be developed in the students by the teacher using The Study of Literature. **PO** s 9, 10, 11 can be developed in English Language Communication Skills Laboratory. **PO** 12 can be developed reading or listening to the words of **APJ Abdul Kalam**. The students live in two worlds: The World of Reality and The World of Technology. To express life, the student has read novels. The Works of William Shakespeare can be considered the best because he is praised for "His knowledge of human heart" (David Daiches). To express any technological topics, the student has to follow the words of the great scientist APJ Abdul Kalam, who is known to express every technological topic with a human touch. This is evident from his speech to the graduates during the 14 Convocation of IIT Guwahati on 25 May 2012. This would motivate them to understanding the fact that Science and Technology is a life time mission, which would help them to work and work and succeed. This helps them to set a great technological goal that would lead them to think high, work and persevere to realize the goal. They start thinking that their greatest friends would be great scientific and technological minds, good teachers and good books.

They would definitely take an Oath

"I will work and work for removing the problems faced by Planet earth in the areas of water, energy, habitat, waste management and environment through the application of Engineering and Technology."

"I will work for making the city or where I am/work as a carbon neutral city or town."

"My National Flag flies in my heart and I will bring glory to my Nation."

This definitely helps the students to become sensitive to every technological issue. The author would like to end with an emotional note:

Let the richness hidden in the literature be revealed through Engineer's innovations

Let the knowledge hidden in the literature be used for the benefit of the society

Let the engineering students understand that they are also driven by emotions and feelings

CONCLUSION

English is an indispensable part of Engineering Curriculum. It serves as a connection between the student's years of formal study before joining Engineering and the professional life during and after Engineering that requires them to use English on a daily basis. Literature serves as a tool for the teacher to deliver the content effectively. From literature, students derive life from LIFE- Learning, Innovation, Flexibility and Empowerment. Using literary texts in the classroom/laboratory teacher helps the students to respond the emotions of the self and those of others. Literature used in the classroom/laboratory promotes the development of linguistic competence, life skills and also organisational skills. Teacher helps the students to engage in life-long learning with the help of literature, keeping in mind the role the students have to play in future.

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