

USING LITERARY TEXTS IN ELT CLASSROOMS: THE PINNACLE OF PROMOTING LEARNER AUTONOMY?

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Abstract

Learner autonomy, in the context of 21st century, is not just a trend that is set newly by ELT specialists which is suitable for language learners of a particular regime, rather it as a – “particularly appropriate idea in non-westerns as in western classroom settings” , described exactly by Smith (2002). Again, literary texts are also being used as materials in language learning and teaching classrooms. This paper reports on a study that investigates how literary texts can be used in language learning classrooms in order to provide more autonomy to the undergraduate students and language learners in a South Asian country, like Bangladesh. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire administrated to English department undergraduate students of a major public university of Bangladesh, to find out primarily what autonomy in a language learning classroom means to them in their cultural context; how they relate language learning and the use of literary text; and their preferable genre of literary texts for language learning purpose. The paper also discusses the implications of the findings and offers recommendations for the better incorporation of literary text’s use in a Bangladeshi language learning classroom.

Keywords: Learner Autonomy, Literary Texts, SL Classrooms, SLA, Bangladesh

Introduction:

At the dawn of 21st century, language teaching is not a teacher centered job anymore, where an omniscient instructor will dictate the classroom. Rather we consider classroom as a coral garden now where collaborative participation is necessary. Students are allowed to be autonomous to choose the way they want to learn a language. In all the government Universities of Bangladesh (as well as in south Asia, in general) – the tradition in English departments is to teach both English literature and language simultaneously. The honours curriculum here is designed in a way where the students must take both the literature courses and ELT courses in each and every semester. Only after they pass their honours, they are allowed to specialize either in Literature or in Applied Linguistics and

ELT, in order to gain their masters degree. This particular research focuses minutely on the undergrad days of English Department of Dhaka University and tries to figure out whether in these four years of obtaining their graduation- the literary courses they undertake provide any aid for an under graduate student to develop his/her skills in English. Then the research will also follow on how much autonomy they get while using those text books for learning English. At the end – this study will give some suggestions on how the curriculums should be designed to provide students much more autonomy in learning English- by using literary texts.

Learner Autonomy: a Brief Literary Review:

Autonomy is related to one's free will to do anything, but not without consensus. When someone autonomously wants to do something, and that person knows the measures he/she is going to take for that – we can say that was an autonomous move from the person.

When we look into the literature, autonomy, more specifically learner autonomy (LA) is considered as a very important concept in English language learning and teaching. The historical context of autonomy in ELT pedagogy is not new. Smith(2002) refers back to Claude Marcel (1793-1876) who told – “ a good Method favours self-teaching” (Marcel1853 :203). In Marcel's own words –

“One of the chief characteristics of a good method consists in enabling learners to dispense with the assistance of a teacher when they are capable of self-government. It should be contrived as to excite and direct their spontaneous efforts, and lead them to the conviction that they have the power, if they have the will, to acquire whatever man has acquired.” (Marcel 1853:203)

Even before that, Smith(2002) tells us that Marcel has the influences of Joseph Jacotot (1770-1840) on him, who (Jacotot) was a radical thinker and foreign language teacher – “Indeed, Jacotot has a good claim to being a ‘founding father’ of pedagogy for autonomy in language education.”

Then there were Joseph Payne (1808-76) from England, who said – “the teacher must... be careful to explain nothing, - to interrogate perpetually, - to make pupil discover his own errors, and justify everything performed by himself.” (Payne 1830:381). Along with Jacotot, Marcel and Payne – smith (2002) also added Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel as well. Among the recent practitioners, names of Caleb Gattegno of ‘subordinating teaching to learning’ fame, Charles Curran of community language learning approach fame, John Dewey, Carl Rogers and Paulo Freire can be mentioned who believed in providing learner autonomy to the language learners.

