

СЕКЦИЯ «Иностранные языки и регионоведение»

No Longer a Luxury: Literature in Foreign Language Teaching

Золотарёва Ольга Александровна

Студент

Московский государственный университет имени М.В. Ломоносова, Факультет  
иностранных языков и регионоведения, Москва, Россия

E-mail: [olgazolotareva95@gmail.com](mailto:olgazolotareva95@gmail.com)

The dichotomy between literature and language in the language classroom has been at the forefront of debate in recent years, as the study of literature is being rapidly replaced by extra hours of pure language study due to time constraints, real or perceived lack of expertise on the part of the teacher and a widespread but faulty belief that the communicative approach to language teaching precludes the study of literary texts [1, 2]. In much the same way, while students are actively encouraged to produce factual texts of practical value during the language lesson, little room is left for creative writing and wordplay [5].

This research positions literature within the context of the communicative approach to language teaching, drawing on material of the English language and the extensive practical experience of the ESL teachers [1, 2, 6, 8]. The principles of selecting texts for study as well as the extent to which those should be adapted, if at all, has also been considered [1]. Adapted and original extracts from «The Moon and Sixpence» by W.S. Maugham [3, 4] have been used by way of illustration. Below is an example of a comparative analysis, which is to be found in more detail in my research paper.

Adapted extract:

I have already said that but for the hazard of a journey to Tahiti I should never have written this book. It is *there* that after many *travels* Charles Strickland came, and it is there that he painted the paintings on which his fame rests.

Original extract:

I have said already that but for the hazard of a journey to Tahiti I should *doubtless* never have written this book. It is *thither* that after many *wanderings* Charles Strickland came, and it is there that he painted the pictures on which his fame *most securely* rests.

Having compared the two extracts, I came to a conclusion that there is no vast difference between them and that studying original texts may therefore be a better strategy for upper-intermediate learners, as this helps enrich vocabulary and develop linguistic intuition.

Finally, I have attempted to examine how the study of literature may stimulate the development of students' creative writing skills and communicative competence. For example, making use of the works in the genre of flash fiction during the lesson may encourage students to create their own short short stories. The same applies to haiku poems, rightly regarded as the very paragons of creative brevity.

The research has shown that the literature is a highly valuable resource which provides students of a foreign language with an illuminating insight into the country whose language they study, hones their feeling for language and plays an integral role in their cultural enrichment [2]. I have particularly stressed the importance of using non-native literatures alongside native literatures so as to give students an understanding of the scope and variety of the language they study and to provide them with role-models to draw inspiration from [1, 7]. (These include Kim Yong Ik, who managed to become a successful writer by mastering

his third language, English [7]). Although my analysis of the ways in which literature can be adapted to the classroom is far from exhaustive, it proves that literature can, and should, play an integral role in the modern curriculum.

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