Restoring Language to Literature Pedagogy: Towards an Interactive Approach

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ABSTRACT
English literature teaching in Bangladeshi universities has remained to be a frustrating experience for the faculties. This "frustration" is often attributed to the poor understanding of "the intellectually unequipped" and 'linguistically unprepared' students. This study, to understand the faculty frustration, investigates the literature teaching approaches practiced in the classes. The study also examines the role of "linguistic skill" as the learning outcome in the lesson plan of the course teachers. Finally, the paper finds that literature teaching at the tertiary level in Bangladesh does not accommodate pedagogical approaches and the linguistic skill of the students is not given the required priority in the teaching process. This paper, therefore, recommends an Interactive Approach in which language is to be integrated as one of the learning outcomes.

Keywords: interactive approach, literature pedagogy, learning outcome, teacher training

INTRODUCTION

The study of English literature in Bangladesh started with the introduction of the Department of English at the country's first public university, the University of Dhaka in 1921 (Al-Quaderi, Islam & Neazy (2010). Now Bangladesh has "53 public and 109 private universities" (UGC, 2022) and, with few exceptions, almost all the universities have English Departments offering undergraduate and graduate programs. Despite the big leap in the growth of the Departments and the students in Bangladeshi universities, there are "virtually no systematic studies of how literature teaching at the university proceeds" (Marshall, 2000, p.236). So, literature pedagogy at the tertiary level has remained 'chaotic' in our context with a "stereotypical format of teaching and learning the subject" because, most literature teachers, even with years of experience in the field, are unaware of the literature pedagogical theories and so, they "consciously and consistently" fail to "apply any single theory" (Showalter, 2016, p. 27) while teaching the students who have come to study the subject, "linguistically unprepared and conceptually unequipped" (Dutta, 2001, p.125). As a result, the literature teaching has been monologic with the teacher always speaking and the students being passive recipients- the silent listeners, no matter whether the students understand or not and, thus, "the teaching of literature has faltered and the students have been led busily but aimlessly" (McCarthy, 2010; Moody, 1983) into the realm of literary gossips and unintelligible maize of interpretations, which finally end up in the failed communication between the teachers and the students.

The failed communication between the teachers and the students of English literature in our universities is often accounted for the 'yawning gap' between the teachers' expectation of linguistic skills from the students and the students' real linguistic skills which is "much below the expected level" (Dutta, 2001, p. 124). The gap is best understood in the 'contrasting' attitudes of the teachers and the students towards literature pedagogy. While our literature teachers expect their students to be able to appreciate their scholarly lectures on English life,

philosophy, values, cultures, religion, ethical visions, and so on, the students keep groping for linguistic skill development in English. The gap grows wider as the students concentrate on the summarization of the literary texts as found in some Indian and online guides/notebooks while the teachers want them to go through the literature textbooks, scholarly texts by native writers, research papers, and articles on the literary pieces being taught. The teachers' expectation of the students seems unachievable in the busy schedule of the semester system of private universities of Bangladesh, in which the students have just 45 hours of in-class lecture sessions separated by a midterm and followed by a final exam throughout the whole semester. This seemingly unworkable scenario has had a seriously bad impact on literary studies in Bangladesh and has already 'pushed literature studies to the margins' to accommodate, if not replaced by, "practical needs of the society" through the introduction of the "pragmatic, scientific and foreign trade courses" (Qiping & Shubo, 2002).

This mismatch between teacher expectation and student performance has been researched the issue. But the question of teacher efficiency in literature teaching has continued to be a taboo in the English Departments in Bangladesh. Literature teachers still practice traditional teacher-centered approaches with a focus on "various aspects of the text including characters, settings, theme, plot, and aspects of language" (Mahrooqi, 2012, 173). They are found neither aware of the existing approaches to literature teaching nor do they tend to "learn, adopt and use teaching strategies in their... lessons in the classroom" (Jose, A. E. S., & Galang, J. G., 2015, p.42).