Holec (1981) defines LA as – “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” , but it not doing as accordingly whatever one’s will, but – “to have to hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of learning” . For him, LA includes – “determining the objectives; defining the contents and progressions; selecting methods and techniques to be used; monitoring the procedure of acquisition...; evaluating what has been acquired” (Holec. 1981:3)

Dam(1995, p.1) points out almost the same thing with his definition of LA – “learner autonomy is characterized by readiness to take charge of one’s own learning in the service of one’s needs and purposes. This entails a capacity and willingness to act independently and in co-operations with others, as a social responsible person.” That defines learner autonomy in a way which not only implies learner’s free will about adopting the learning style but with sense of utter responsibility. However LA does not advocate learning without a teacher, nor learning without interaction, says Little(1991). However, LA and the use of technology for promoting autonomy – do not replace the necessity of instructors and teachers –

“with the spread of ICT and self-access centers, a ‘technological’ interpretation is often placed on autonomy which seems to give the teacher only a very restricted role. While students may be enabled to exercise autonomy in a computer- centered learning environment, doing so does not necessarily develop their autonomous learning capacities, and for this the teacher’s (or at least a ‘counselor’s) role continues to be crucial” (smith, 2002)

Sinclair(1997) has culminated 13 brief concepts regarding LA that includes various aspects of it . For him autonomy is 1stly a “construct of capacity” that means, LA is supposed to describe the ability of learners to adapt with a new learning situation. 2ndly – autonomy denotes “a willingness on the part of the learner to take responsibility for their own learning” , which means learners need to gather the courage to take decisions about their learning preferences. 3rdly – that capacity, that courage and willingness of “taking responsibility” of one’s own learning is “not necessarily innate”. 4thly – Autonomy to its fullest bream is – “an idealistic goal”, means that – complete autonomy is not really possible. 5thly – There are certain “degrees of autonomy” which Sinclair(1997) himself exemplifies – “For example – a language learner may have a fairly high degree of autonomy with regard to learning new lexical items, but a poor level with regard to selecting strategies for practicing spoken language.” 6thly- the degrees of LA are “unstable and variable”

Literary Text: A Brief Literary Review:

A text or written material, like a book or piece of poem, that has an intention to tell a story or entertain the reader is considered as a literary text. The chief function of a

literary text is usually aesthetic, but a literary text may also contain political messages or beliefs. Lazer (1983) has quoted from different literary persona to define literature and literary text. He mentions Murdoch (1978) who considers literature as a technical thing and that deals with the arousal of emotion among the readers - "Literature could be said to be a sort of disciplined technique for arousing emotions" (Iris Murdoch, *The Listener*, 1978). He mentions Ezra Pound, who defines great literature as something that is related to language and its ability to bear meaning that touches the readers - "Great literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree" (Ezra Pound, *How to read*, Part 2). He mentions Barthes (1978) who represents literature metaphorically - "Literature is question minus the answer" (Roland Barthes, *New York Times*, 1978). Among some other mentions there is Paley (1974), who has defines literature and its role from social class relation perspective - "Literature, fiction, poetry, whatever, makes justice in the world. That's why it is almost always on the side of the underdog." (Grace Paley, *Ms*, 1974).

The language of literary text is definitely different from other formal or informal writings. In order to explain language of a literary text, Lazer (1983) quotes from Seldon (1989) - "The Formalists' technical focus led them to treat literature as a special use of language which achieves its distinctness by deviating from and distorting 'practical' language. Practical language is used for acts of communication, while literary language has no practical function at all and simply makes us see differently" (Seldon, 1989, pp. 9-10) However, in this case study, I considered literary texts that are language specific and criteria specific. I considered only the literary texts that are written in English and are taught in Department of English, University of Dhaka within its four year honours curriculum. Some of their literature courses are – Romantic Poetry (containing poetry of Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelly and Keats), English Novel from Defoe to Hardy (Novels of Defoe, Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Charles Dickens, Hardy), English Drama from Marlowe to Congreve (Dramas of Marlowe, Shakespeare, Jonson, Congreve), Victorian poetry and Prose (Poetry from Tennyson, Browning, Arnold and prose from Mill and Walter Pater), Poetry from Spenser to Pope (Including Spenser, Donne, Herbert, Milton, Marvell, Pope), English Prose from Bacon to Burke (Prose from Bacon, Milton, Swift, Addison, Samuel Johnson, E. Burke), 20th Century Literature (poetry of Yeats, Eliot, Auden and Larkin, Drama of Beckett, Pinter), Classics in Translation (Drama of Homer, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Euripides), 20th Century Fiction (Conrad, Woolf, Lawrence, Joyce, Golding) etc (Student Handbook: Department of English, University of Dhaka, 2008).

