

The Possibility of Implementation Katherine Mansfield's *The Doll's House* to Enhance Language Skills to EFL Students

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Abstract

This research aims to explore the use of Katherine Mansfield's "The Doll's House" as a tool for enhancing English language skills for EFL learners. The study delves into how the literary elements of the text, such as characterization, plot, and themes, can be leveraged to improve language proficiency, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for the English language. The analysis encompasses both linguistic and literary aspects, aiming to highlight the educational benefits of incorporating this short story into language learning curricula.

Keywords :- Katherine Mansfield; *The Doll's House*; English language skills; Literary elements; Language proficiency; Education

1.Introduction :-

In nineteenth century, The dominant method for teaching English as a Second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) was the Grammar Translation Method. This approach is focusing on translating of the literary texts from the second language into the student's mother tongue language, by making the literary works a primary resource in EFL / ESL teaching. However , during the period 1960s till 1970s GMT was replaced by the Structuralism approaches. On the other hand, Structuralism prioritized the grammatical correctness over the content, interpretation, and style. Furthermore, this approach was treating the foreign language teaching as primarily linguistic matter.

Subsequent teaching methods such as Direct Method , Community language learning , Audiolingualism , The Silent way, Total Physical response, and the Natural Approach gained prominence and sidelined the use of literature ESL/EFL teaching. Even with the advent of the Communicative Approaches in the late of 1970s and early1980s , literature continued to be overlooked. The prevailing trend of EFL classrooms during this period emphasized the teaching of usable practical content and literary works were sideline from the curriculum. EFL courses aim primarily at improving oral communication skills , resulting in their dialogues dominating the curriculum.

Since the 1980s, there has been a significant shift in the use of literature in ESL/ EFL. In contrast to with Grammar Translation Method. Literature has been reintegrated into EFL/ESL curricula with the focus on the improving communicative competence. Now it is served not only as a tool for linguistic improvement , but as a mean for fostering critical thinking , aesthetic appreciation, social and cultural understanding of the language's country of origin . This period shows the extensive re-evaluation of the role of literature in language teaching, with the growing

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interest among educators in its potential benefit. The resurgence of literature in language teaching has been supported by increasing scholar's attention, with researcher conducting studies to explore its effectiveness in EFL/ESL context.

2. Aim of the study :-

This study aims to discuss how the literary works generally and short stories specifically can help to enhance the EFL/ESL. The use of literature in ESL/EFL teaching is very advantageous because it presents authentic material, cultural enrichment, language development and personal growth. Furthermore, literary text can be more beneficial than information materials, because it provides authentic context for processing a new language. Literary texts expose the learners to fresh topics and themes and unexpected language. In this regard, literary text is an authentic text, real language in context to which we can respond directly. Moreover, literary texts contain language intended to native speakers. Literature stands as a model for language learners to be familiar with different forms and conventions.

By incorporate authentic examples of grammatical structures and vocabularies, literary texts to enhance learner's understanding of the full range of the target language and increases their proficiency in all language skills. Literary texts are not meant for teachings, but they deal with themes and issues were important to the author at the time of writings. Furthermore, literary language is richer and more diverse in terms of linguistics formation and function and the way of connecting ideas. The task of exploring literary language encourage the learner to think over the norms of the language use. This approach motivates the students to be familiar with different language uses, forms and conventions, which is so important for their language development. Therefore, learners can appreciate the variety and the richness of the language and be more sensitive to the features of it.

The inclusion of literature in ESL/EFL learning has a distinct advantage by providing a cultural insights into the target language. Literary texts serves to increase foreign language learner's understanding of the country and its people whose language they are learning. Engaging with literary works allows the learners to perceive the world from different point of view, gaining insights into values and different way of life. The students will be more aware of the social, historical, cultural events which happened in certain society. In this way the students can enrich their cultural understanding through literature and literary texts. Literature enables the students to appreciate and understand other cultures, societies, and ideologies that different from their own. In other words, Literature encourage the students' personal growth and intellectual development.

It is obvious that literary texts help the students to understand the language better by providing them with real world experiences, relationship between people and society where the target language is spoken, even if they are fiction.

3. Katharine Mansfield

Katharine Mansfield Murry was a New Zealand prominent writer and critic. She was an important figure in the modernist movement known for her innovative and evocative short stories. Born in New Zealand and moved to England as a young girl to pursue her writing career. She was associated with Bloomsbury Group and the modernist literary movement, which emphasized experimentation with narrative form and focus on psychological realism.