The present study, having discussed the existing literature teaching approaches, examines the practice of literature pedagogy at the tertiary level in Bangladesh. It also shows that literature pedagogy helps the faculties to better understand the student attitudes toward linguistic skills as a learning outcome. The paper, therefore, argues that the faculties, equipped with the pedagogy, can make the literature teaching interactive by empowering the students to create their understanding and interpretations of the text.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Development of the literature pedagogy

English Literature pedagogy may be traced back to the mid-1920s with I.A. Richards' *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) and *Practical Criticism* (1929). Richards, faced with the chaos of critical theory, seized up communication as the central idea in his attempt to justify the literature pedagogy (Moody, 1983, p.21). Then a bulk of publications came out during the 1960s and 1970s with the preliminary approach to literacy pedagogy. Wellek and Warren (1963), Alex Rodger (1969), H.L.B. Moody (1970), H.G. Widdowson (1975), and many others appeared on the scene with the literature pedagogy, but they discussed the issue of teaching literature through traditional language and culture-based approach. Dutta (2001) puts up a long list of the proponents of the integrated approach during the 1980s. His list includes Carter (1982), Brumfit and Carter (1986), Short (1988), Quirk and Widdowson (1988), Carter and Simpson (1989) et al., and all of them illustrated the integrated approach with theory and individual experiments. Gower and Pearson (1986), Tomlison (1987) Greenwood (1988), Clarke (1989), Durant and Fabb (1989), Duff and Maley (1990), and McRae (1991) discussed the practical classroom materials and techniques. All these critics, as Dutta (2001) claims, have suggested: "a wide range of practical classroom activities linking language and literature and leading to communicative exercises" (p.129). Among the significant publications in the field during the last two decades are *Teaching Literature: A Companion* (Agathocleous & Dean, 2003*), Close Reading: The Reader* (Lentricchia and DuBois, 2003), *Teaching and Learning English Literature* (Ellie Chambers & Marshall Gregory, 2006), *In Defense of Teaching Literature in the Twenty-first Century* (Daniel, R. Schwarz (2008), *Teaching Life: Letters from Life in Literature* (Dale Salwak, 2008), *Literary Praxis: A Conversational Inquiry into the Teaching of Literature* (Piet-Hein van de Ven & Brenton Doecke, 2011) and *The Slow Professor: Challenging the culture of Speed in Academy* (Maggie Berg & Barbara, K. Seeber (2017). But till now, Elaine Showalter's *Teaching Literature* (2003) is the most acclaimed book

on the subject as it discusses the literature pedagogy with insightful analysis of our classroom practices with a clear paradigm shift from teaching to learning literature.

Literature teaching approaches

For literature teaching, Moody (1983, p.23) proposes "The Extrinsic" and "The Intrinsic" approaches to be used by the teachers as required. The Extrinsic approach considers the external factors and thus discusses the biological, historical, aesthetic, and philosophical aspects of a literary text while the intrinsic approach covers the grammatical, lexical, structural, and cultural aspects of the literary texts. After a detailed discussion of these two approaches, Moody (1983, p. 25) proposes the integration of the component and techniques from both approaches.

"Literature teaching may be viewed as a range of three models: Language-based, content-based and personal enrichment-based" (Carter & Long, 1991; Gabarre, 2013). Divsar & Tahriri (2009, p.106) categorize these three models as three phases of literature teaching: 1. the preliminary phase 2. the content-cultural phase 3. the synthesis phase. The preliminary phase aims at the comprehension of the literary text with the help of language activities. The content-cultural phase acquaints the learners with the target culture through the literary texts and thus helps the learners to appreciate and critique the target culture they are exposed to. Finally, the synthesis phase includes an overall evaluation of the text taught by accommodating the responses, reactions, and appreciation of the students on the literary text. Al-Mahrooqi (2012) investigates the existing literature pedagogy, and in the process, lists four approaches to literacy pedagogy with the first three ones as mentioned in Lazar and Carter & Lang. Her proposed approaches are 1. The language-based 2. The culture-based 3.The personal growth approach 4.Integrated approach.