English language in Bangladesh:

Before trying to judge how much autonomous our participants (Honours 1st year students of English Department, University of Dhaka) were while they built up their

proficiency in English, we must consider the situation Bangladesh and its linguistic policy to contextualize our research findings. Bangladesh is a country of 147,000 square km with comparatively a huge population of 140 million. It belongs to Asian regime, a country from South Asia to be more exact. The annual per capital income of this country is US\$ 411 (Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics [BANBEIS], 2004). 45.3% of its population over 7 years age are literate (Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics, 2004). Rahman (2007) noted that, after the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation, English suffered a serious setback.

There was an upraise of strong nationalistic sentiment for the mother tongue Bengali. The Bengali introduction Law, disseminated in 1983 by Bangladesh Government, made it compulsory for employees in government, semi-government, and sovereign institutions to use Bengali in interoffice memos, officially permitted documents and correspondence except in case of communication with overseas governments, countries and organizations. Thus English lost its previous position as a second language and came to be treated as a foreign language. Within time English has regained its status and utility. English is now being taught in primary, junior, secondary and higher secondary schools. English is also the medium of communication in government and nongovernmental offices as well as for business purposes. So, English – the language which came to the people of Bangladesh along with the British colonial ruler still has an dominant and prestigious position in this country (Banu & Sussex, 2001; Kachru, 2005).

The Current State: Why Learner Autonomy through Literature?

Instead of putting a scrutinizing eye inside the language learning and teaching classrooms in Bangladesh, lets stand by its window and put our eyes through it, to see what's going on around in this particular field around the world. To develop 2nd language(L2) learning experience interesting , ELT specialists have divided it and are trying to cover it from different micro aspects like – “SLA(L2) acquisition as a uniform phenomenon”, “Second language acquisition vs first language acquisition” or “second language acquisition vs foreign language acquisition”, “the centrality of syntax and morphology”, “competence vs performance”, “Acquisition vs learning”, “the role of the first language”, “The natural route of development”, “Contextual variation in language-learner language”, “Individual learner differences”, “The role of the input”, “Learner process”, “The role of formal instruction” and so on (Ellis,1999, pp.4-15). Considering different aspects of L2 learning, there have been different approaches and methods – “approaches and methods have played a central role in the development of our profession...for second and foreign language teaching” (Richards &Rodgers, 1986,p.250).

After that – there was a proposal about the end of methods (Thornbury, 2009) and post method pedagogy (Kumaravadelu, 1994). Language teachers found that applying a

self directed method with an incorporation of all previous methods and approaches that suits to their teaching purpose and apply it on their own way is more helpful for the learners than blindly following a particular method prescribed by someone – “post method teachers adapt their approach in accordance with local and contextual factors” (Thronbury,2009). There have been attempts of familiarizing with the classroom culture as well. Being aware of students’ backgrounds and making the classroom practices culture sensitive as well as co operative by using the metaphor classroom as a coral garden – where the whole class functions together and strives for a cumulative goal (Holliday, 1994) So when all these are happening in modern day ELT pedagogy around the world writing a paper to promote learner autonomy between University fresher’s through the literary text included in their undergraduate curriculum seems quite depressing.

It is depressing, because in one hand most of them are not familiar with the concept of learner autonomy, on the other hand they had a very problematic language learning experiences that they in their past before they came to graduate in English. Even in some of the best Universities of Bangladesh, there are some freshmen undergraduate students who have come to obtain a degree in English without the ability to write grammatically correct sentences, to read and bring out the meaning out of their texts , to reciprocate while they are asked to do during the class. Speaking fluently in English remains an alien act to a lot of them even after completing their honours or masters.

The reason of this discrepancy is simple . The problem is in their root of learning. The problem is, they have never considered English as a language within any of their previous curriculums before they arrived to obtain a degree in English for graduation, although there is a slight difference to the English medium students. Almost all the student’s took English as a course just like all other courses – physics, chemistry, religion, economics or accounting during their SSC (Secondary school certificate) and HSC (Higher secondary certificate). They read selected part of their English text books, made notes and memorized some selected questions from previous years’ question paper and they passed. That is what kept on happening in a circular way and all on a sudden they are in a University class room. It often becomes difficult to teach them literary texts as well as to introduce old and new English language learning theories. Students remain frustrated as well.