She is best known for her short stories, which often depict moments of epiphany and explore the complexities of human relation and emotions. Some of her most famous short stories include "The Garden Party", "Bliss", "The Daughter of The Late Colonial", and "The Doll's House". These stories are characterized by their suitable narrative technique, vivid imagery, and delicate portrayals of setting and characters. In her short stories, she discussed the tension between appearance and reality, the constrain of social conventions, and the fleeting nature of happiness. Her language is characterized by precision, economy and evocative imagery. Furthermore, her writings is often lyrical and atmospheric, which she creates a sense of mood and atmosphere that immerses the reader in her fictional worlds.

By using stream of consciousness and free indirect course, she allows the reader to experience the inner working of her characters' minds.

3.1. Why Short Stories .

Despite the benefit for the students, there are always those who argue against the use of literature in EFL/ ESL , because of the overloaded classroom , a heavy curriculum , and the lack of time. Furthermore they argue that , it takes a very long time to understand the figurative language of poetry . Secondly , It will be difficult to finish the novel in one class due to its length and enrichment language. Finally , Drama can be used in the classroom , but it will be challenging to perform a play in a pack classroom and condensed course hours . Considering these objections ,it is obvious that among literary form short stories, which is defined by Edger Allan Poe as narrative that can be read at one sitting of form one- half hours to two hours, that is limited to a certain unique or a single effect to which every detail is subordinate . It seems to be the best way to enhance the EFL/ ESL for high school and university school is through the short stories. Since it is short , no detail description of setting, few characters, there is usually one plot . It is easy for the students to follow the story line .

4. Literature Review.

Influential studies done by scholar such as Lazar (1993), Shanahan (1997), Liddicoat & Crozet (2000) have strongly advocate the inclusion of literary text in second and foreign language circular. Their findings argue for content- focused approach that include literature as the cornerstone. This evolving perspective emphasizes the great value of literature in language teaching. Furthermore , highlighting the role of literature not only in language acquisition, but enrich the learners' cultural competences and the critical analysis skills.

According to Hirvela and boyle's 1988 study on Hong Kong Chinese student's opinion about four literary text genres. (short stories , novel , drama , and poetry) the short stories is the best literary form to ESL/ EFL . the study found out short stories is the second most enjoyable and least feared genre , while novel is the most enjoyed . On the other hand , Coiler and Slater point out the benefit of using short stories for language teachers. Short stories are convent because they can be completed in one or two class sessions. Secondly, student can work independently on short stories, because they are not difficult. Thirdly, a wide range of interests and tastes can be satisfied by reading short stories. Finally, short stories can be used in morning , afternoon or evening classes , and with students of different ages and levels (from beginner to advanced) .

Pardede's (2010) research provides sustainable support for the notion that, short stories are highly suitable for integration into English language classroom. This study is conduct among English language teacher Training students at the Christian University of Indonesia, explore their perceptions, interest, and perceived needs regarding the use of short stories in English language teaching. The result shows that, the majority express strong interest in using short stories for both personal enjoyment and a teaching resource. In addition , a significant proportion agreed or strongly agreed that the use of short stories in language teaching would improve learner's language skills. Many participants also emphasized the importance of English teacher candidates being able to use short stories to facilitate the development of language skills. Notably, the statistical analysis revealed a positive significant correlation between students interest and perceptions, indicating mutually reinforcement relationship between these variables, both of which had a significant influence on each other .

5. Methodology

The use of the short stories in English language classrooms should aim to encourage students to use their knowledge . This approach promotes the students-centered learning environment, along with considerable guidance from the teacher. It is essential for the teacher carefully select an appropriate text for classroom to facilitate students' comprehension through verities of activities. By using short stories to teach English, the teacher's role in story

selection should be fundamental. Choosing a story of appropriate of a suitable brevity ensures manageability within the constraints of class time.

Apart from the length of the story, There are basic certain point need to be taken by the teacher before choosing a short story to enhance English language learning.

– **Language level**:- Choose a short story that is appropriate to language level of students. The vocabulary , sentences structure and overall complexity of the language should be challenging enough to encourage growth, but not so difficult that students feel overwhelmed.

– **Contextual learning** :- Choosing a short story with rich contextual clues to help students understand the meaning of unfamiliar words, and phrases. contextual learning promote deeper understanding and retention of vocabulary and grammar concept.

– **Cultural context** :- Select a story that introduce students to English speaking culture and customs. Exposure to cultural context enhance language learning by providing a real-world context for language use and promotion cultural awareness.