a. **The language Model:** In recent years, language-based approaches to the teaching of literature have gained a much wider acceptance. This approach to literature pedagogy is "characterized by its intense and constant relationship with both linguistic form and literary meaning" (Carter & Long, 1991). The approach aims at helping the learners to "enhance their knowledge of target language" (Divsar & Tahriri, 2009, p.107) by "focusing on deconstructing the literary text into its linguistic features such as dissecting it for literature and figurative language" (Al-Mahrooqi, 2012, p.173), which paves the way for a better understanding of the text and meaningful interpretation (Divsar & Tahriri, 2009, p.107)
b. **The Cultural Model:** Literature is "culture in action ... and one of the major functions of literature is to serve as a medium to transmit the culture of the people who speak the language in which it is written" (Valdes, 1986, p.137). The literary text itself is "the content of the course, which concentrates on areas such as the history and characteristics of literary movements; the social, political and historical background to a text; literary genres and rhetorical devices, etc." (Lazar, 1993, p.24). This teacher-centered approach introduces the learners to the target cultures and ideologies and helps them get an insight to appreciate "different cultures and ideologies in relation to their own" (Yimwilai, 2015, p. 15).
c. **The Personal Growth Model:** The approach attempts to blend the language approach and cultural approach by "focusing on the particular use of language in a text, as well as placing it in a specific cultural context" (Divsar & Tahriri, 2009). In this approach, the learners can express their feelings, responses, opinions and intellectual thoughts and are able to "make connections between their own personal and cultural experiences and those expressed in the text" (Kennedy et al., 2008; Yimwilai, 2015, p.15). The approach requires the learners to be actively engaged in the literary text and to develop an interpretation of his/ her own independent of his course teacher's interpretation.
d. **Integrated Approach:** Divsar & Tahriri (2009) states that the three literature teaching approaches differ only in terms of their focus on the text. "In the language model, texts are

used as a focus for grammatical and structural analysis; in the cultural model, texts are used as cultural artifacts, and in the personal growth model, texts are considered a stimulus for personal growth activities" (Yimwilai, 2015, p.15). But the integrated approach seems to be a systematic integration of these three approaches to finding out not only "what a literary text means but also it suggests how it means" (Short, 1996). Again, Divsar & Tahriri (2009) describe the integrated approach of teaching literature as "linguistic approach which utilizes some of the strategies used in stylistic analysis, exploring texts, literary and non-literary from the perspective of style and its relationship to content and form" (p.108). Showalter (2003) calls this approach the theory having no theory at all, which tries"'to make use of whatever will do the job" (p. 37). It is an eclectic approach that allows the literature teachers to be free to be "pragmatic, using whatever seems to work" (Alxelrod, cited in Showalter, 2003, p. 37). In this integrated approach, the teachers are free to choose the items that stimulate students' interest, fulfill teachers' expectations, and interpretative possibilities, which arouse a strong critical thinking faculty in the learners and thus serve the universal goal of teaching and learning literature.

Literature teaching in Bangladesh

Literature teaching in Bangladeshi universities has always been a challenging and complex enterprise because of "learners' level of linguistic sophistication and literary perception" (Dutta, 2001, p. 125). However, Alam (2005), in his review of Elaine Showalter's *Teaching Literature*, counterbalances the causes of chaos in the teaching of literature. The challenge of literature teaching and learning is shouldered by the teachers as well. With a regretful note of not having had any book to read on literature teaching during his first few years of literature teaching at Dhaka University, he admits that "we are caught up in teacher-centered pedagogy" with the expectation of knowledge emanating from the teacher. But Professor Alam too transfers the blame onto the large class size and onto the student habit of having been spoon-fed without mentioning the teachers' lack of training or pedagogy as mentioned in Showalter.

Regarding the study of English literature in Bangladesh, the students are made to believe an enigmatic myth that they are capable of understanding neither the textbooks nor the lectures of the teachers in the class. Resultantly, they have traditionally been dependent on notebooks or guidebooks mostly by some Indian Professors. Some British or American guidebooks such as Cliffs Notes and York Note started popping up on the market during the early decade of this century. Spark Notes is often one of the dependable guidebooks for students as its mission is "to help [them] make sense out of confusing" (Bach, 2014, p. 274) literary texts and interpretations. And quite recently, students are using Wikipedia and other internet resources indiscriminately for the study of the literature. The worst is not the use of these internet resources but the belief that they are excellent supplements for the understanding of literary texts. The situation has moved from "Why do the students use" the guidebooks or notebooks instead of textbooks and the class lecture to "why wouldn't they"? To be precise, the students have slowly been drawn to and are now dependent, to a large scale, on the guidebooks and notebooks rather than on the teachers' lectures in the classes as the teachers reportedly tend to deliver their lectures in such a way as to prove their knowledge and scholarship on the subject with the least consideration for the student intelligibility of the course. Dutta (2001) rightly puts this scary scenario, teachers are found to stand in front of the class in a vacuum, as it were, enjoying their lectures but getting no feedback whatsoever from the learners (p.126).