My research findings will show that maximum number of students who are now students of Department of English, University of Dhaka have somehow grown fondness on some specific literary genre. My point is, as they have to take courses which are mostly from literature, why we do not teach them, or at least prescribe them the way of using literary text to develop their language proficiency in English? Because, willingly or for the course’s sake they have to read their texts. If they can acquire the necessary linguistic

elements from their texts along with, they will grow as autonomous learners as well which is another motif of this study.

The Current study:

The current study is based on a small scale research that has been conducted on the students of Department of English, University of Dhaka. Department of English, University of Dhaka – is the oldest English departments across the country. This department started functioning along with 19 other departments on the day Dhaka University was founded – 1st July, 1921. The department has grown steadily in its size and reputation since the year it was born and now it is one of the most fully fledged departments in this university. Since 1998 this department is offering four-year B.A. Honours degree in English. At the M.A. level the student can complete their major either in Applied Linguistics and ELT or in English Literature. Since the academic year 2006-2007 the department is following semester system of teaching and letter grade system of evaluation that has been introduced by faculty of Arts at all the departments under it. (Student Handbook: Department of English, University of Dhaka, 2008). The department has approximately 125 students for each class at an average.

The Main Study: Participants and Instruments

The sample for the quantitative phase of the parent study consisted of 100 undergraduate students (20-25 year olds) of Department of English, University of Dhaka, who were selected randomly. Three of these 100 students were later selected for one-to-one interviews in its qualitative phase. There was only one instrument used for collecting numerical data: a student survey questionnaire.

Survey Questionnaire:

The questionnaire collected data on some basic data regarding students' gender, their social and financial backgrounds (like where they grew up and in what curriculum they completed their higher secondary schooling). Then there were questions to discover their previous English language learning experiences, whether they know what LA is or not and lastly there were questions to find out their preference regarding literary genre within their honours curriculum. It was an online survey, conducted with the help of Google survey in November 2015. There was a brief introduction to the motif of this study along with an assurance that the information they provided would be kept anonymous and would be used only for the research purpose.

Methodology and Data Analysis:

To analyze the data of this paper a mixed-methods approach was taken (Bryman,2006; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Greene,2008). To analyze data in this approach one needs to collect, analyze and mix both quantitative and qualitative data at the

stage of data collection procedure through the survey questionnaire. Within this research design – “premise that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p.5). There was a plan of arranging one to one interview which was not possible due to lack of time and participants unwillingness. So the qualitative data was collected through the same survey questionnaire form by adding two open ended questions related to the study.

Quantitative Data Analysis:

The questionnaire was surveyed through a Google form with some prior written instructions to the students. It was circulated to exactly 100 students who responded to it within more or less than a week. The participation rate for girls (54%) was closely followed by boys (46%). The difference was not statistically significant.

Table 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 presents percentage distribution of the students (n= 100) background information like where did they grow up, the types of school and colleges they attended and currently they are students of which year in Department of English, University of Dhaka.

Table 1.1

Percentage distribution of students growing up

Where did you grow up?	Percentage
City	65%
Village	20%
Town	15%

Table 1.2

Percentage distribution of students' educational background

Which type of school and college you attended?	Percentage
Bangla medium	89%
English medium (National Curriculum)	8%
English medium (Foreign Curriculum)	3%
Madrasa	0 %

Table 1.3

Percentage distribution of their current academic placement

You are a student of English language and literature of which year?	Percentage
1st year	55%
2nd year	20%
3rd Year	5%
4th year	5%
Masters	0%

In table 1.1, we can see that most of the students (65%) who took part in the survey are city dwellers. They have been raised in cities. 20% of the students are from villages and 15% are from suburbs or small towns. Table 1.2 that throws light on the educational backgrounds of students shows us the conventional picture of students' instruction material and medium. Largest number of students of Bangladesh are from Bangla medium. They use text books that are written in Bangla and answers in the exam scripts in Bangla, which is their mother tongue or L1. 89% of the total people who participated in the survey are from Bangla Medium background. 8% of the students are from English medium (National Curriculum) and 3% of the rest are from English medium students of foreign curriculum. Table 1.3 shows that, the largest portion of the participants are from honours 1st year (55%). 20% of the participants are from honours 2nd year and there are 5% each for honours 3rd year and 4th year. No participants were from Masters.

