

Using Pakistani Literature for English Language
Instruction at the Undergraduate Level at the University
of the Punjab
(An HEC Sponsored Project)

Dr. Amra Raza & Dr. Rizwan Akhtar

ABSTRACT: *The present research explores various methods and strategies that can be useful in imparting English Language skills through Pakistani Literature in English to undergraduate students. The main research question focuses on the causes and hindrances that an undergraduate usually encounters in learning English especially if the learner is exposed to Language learning activities without a complimentary module of Literature. It further investigates the progress of students who have been given the opportunity to read native literary texts in English and have demonstrated more courage and creativity-based response to the learning of English Language. The research question is further substantiated through class room observations, questionnaires and interviews conducted at different departments of University of the Punjab. Literature produced by Pakistani writers is found to be a more effective and productive means of cultivating a desire and urgency for Language learning. The research also suggests that postcolonial curricula, namely of Pakistan, do not emphasise using Language and literature as a symbiotic tool of instruction therefore it is imperative to expose students to the teaching of literature produced by native writers. The findings of the present research also suggest that a reasonable frequency and magnitude of native literature will eliminate the problems of contextualization caused by canonical English texts. English Language is a global phenomenon and Pakistani Literature produced in English language also caters to an international audience.*

Keywords: Pakistani Literature in English, Language learning, global phenomena, canonical English texts, undergraduate students, language through Literature.

Introduction:

The aim and objectives of this study are first of all to investigate whether the learning of English at the undergraduate level is facilitated by learner exposure to Pakistani Literature in English texts in the University of the Punjab. Secondly, to analyze existing levels of motivation, interest and skills of undergraduate students at the Punjab University in English language learning. And explore whether learner motivation increases with language instruction through Pakistani texts (in English and in Translation). Thirdly, to evaluate and describe any changes in the motivation interest and skill levels during the study of Pakistani Literature passages and poems included in the recent course book introduced in the Punjab University for undergraduate students titled *English for Undergraduates* by D.H. Howe, T.A. Kirkpatrick and D.L. Kirkpatrick. This book contains short stories and poems by number of Pakistani writers writing in English as well as translations such as Intizar Hussein, Adam Zameendad, Maki Kureshi, Moniza Alvi, Zulfiqar Ghose and Taufiq Rafat. On the basis of data collected through questionnaires, interviews with English language teachers and class observations, suggestions will be made for reconstituting and redesigning the English language course being taught to undergraduates at the Punjab University.

Literature review

When we read English literature we read the English language. It is important for teachers and learners to have an understanding of the linguistic and stylistic resources which may be exploited in written texts and of the relationship between linguistic choices on the one hand, and meanings and effects on the other. Many language experts have investigated the relation between literature and language as mutual and productive and concluded that the comprehension of the localized produced literary text is far easier than a non-native literary production. Moreover, since literary text is open-ended, critical perception and ability is enhanced. Literary text also broadens the world-view. Through a native text the problem of strange or foreign context is removed hence contextualization is achieved. The emergence of post-colonial discourse and the consequent productions of literary texts by the native writers have also given a new significance to the English language and the literature produced in the language.

In pre-partition India the English language was introduced as a strategy, process and activity to combat the likely disagreements between the colonizer and the colonized. It was not language but literature, which was included as a major subject in prestigious examinations like the Indian Civil Services. The comprador class was prepared to minimize the cultural and social gaps between the colonial administration and the native subjects. Thus English language became an essential component in the schools under British administration.

The Partition of the Sub-continent did not affect the status of the English language; rather it rapidly gained popularity as a language of communication and professional enterprise. The business class in Pakistan, which proliferated in the immediate context of the partition, was educated in British English studies. In colleges and universities, English was introduced as a major compulsory subject that emphasized the growing need of an international language for communicative purposes. Delhi and Lucknow were two centres of art and culture in Muslim India. The focus shifted to Calcutta with the establishment of Fort William College that fostered Oriental Studies. Indian literature or indigenous literature was translated which is a historical paradigm. The same intellectual stimulation was witnessed when the Renaissance replaced medieval ideas in Western Europe. With the translation of local literatures the local idiom received a new treatment and local writers also started transmitting their experiences in the English language. The activity was a historical determinant as the East India Company had a specific Educational policy.

In Pakistan, literature in English came into its own after two to three decades of independence. Texts by classical and romantic English writers were an essential part of the language and literature course component at the undergraduate and graduate level.

The main aim of this study is to raise awareness that learning of English at the undergraduate level at Punjab University needs to be modernised and contextualised. In Punjab University according to the needs of learners, the medium of instruction is pre-dominantly English; therefore, it is the learner's exposure to the contextualized text that will facilitate the learning of English language. Pakistani Literature can motivate English language learners because they will find their own social issues, cultural conflicts, and political concerns translated or expressed in a foreign language, which would mean that the Pakistani experience has a

global voice. Thus they will be better equipped to use language as a tool to convey their own point of view.

The study also explores some fruitful approaches that might be helpful in achieving the desired language expertise through the literature component in the class room. It is presumed that a careful and more appropriate utilization of the literary text may make language learning a more palatable and cumulatively charged activity for both the learner and teacher. The motivation behind the study is the evidently unsatisfactory performance of Pakistani learners of English at the Undergraduate level in the Punjab University when they are exposed to the nuances of language. In Pakistan English language is usually taught to equip the students to meet their professional objectives. At least this is the conceptual framework in the mind of the people directly responsible for designing the curricula. The method of imparting language skills with a relevant cultural context has either been deferred or thought insignificant by many language instructors.