This study shows that this shift to guidebooks and internet resources is the outcome of teachers' lack of familiarity with the literature pedagogy. The study also proposes that literature teachers need to be fully equipped with literature pedagogical knowledge and practices to "ensure that they know what they are doing" (Moody, 1983, p.23).

Background to the research

In the 1990s, there appeared bulk of books stating the death of literature studies in academia. *The Death of Literature* (1990) by Alvin B. Kernan, *Literature Lost: Social Agendas and Corruption of Humanities* by John Ellis (1997), *The Rise and Fall of English (*1998) by Robert Scholes are the books that confirmed the death of literature studies with persuasive arguments of its irrelevance and pointlessness in the society. But Carl Woodring (1999) in his apocalyptic book *Literature: An Embattled Profession,* through his bold refusal to call it the death of literature studies, rephrased the scenario terming literature studies as "besieged" and stated that "academic custodians of literature" are responsible for the seeming death of the literature studies.

In Bangladeshi universities too, literature studies have already been under critical suspicious eyes, if not pushed to the margins yet. English departments have been introducing Language-oriented programs such as Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, English Language Teaching (ELT), Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) at their graduate levels. In the undergraduate programs too, many literature courses have already been replaced by language-oriented courses for upgrading the department of English to "a department of pragmatic English" (Qipling & Shubo, 2002, 317). Most importantly, high graders of departments at the undergraduate level are found to prefer to enroll in language-oriented programs despite their adequate exposure to many literature courses.

The decline of literature studies and its subsequent marginalization at the Department and its seeming pointlessness in society as discussed and referred to have motivated this research to find out why literature studies are gradually losing their place to language studies. For this purpose, this study examines literature teachers' pedagogical exposure and classroom practices and seeks to find out whether there lie any lapses in the practice of literacy pedagogy.

METHODOLOGY

Research objective

The present research discusses the existing literature teaching approaches and then investigates whether the literature teachers are familiar with and capable of practicing the literature pedagogical knowledge in the class. The study also seeks to examine whether the teachers set any "learning outcomes" for the courses they teach. Finally, the study aims at examining the teachers' attitudes toward the role of language as one of the "learning outcomes" in literature pedagogy.

Research questions

As there is hardly any research on the literature teaching pedagogy at the university level in Bangladesh, the present study relies on the perceptions and classroom practices of the practicing faculties. For this purpose, we have set two research questions.

a. What learning outcome do you set for the students in your teaching of literature?
b. What approaches do you prefer to practice for literature teaching and why?

With the research objectives in mind, the paper uses some more open-ended questions. The questions help the researcher address the research questions through his knowledge of the teaching activities and teacher performance inside the literature classroom. These questions include:

a. Apart from your university degree in literature, do you have any training or study in literature teaching?
b. Have you ever participated in any workshop, seminar, symposium, or conference on teaching literature?
c. Do you feel you need professional training for more effective literature teaching?

d. Do you feel teaching literature without training poses challenges for the teachers?
e. What are the problems/difficulties/challenges in teaching literature?
f. Do you try to make the literature class interactive by encouraging students to interpret the literary texts?
g. What role does the linguistic skill of the students play in the success of your literature teaching?
h. Do you integrate 'language' in your literature teaching and if so, how?
i. What gap do you find between student expectation and teacher expectation regarding the literature pedagogy?
j. Do you think the length of service is the only criterion for making an efficient and competent literature teacher?
k. Do senior teachers always get higher ratings from the students at the end of the semester?
l. What, do you think, maybe the effective literature teaching approach at the university level in the Bangladeshi context?
m. Do you think some professional training/ study on the literature teaching may improve the scenario? If so, what might be the procedures?