Table 2.1 to 2.6 shows analysis of data on 6 different issues of their language learning background which are regarding the way they treated English during their school and college days, how much interactive their classrooms were, whether they were aware of the 4 skills of language learning and whether these skills were practiced in their classes. Then there were questions on the textbooks that they used and the measures they have taken to learn English by themselves.

Table 2.1

Percentage distribution of participants' treatment of English course

How you treated your English course in school/college	Percentage
Just like another subject to pass exams	55%
English as a language to communicate	13%
Not sure, never gave a thought on that	25%

Others	7%
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Table 2.2**Percentage distribution of participants' classroom interaction**

How were your English classrooms like?	Percentage
Lecture based	56%
Task based	26%
Interactive	17%
Others	1%

Table 2.3**Percentage distribution of participants' awareness of 4 language learning skills**

Did you know there are 4 language learning skills during your school/ college days?	Percentage
I didn't know	26%
I knew	70%
I am still not clear about them	4%

Table 2.4**Percentage distribution of participants' who practiced those four skills before**

Were those language skills practiced within your classroom in your school/college?	percentage
All four(listening speaking reading writing)	9%
A few, not all	61%
They were never mentioned	26%
Others	4%

Table 2.5**Percentage distribution of participants' text book usability**

The English text books that were used in your language classrooms, were they helpful?	Percentage
Yes	17%
No	53%
Not sure	30%

Table 2.6**Percentage distribution of participants' personal attempts to learn English**

Did you try to practice English by yourself during your school/ college days?	Percentage
I tried to speak in English with others for that	18%
I tried to read English books for that	7%
I watched English movies and listened to English songs for that	56%
I opened an English language club for that	0%
I never felt that important	18%
Other	1%

Table 2.1 to 2.6 takes us to the participants language learning habits. Table 2.1 concerns with how the participants treated their English course during their school and college days. The absolute truth is, in most of the Bangla medium schools English is always treated as a subject and is learnt and taught as a subject to pass. The survey questionnaire also reflects that. 55% of the total participants has said that, they considered English as nothing more than a subject to pass during their school and college days. 13% of the participants considered English as really a language that they should use as a medium of communication. 25% percent of the students never gave a thought on how they are considering English and 7% of them had some other opinions. Table 2.2 reflects on participants' classroom interactions. Though we are claiming that CLT method is being

applied in our English language learning and teaching classrooms for more than a decade now, there is hardly any sign of that in the research survey. 56% of the students who participated in the survey claimed that their language learning classrooms were mostly lecture based, 27% of them claimed that teacher used to come and give them class works and reading and writing tasks to teach English and only 17% of them claimed that their classes were interactive. Table 2.3 and 2.4 deals with students awareness of the four language learning skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and how many of them followed these within their classroom in schools and colleges.

Table 2.3 makes us hopeful about the language learning and teaching situation in our country where 70% of the students claim that they were aware of these four skills during their school and college days. 26% of the participants said they didn't know of them in their school and college days rather became aware of them after joining the department. 4% of the remaining were honest enough to claim that they still do not have any idea about what these four language learning skills are. Table 2.4 deals with whether their schools or colleges helped them to acquire these four skills. 9% of the participants claimed that their language instructors at schools/colleges helped them to acquire all four skills. 61% of the participants claimed that they were taught not all four, but a few of the skills within their classrooms at schools/colleges.

A wholesome of 26% participants claimed that the name of the skills were never mentioned even if they were being practiced within their classes. The NCTB has produced a text book for communicative approach in our country that is called English for Today. So it was an interesting question for them whether their text books really helped them to develop their four language learning skills. Surprisingly 53% of the participants claimed that their text were not helpful for them in this regard. 30% of them were not sure whether their texts really effected their language learning experience or not. 17% of the rest claimed assertively. Table 2.6 shows the analysis of a question regarding their personal attempts to learn English. There were different approaches. 18% of the participants claimed they used to talk with their partners or peers in English to develop their English, 7% used to read books for that, and 56% of the participants claimed that they either watches movie or listen to English songs to develop their English which fulfills their entertainment purpose as well perhaps. 18% of the participants said that, they never felt it important to develop their communication skills in English.