– **Authenticity** :- Select an authentic short story written by native speaker. As that will expose the students to natural language usage, idiomatic expressions, and cultural nuances. That will help them to develop authentic communications skills.

Engagement:- To grab students' attention and motivate them to engage with language, the teacher has to select a story with compelling plot, relatable characters, and unexpected twists.

Diverse perspective :- Select short stories that reflect different perspective and experiences, allowing students to explore different cultures, point of view, and voices. That will increase the students' horizon and promotes empathy and understanding.

Readability of the text:- Excessively long sentences make comprehension challenging for the students. If students struggle to understand such sentences or unfamiliar words, they may become disengaged and lose interest in the material. Therefore, it is important for the teacher to assess the readability of the text before incorporating it in the curriculum.

6. Short Stories and Language Skills Development .

Short stories allows teacher to teach the four skills to all levels of language proficiency. Short stories can provide height- quality text contain that can significantly improve ELT course for school and university students. Furthermore, short stories could be very beneficial resource for ELT reinforcement by using learning exercises such as writing, dialogue, and discussion.

The following sections provide teachers with specific suggestions on how to use Short Stories in their EFL classrooms by demonstrating how they can be used to enhance language proficiency through series of activities. This example presents a student- center approach. This method give students more opportunities to explore the short stories and develop their basic language learning skills, while also giving them more opportunities to express their thoughts and opinion on the topic(s). In order to accommodate different learning styles, different types of tasks and activities need to be developed .In order to fully immerse students in English-speaking atmosphere, they all will be conducted in the language.

Katherine Mansfield's The Doll's House (1923) is a rich literary text that is not only discuss the theme of social racism and classism , but also used to as an amazing tool to enhance English language skills development .

Despite of being short story, but it has a lot of literary devices such as symbolism, Irony, metaphor , and nuanced characterizations. The story offers learners great opportunities to enhance reading, interpretive and analytical skills.

6.1. Listening skill and Comprehension:-

Implementing Katherine Mansfield's *The Doll's House* is quite important to enhance listening skill to EFL learners, because it may provide them with variety of meaningful layered experiences. Through listening to the gist , detail , repetition , learners will not enhance pronunciation and comprehension only, but will deeply engage with theme, characters , and cultural context. The simple language and the emotional depth of the story make it a unique source for thoughtful , active , and purposeful listening in the classroom.

6.1.1. Why *The Doll's House* is an ideal source for enhancing listening skill to EFL learners.

- Its natural and expressive language expose the learners to different types of spoken English such as descriptive, conversational, and emotional. That will help the learners to develop empathy and cultural awareness through voices.
- Students may focus on an interesting themes such as class division , kindness, and childhood innocence which are universally relevant and emotionally engaging. That will expose them to an authentic emotional language.
- The vivid and liner narrative of the story make it quiet suitable for more comprehension and segment by segment activities. Furthermore that will make students more aware of the pronunciation , rhythm and stress, as well as improve vocabulary recognition.

6.2. -The Speaking Skill and Fluency.

Katherine Mansfield's *The Doll's House* is an excellent example to develop EFL learners' fluency, expressive communication, and critical thinking. Here is the activities that the teacher may use to build up students skills

One of the activities might be used is group discussion in which the instructor may divide the students into three groups and give questions to discuss and share their ideas. That will help the students to discuss freely as well as sharing their perceptions about the questions. Sharing answers and perceptions about the topic will help the students to foster their critical thinking, understanding, analysis ,and improve their speaking skill. Furthermore the teacher may ask the student to react the story in front the class. Different roles will be taken by different students that will help the students to use the tome of anger, sarcasm, and shyness. Learners can reflect on the moral lessons, social issues and express their opinions , justifications, and personal stories.

Practical Speaking Activities using *The Doll's House*.

Role play :- Students may act like Kiza , Lil , Any other characters to preform scene.

Story Retelling :- Students may retell the story or part of it using their own words .

Dialogue Creation :- Students may write or preform an imagine conversation between characters.

Personal Response:- Students relate the story to their own experience, life, and Culture.

All of these activities my help the learners to move beyond their simple language and thinking into deeper, more expressive and rich language. Also they will develop social awareness and empathy through story telling.