Research participants

For an interview, the research approached as many as 50 literature teachers from public and private universities in Bangladesh with teaching experiences ranging from 6 years to 40 years and with positions ranging from Lecturers to Professors. A total of 35 teachers consented to be interviewed. Out of the consenting faculties, only 21 are physically available for interview and the rest of the 14 are interviewed over the phone or on Facebook messenger and WhatsApp. Out of the 35 teachers, 2 have PhD in literature, 3 PhD in Language, 5 have a Master's degree in literature, and a second Master degree in the language (ELT, Educational Technology, and TESOL). 9 are found to have been doing PhDs in language while 2 are doing the same in literature. The respondents include 9 lecturers, 12 Assistant Professors, 8 Associate Professors, and 6 Professors. Lecturers belong to be in the experience range 4 to 6 years, Assistant Professors in 8 to 13 years, Associate Professors in the range 11 to 16 years and Professors in the range of 20 to 40 years and above. Despite the length of experiences and diversity in the degrees in their Masters and PhDs, all of the faculties teach literature at their departments.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The interview with the respondents is a unique opportunity to understand the perceptions of the literature teachers about their teaching approaches. For the convenience of the analysis of the faculty perceptions, we hereby categorize the faculty responses to the interview under some categories:

Teacher training

100% of respondent faculties admit that they have no training in literature teaching at any level of their teaching career. They also admit that they have not studied any certificate, diploma, or even non-certificate courses on literature teaching. 74.28% of respondents have never attended a workshop, seminar, or conference on literature teaching. Only 25.71% of them remember to have participated in or listened to talks on how to teach a particular literary piece in the class but they could not be sure whether it was a workshop, seminar, or conference. But all of them (100%) agree that professional training will contribute to the better teaching of the courses they teach at the university.

Challenges of literature teaching

In response to "Do you face any challenge due to your having no training or study on literature teaching?", all the respondents are initially found uncomfortable and confused. They say they hardly have any experience of facing any problem in teaching literature, rather they

mention some problems faced by the students. But when prompted by the supplementary questions, they admit "having issues" to deal with in their teaching. **100%** of respondents believe a period of 3 contact hours per week and 15 weeks of classroom teaching is inadequate for an in-depth discussion of literary topics. **85.71%** of them agree that they feel unguided and thus lost regarding the choice of the perspective to be focused on during the classroom discussions. For teachers, it has always been the greatest challenge to choose one perspective from among the diversified ones covering culture, religion, history, critical theory, sociology, anthropology, translation, language, and so on. Retaining student attention to the class discussion is an issue of displeasure for **71.42%** of the faculties as they find as many as 30% of students lose attention to the class in less than a quarter of the class time**. 86%** of faculties do not allocate any time for student feedback on the topic(s) discussed as they have been used to student silence. And thus, 80% of students never tend to have any queries, views, or feedback during their graduation period of 4 years at the Department.

Student expectation and teacher's efficiency

Confronted with the question of 'student expectation', **71.42**% of respondents say their students are hardly capable of what to be expected from the course and the course teacher. As the students are grade hunters, they expect exam-oriented lectures in the classes. When reminded of the student expectations, 100% of faculties admit that students with 'higher language proficiency' expect their teachers to be prepared with updated scholarship on the topic(s). But **100**% of students appreciate the teachers articulating learning outcomes in the Course Outlines supposed to be provided at the beginning of the semesters. But **80**% of faculties say they do not prepare the course outlines or lesson plans specifying the learning outcome for the class. **9**% of faculties are aware that the learners appreciate focused, relevant, cross, and self-referential lectures in line with the learning outcome as specified in the course outline.

Student participation in the literature class

The literature faculties often complain of student silence in-class activities. They say students are inattentive, non-responsive, and passive having no interactions throughout the lectures. They claim as many as **80**% of students remain silent in all the classes throughout the semester. **13**% of students have some queries regarding personal issues such as class attendance, exam marks, question patterns, etc., **5**% of students sometimes ask the teachers to clarify or repeat the point they have not grasped and only **2%** of students come up with queries and questions on the relevant class topics. When asked why the students are so incapable of interactions, the teachers explain that **76%** of students do not have the required linguistic skill to read and understand the given texts and the class lectures as well. The students therefore cannot familiarize themselves with the cultures, philosophy, and connotations of the texts before they attend the classes and thus, they remain unsure of what to ask and focus on. Only 14% of students have linguistic skills of different levels to be interactive, responsive, and thus attentive during the lecture period.