Table 3 shows the analysis of a question, that is, whether they are aware of the technical term 'Learner Autonomy' (LA) or not.

Table 3

Percentage distribution of participants' awareness of LA

Are you familiar with the term Learner Autonomy? Percentage

I never heard of this 41%

I have heard of this but I am not sure what exactly it means. 43%

I know what it means and how it functions 16%

In this analysis its vivid that the largest portion of the participants (43%), being an undergraduate student of Dhaka University are familiar with the word Learner Autonomy though they exactly don't know what it means. 41% of the participants have no clue of what LA is and 16% of the participants claimed that they are familiar with the jargon and know its functions as well.

Table 4.1 and 4.2 deals with their preferred literary genre and the literary text genre that they think can be helpful to develop their language skills.

Table 4.1

Percentage distribution of participants' preferred literary genre

Which sort of literary texts (within your 1st year curriculum) do you like most?	Percentage
Poetry	47%
Short Fiction	41%
Literary articles	6%
Others	6%

Table 4.2

Percentage distribution of literary texts that participants think can be helpful to develop their language skills

From which literary text (within your honours 1st year curriculum) do you think you can develop your language skills most?	Percentage
Poetry	17.7%
Short Fiction	67.7%
Literary articles	10.4%
Others	4.2%

Table 4.1 and 4.2 shows that, though the personal preference of participants is very close between poetry (47%) and short fiction (41%) within the texts that they are taught in 1st year curriculum of Department of English, University of Dhaka, most of them prefer short fiction (67.7%) as texts that an individual can use to develop their language skills.

There were 2 more questions, which are open ended regarding why they prefer the literary genre to be apt for developing language skills and their overall language learning experiences so far. These two questions will be discussed in the qualitative data analysis part.

Qualitative Data Analysis:

There was an interpretive phase of the study that aimed to construct, describe and analyze the participants' prior language learning experience and their perception of promoting LA through literary text. So there were two open ended questions that relate to students prior language learning experience and their perception of LA and LT.

Tracing their preferred literary genre and the reason behind it:

Question 11 from survey questionnaire was one of these open ended questions. It refers back to its previous question which was a quantitative question asking participants to select their favourite literary genre. After marking their preferable genre, they had to explain why they have chosen this within the answer of question 11. As 67.7% students opted for short fictions, let's have a look on some of the interesting reasons that they have showed for selecting short fictions as their favourite genre of literary text within their honours 1st year curriculum.

In order to explain why to choose short fictions, some of the participants said it helps to build up their vocabulary. For example, one of the participants writes in his questionnaire form – “We can learn a lot of new words and expressions”. On the other hand some participants focused on the grammatical structure – “a good short fiction teaches you basic stuffs like grammar, structures and balance.” There were some brilliant explanations of why the participant would choose fiction over poetry like- “Because in short fiction, I can see complete sentence structure and how they are used. Although poetry will help with pronunciation, it is not always easy to understand poetry by myself.”

Their prior language learning experiences:

The last question of survey questionnaire was on their prior language learning experiences. They could share some information if they felt it necessary within 5 sentences. It was an optional question and everyone of the participants did not answer to it. However within the few received answer, some very important facts came up. There were some blunt acknowledgements regarding the futility of the current curriculum in

the schools and colleges for English language learning and teaching, for example – “In our classes, English speaking and listening skills were not practiced properly. I hope they will be taught properly to the new generation in schools and colleges.” Then there were some very interesting answers as well regarding the ways some of the participants applied to learn English. For example, one of the participants thanks his/her mother for taking him/her to several spoken English courses that increased his/her confidence to communicate in this language – “Though my school and college did not play any significant role in teaching me English, My mom did a far better job. She took me to at least 8 different language learning centers like British council, s@ifur's, FM method etc that when I entered my university level, I was pretty much relaxed with the language.” Then there was one participant who used to read English text loudly in a funny accent to make his learning experience interesting – “It's funny how I used to read the texts loud to myself in Spanish accent just because I found it so catchy and interesting.” Then there was one participant who said help from family and friends intrigues one's language learning capability – “I think family environment, friend circle and the learner's self intention to get improved are most effective way to develop English in this stage”

After considering the findings of these two qualitative or open ended question, we can come to this conclusion that students are demotivated with their prior language learning experiences which they don't consider effective. They marked that whatever development they have achieved in their skills of using English, they achieved it from some prior spoken English courses or from help of friends and family. They expect to develop their skills in English further, but within an interesting and entertaining way. They consider that literary text that they use for their academic purpose within their honours 1st year curriculum in department of English, university of Dhaka, can be handy to develop their language skills. Their preferred genre within the literary texts is short fictions which have good collection of vocabulary, daily life conversations and apt sentence structures to learn and practice.