6.3. -Reading Skills and Vocabulary Expansion :-

Short stories a unique source to improve students' vocabularies, and reading comprehension. It is important to point out that utilizing short stories in EFL classroom enhance almost all the language skills of the learners. It has a positive impacts on developing learners' language skills and critical thinking. *The Doll's House* by Katherine Mansfield is an ideal text for English foreign language (EFL) students due its rich vocabulary , clear themes ,and vivid imagery. This section will clarify the strategies that can be used to improve student's reading comprehension , vocabularies acquisition, and literary analysis.

First step is the pre –reading phase. It's just like a worm up technique in which the teacher will discuss the author's life, the historical and the cultural background related to Mansfield's *The Doll's House*, the theme of classism, hope and social racism. This technique used to foster social interaction and develop a share understanding among the students. Furthermore encouraging them to share their point of view and experience. Furthermore that may help them to have critical thinking and analysis. The teacher may go for such questions to help them in their critical analysis.

- What does the Dolls' House represent ?
- Who is permitted to visit the Burnell's house and see the Dolls House and why?

6.3.1-Close Reading:-

In this part the students have to pay more attention to language, structure, literary devices. That will encourage the students to go further in understanding and critical comprehension, that will help to uncover the deeper meaning, contradictions, authorial intent. Applying the close reading to Katherine Mansfield's *The Dolls House* may offer rich opportunities to develop critical thinking , literary devices and interpretative insight. Furthermore it will help the EFL students to move from what happen to why it matters, teaching them to support their answers with quotations from the text, and discover the hidden meanings .

For example :- From these lines we can ask the students to identify the literary devices such as :-

what Kezia liked more than anything, what she liked frightfully, was the lamp. It stood in the middle of the dining-room table, an exquisite little amber lamp with a white globe. It was even filled all ready for lighting, though, of course, you couldn't light it. But there was something inside that looked like oil, and that moved when you shook it . The father and mother dolls, who sprawled very stiff as though they had fainted in the drawing-room, and their two little children asleep upstairs, were really too big for the doll's house. They didn't look as though they belonged. But the lamp was perfect. It seemed to smile to Kezia, to say, "I live here." The lamp was real.

Personification :- “ to smile to kezia.... I live here “

Repetition :- “ The lamp was perfect The lamp was real “

Symbolism :- The lamp may symbolize the hope , warmth, and the authenticity in a cold and selfish society. It's totally different from the rigid social roles (the children and the parent) the light is shiny, full of life, and independent.

- The father and the mother toys are stiff they may represent the stiff , inflexible, and rigid social class structure.
- The lamp, despite of being small , but it's perfect and real which suggest the true values lies in in simplicity not in material things and statue.

Contrast :- Here the teacher can ask the students to identify the themes that they understand from reading the novel, furthermore he can ask them question and they have to answer individually or in group discussion.

- The shiny little lamb Vs. the stiffness of the toys.

- The beauty of the Doll's house Vs. the smell off it.
- Brunel's family Vs. Kelveys' family.
- Light Vs. The darkness.
- Innocence Vs. Social Conditions

Synonyms :- The students have to write the most difficult words and the instructor have to figure the meaning of these words according to the ext.

Exquisite = wonderful ,Sprawled = relax , globe = a ball .

6.4.- Writing .

Implementing Katherine Mansfield's *The Doll's House* is a veracity literary work that may scientifically enhance EFL students' writing skill through narrative, descriptive, analytical and creative exercises. Engaging the learners with the text's language, themes, and structure may improve the learners' fluency, critical thinking.

The instructor have to encourage the learners to write about themes such as Classism, Innocence, Love, and Hope and how these things can affect people's life. That will help to improve the students' critical thinking skills, imagination, and creativity. Furthermore instructor may ask them to write different versions of the story suggest different endings .

Activities :- Choose two different topic and write about them .

- Write a different end of the story ?
- Write a different version of the story ?
- Which character do you admire the most ? Why ?
- How does Mansfield criticize social inequality?

7.-Conclusion

The result of this study can show that Short stories have great impact on developing English language skills, personal development ,and cultural knowledge and understanding specially for EFL learners. It is so clear that using literature in general and short stories specifically for EFL learners is more vital and recommended. It can develop and enhance students critical thinking, imagination , creativity and culture awareness and understanding . Students' involvement in different activities such as critical analysis, discussion and responding to the questions can help them to learn quickly, being not afraid as they will indulge in a discussion with their mates.

The authenticity of implementing literary works , the richness of the language , the scoop of the imagination and the process of critical thinking are just few advantages for implementing literature to enhance English language skills. Thus, incorporating short stories in EFL programs may improve EFL learners' skills and increase their language proficiency .

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