Teacher-centered class

In response to 'How do you teach literature in the class?", 82% of respondents admit to giving lectures one-sidedly having no interactions with the students in the form of queries, responses, feedback, or interpretations. Only 6% of respondents ask questions during their teaching but receive hardly any response from the students. 12% of respondents encourage student interactions during their lecture period but in all of the cases, the result is the same-'silence' from the students.

The successful literature teacher

In response to "Do you think the length of service is the major criterion for successful literature teaching?", 82.85% of the respondent faculties say that length of service makes a teacher knowledgeable and confident in the relevant field, lends insight into understanding student psychology, and eventually helps them to be better teachers. They further admit that **77.14%** of senior faculties are highly rated by the students in the Teacher's Efficiency Ratings (TER) conducted at the end of the semester. But 74.28% of them perceive that teachers with higher ratings in TER are not necessarily effective and better ones as TER might be affected by a variety of factors not related to the efficiency of the teaching.

Role of linguistic skill

In response to "Why do the students not interact in the literature classes?", 77.14% of the respondents agree that the poor linguistic skill of the students is the major bar to the student interactions in the literature classes. Asked if the faculties integrate language as the learning outcome in the lesson plan of literature classes, they refer to the language courses taught to indicate that literature teaching has nothing to do with language skill development. But the faculties expect the Department to admit students for literature with higher English language proficiency.

Approaches to literature Teaching

The interview question "What approach do you follow while literature teaching?" reveals that 100% of respondents are not aware of any literature pedagogy. The supplementary prompts, however, show that the faculties spend **90%** of the class time practicing Language Model **(62%)** and Culture Model **(29%)** with **9%** time for the Personal Growth Model. The teachers primarily paraphrase the literary text into simpler language or translate it into the target language of the students followed by background information on historical, political, religious, and cultural perspectives so that the students can understand and appreciate the interpretations of the teachers and, in the process, are imbued with the moral values. Language activity that "improves language proficiency, incorporates literature and language skills among the students" (Dhillon & Mogan, 2014) is not practiced in literature classes. The teachers do not have room for interactive activities such as discussion, debate, group or pair work, and reproducing and re-interpreting the text in the language of the students.

Assessing the student achievements

"How do you assess the achievements of your students and grade them" proves to be the most puzzling query of the interview. 100% of the respondents say they have their methods of evaluation and grading meaning that "literature assessment… is far from transparent, with no criteria … for marking students' answers" (Nguyen, 2014, p. 2) but the claim is not substantiated by the responses to the complementary queries. When asked what they assess in their student's answer scripts, 85.71% of them say that they assess what the students were taught in the classes, and therefore, the students are graded on their skilled representation of the class discussions and integration of the critical, intertextual and scholarly analysis of the texts that can construct an argument and a meaning. In response to a prompt, 100% of the teachers admit that linguistic skill helps to achieve better grades while the lack of it does have negative impacts. While language is not integrated into the teaching process as the learning outcome, why to grade lowly due to the poor language skill of the students is an irrelevant query to the literature teachers for language is the prerequisite to understanding and appreciating literary pieces.

Findings and Recommendations

As found in the data analysis and the discussion, the literature faculties, regardless of the varying length of experiences, have no pedagogical knowledge of literature teaching. As they have no formal or informal training and study on how to teach literary pieces, 90% of the

faculties admit they feel unprepared, unguided, and lost to deal with the texts in the classroom while 100% of them, once prompted, agree to the need of the training in the field. Having no consideration for student expectation, the teachers doubt the intellectual level of the students to even expect from the courses and the course teachers but, responding to the prompt by the supplementary query, 100% of the teachers agree that students expect the teachers to set the learning outcome at the start of the semester and implement it as shown in the course outline. 93% of the teachers admit that they cannot prepare the course outline and, so, cannot fulfill the student expectation of the learning outcome in the class. And this is why faculty lecture is not focused, relevant, and precise enough to motivate the learners. The result of unpreparedness leads to the loss of attention of the students. The students remain silent, passive, and non-responsive in the class because they do not have the linguistic skills to understand and appreciate the assigned texts and to engage themselves in the interactive activities on the texts in the class. The teachers do not accommodate 'language' in their literature teaching as they believe language is to be dealt with by the language classes and literature is all about discussing ideas, philosophy, and theories and imparting knowledge on the texts through scholarly lectures. Besides, the faculties feel degraded to create a place for language in the literature classroom.