Proposed Way to connect LA and LT:

Using short fictions for language teaching purpose is nothing new as there are various formats of materials and activities designed by the experts in this field of using literary texts in language classrooms. Lazar (1993), Collie and Slater (1987) developed their own model of using short fictions in language learning classrooms as materials. Short fictions can be useful for language teachers in many ways with some “immediate and striking advantages” that Collie and Slater (1987) discussed like the practical length of the text are coverable within one or two classes at best, they offer great verities and they work great as homework.

Autonomy in developing speaking:

- The teacher, after choosing a story for the class can relate it to the students own life. When the learners feel motivated by finding a similarity somehow with the struggle or happiness of the fictional character/s with their own sorrows or happiness, the teacher can ask them to share their own story with peers. Students would feel less threatened this time as they would willingly come up to share something that is very much personal to them with their friends.
- The teacher can ask some of his/her students to come forward and exchange dialogues or role play from the given text characters.

Autonomy in developing Listening:

- Before asking the students to read the story, the teacher can tell the summary of the story to the students and ask the students to listen carefully. After that he/she can ask questions regarding the story which they have to guess and answer from their prior listening experience. Or, the teacher can share the story partially and make his/ students listen to him/her. Then, based on their listening experience the teacher can ask them to guess what is going to happen next.

Autonomy in developing Reading:

- Students of University level are often very much interested in expressing their views regarding anything and everything. So the teacher can bring a short fiction in the class and ask the students to read it carefully and write a review on it from different perspectives. Or they can asked to summarize the story as well which will also test their reading. Immediate short question- answer session may help after the reading session is done .

Autonomy in developing Writing:

- The best way to promote autonomy through literary text in developing writing is to make the learners authors themselves, by asking them to write a story of their own. The teacher can help them by clarifying the strife of the protagonist in the story and how it builds up the main theme of the story. Then he/she can suggest the learners to relate it with themselves and come up with some original writings.

Autonomy in developing grammar and vocabulary:

- Students can always follow the sentence structure and new words used in the text to develop their grammar and vocabulary.

However, these are some basic suggestions to make students use a short fiction autonomously to develop their language skills. Detailed materials are provided in the aforementioned books of Lazar (1993) and Collie & Slater (1987). Language teachers can always contextualize the curriculum and material development suggestions provided by them. In honours 1st year at English Department , University of Dhaka, the students have to answer only explanations, short notes and broad questions from short fictions during their midterm and semester final exams. If these texts were used from micro aspects of developing there linguistic proficiency, the result would be fur more practicable and better.

Limitations of the study:

The study was conducted for the purpose of research proposal submission which later on turned into a full fledged paper. However there are some limitations of this paper:

- Due to budgetary provisions and time constraints, the study was conducted upon only 100 participants from a particular University (University of Dhaka). Collecting view points from only 100 participants cannot be considered as representative of the whole pedagogical system of a community or country.
- The study was intended to develop materials and to provide intensive curriculum development suggestions which could not be as detailed and as intense as they were planned earlier. Probably another research should be conducted on that.

Towards conclusion: Curriculum Advice for Future Research

As an investigation into the relatively under researched area of promoting learner autonomy in Bangladeshi language learning and teaching classroom, the current study is unique in a sense that, there is no prior study in literature of English language learning and teaching pedagogy of Bangladesh, where LA has been tried to be linked and promoted with literary text that the undergraduate students use within their curriculum. This research will make it possible for subsequent researchers to conduct research with more focused and discriminating categories of analysis, for instance – how other literary genres can promote LA within their ELT classrooms in Bangladesh. Literary texts are something, as it has been mentioned earlier, that the English undergraduates have to deal with everyday within their student life. So why do not we use these text as our arms to develop our students linguistic proficiency which they need very much in the rest of their career? This research can be a fresh new start to a long untraveled path to that.

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