Popularity is often confused to be the success of effective teaching of the particular faculty. Though 75% of the senior faculties with long teaching experience are highly rated by the students in the Teacher's Efficiency Ratings (TER) conducted at the end of the semester, 76% of respondents believe that higher ratings in TER do not reflect the quality teaching. Salim (2013) also rules out the validity and acceptability of TER in the Bangladeshi university context as the students "are not properly trained, knowledgeable and motivated for the purpose" and might have "political bias…, high-grade expectation…and personal likeability" (p. 20). Besides, TER questionnaires having been disclosed, the faculties may behave in a way that might tempt the students to give higher ratings to the particular faculties. The most intriguing part of the study is that 100% of the respondents who do not integrate language in the learning outcome of the literature teaching are found to reward or punish the students for the good or poor language skills in the answer scripts of the assignments, term papers, and the formal examinations. While the teachers, though unconsciously, practice the Language Model for 62% of class time, they do not integrate the language activities that motivate the students to engage themselves in the interactive activities with the literary text.

The research, thus, shows that due to the lack of pedagogical knowledge, the literature faculties cannot integrate language as the learning outcome of the literature courses. The study concludes that literature teaching can be made effective through an approach that makes the literature classroom a place where the learners are privileged to engage themselves in an active process of interactions with fellow learners and the teachers in the language of the literary texts through insightful interpretations. The research, therefore, proposes the restoration of language in literature teaching through "An Interactive Approach" at the university level in Bangladesh.

Towards an interactive approach

Literature pedagogy in Bangladesh involves a process in which the students "are required to listen to what an instructor is saying" for jotting down notes (Obeidat, 1997) having no interactions with the teacher or fellow students. The interactive approach requires "a distinctive functional unity of the three pedagogical strategies of teaching, learning, and self-study" (Knežević & Kovačević, 2011, p. 85). In this approach, the teacher creates a supportive class environment for the students in which the students follow, appreciate, and critique the interpretations of the literary texts. The students in a pair or group or as a class discuss the text from different perspectives initiated by their insight, understanding, and reflections. The students in the class are free to create their meanings and interpretations to be shared in the

classroom. But all the classroom activities "aimed to enable the students to interact creatively with the texts and the class" (Nguyen, 2013, p.) are to be conducted in the language of the literary text integrated as the learning outcome of the course.

CONCLUSION

English literature teaching has celebrated, though quite unceremoniously, its 100 years of journey in Bangladeshi universities with its debut at the University of Dhaka in 1921. As the academic program in the universities, it has achieved immense popularity for its contribution to the job market with English graduates placing themselves in good positions in government, private, multinational, and international sectors. Against this success story, there lie the untold personal struggles of the English graduates. This research discusses the personal struggles of English graduates inside the classrooms because English literature teaching has not witnessed much change and upgradation over the last century. English literature classes, as Mee Ling & Siew Eng (2016) finds, have continued to be "teacher-centered as the teachers act as dominant figures by spending much time explaining and translating the literary texts" giving "little room for students to give responses" (p.2). Kateregga (2014) finds that literature teaching concentrates "on exams through memorizing notes and critical comments" (p.29) supplied by the teachers. This study, by exploring the literature pedagogy practiced and the role of the language as the learning outcome in Bangladeshi universities, has proposed an interactive approach to literature teaching.

The interactive approach restores the role of language and relocates its place in the pedagogy bringing in the paradigm shift from the teachers to the learners. The language skill acquired and improved through interactive activities during the literature lessons instill in the learners the confidence to deal with the literary texts in their own right. The students then can free themselves from the imposed meanings and interpretations of the teachers and can construct their intakes and interpretations. For this to happen, the faculties are to be familiarized with and trained in the literature pedagogies so that they also can liberate themselves from their perceptions of the literature teaching approach and can integrate language as the learning outcome in their teaching.

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