The current situation is, that an undergraduate who embarks on a first year course in English, is conveniently exposed to the learning of both language and literature. However, he cuts a sorry figure in the end, as he does not have the confidence to generate new sentences and has no exposure to the nuances of the language. Moreover, he is disappointed to find that he has only learnt the rules of a language, and not the rules of language use. Struggling with syllabi the undergraduate has to learn English language skills under the pretext of a very strong literature component. This literature component comprises many foreign writers. The word *pretext* implies that although foreign writers have been given major representations in undergraduate text books however, generally the learner remains alien to the influence of a literary text. Supplied with a literary text during the initial learning stage of learning the language learners are confused as they confront difficulties in the comprehension of a literary text. They assume that their language skills will develop miraculously, but are often sorely disappointed as knowledge of the literary text and its comprehension questions does not necessarily equip them to use the English language to generate independent sentences. Students often cram summaries of short stories and poems only to pass the examinations. An unpalatable and lengthy dose of the rules of grammar often make the learners lackadaisical and slow. Native literature in English can generate an interest in the learners and reduce the degree of tedium whereas an isolationist approach to language

learning or one in which the learner is not exposed to the literature of the any particular language will make the textbook appear unfriendly if the learners are kept unaware of the cultural and social context. This places a more serious responsibility upon the undergraduate teacher. He has to disabuse the learner from the already accumulated inhibitions in his mind for different reasons. Both learner and language instructor will discover that the task of teaching English is incomplete without an indigenous cultural and sociological referent. Literature is one such referent. Therefore content selected for teaching language skills should be socially and culturally relevant to mould a mind that is already prone to inhibitions.

Although the *study of language* may be easier to justify intellectually (Simpson 3), Language is not purely an intellectual matter (Maley 6) and its cultural background is equally important in its acquisition. Learning of grammatical skills can be made more friendly and palatable exercise through a literary text.

At the elementary level there is no concept of freedom of language learning. Undergraduate learners arrive at the University holding onto a very clichéd version of linguistic competence. Prescribed texts books are crammed. In the rustic plains of upper and central Punjab local and native dialects of vernacular impede the acquisition of foreign language. Many language experts believe that the localization of a particular language (foreign or colonial) reduces the impact of it. This reasoning is subversive. No social context should be made a scapegoat for another social context. The interactive approach facilitates the learning of language. The teacher using a literary text can decrease the cultural stakes. By exposing the taught/undergraduate to the literary text produced by the indigenous writer the cultural issues can be addressed in a more pluralistic atmosphere.

Reading Pakistani Literature will be an intuitive activity because it will remove the customary hindrance of foreign context and there is a greater likelihood of identifying with concepts like marriage culture, norms, locale and bilingualism. Language can be more effectively integrated with literature to enhance *stylistics-based* perception and critical reception. A study of stylistic patterns in a literary piece also multiply literary pleasures and cultivate sensitivity to nuances of a language. In fact, the most cognizant benefit of stylistics is the psychological mode and moral sensitivity (Carter 12).

Literary texts by Pakistani writers may be more helpful in generating an independent spirit of self-questioning. Local ethos and native patterns of social behavior are translated through literature in a much more effective manner than texts of sociology and cultural studies. Literature in English produced by the Pakistani writers, generally, addresses the question of the cultural self-representation. In critical theory reader-response theory holds a significant explanatory place. Learners are also readers and therefore their response to a particular text, produced in a particular milieu is very important. Mere language training will not help generate this kind of response, which is limited and individualized. Comparison of language and literature based response indicate the following binaries: individual/holistic, implicit/explicit, and transitory/cumulative. It is not the critical analysis of a particular literary text that ensures the judgment of the reader/learner rather it is the community's (class room is an analogue for the community) participation in the culture through a particular text that bolsters the confidence among the learners to learn and comprehend the language and "textual criticism cannot be just a judgment on the bases of disinterested readings by a presumed community" (Spivak 26-7). It is assumed that a reader's response is extracted from textual criticism of a text but this can be a misleading approach because the community from which a particular reader/learner hails is always informed by a distinctively unknown and obscure set of cultural values and in many ways cultures are marginalized when they are internationalized. In postcolonial debates this is treated as hybrid and Diaspora identity. Literature-based class room activity generates more cumulative response because it covers the social, cultural, political and psychological aspects of a particular culture and civilization. Post-colonial literatures have emerged as a new genre of cultural and literary representations and the works of Pakistani writers have gained enormous relevance and currency. In the wake of postcolonial literary productions the cultural binaries between the West and East have thinned down and a more accommodative narrative of reciprocity has emerged which is partly restorative and partly informative. Culture, identity and Language are the paradigmatic centre in such writings.

Teaching Language through Literature is considered an effective language learning strategy. This is because culturally contextualised texts stimulate the interest of language learners and help them to comprehend and develop language skills more confidently and effectively. Moreover English is no more colonial property, and there

are many established types of 'Englishes'. Pakistani English is now a recognised entity among world Englishes.

There are a number of reasons for using Literature in English in general and Pakistani Literature in particular, in the language classroom. Primarily, literature is classified as authentic material which is not specifically designed and modified for language teaching, thus providing learners with exposure to a variety of forms of the same language from the most formal to the most informal such as gossip. Moreover, focus on language studies through literature demands an interactive approach, which is conducive to generating discussion and debate as well as opinions. This is because literary texts cultivate ambiguity and invite multiple reader responses. Another reason is that studying language through literature fulfils the communicative function of language learning and teaching. Thus when language is studied in the context of politics, culture and society it becomes a means to an end instead of an end in itself. Students in different cultures can also often identify with literature as narrative and are also often familiar with many pieces, which have cultural values and significance. And finally, exposing language learners to good language provides them with a good model for writing skills. Thus teaching language through literature is a strategy, which equips learners with experiences that occur outside the classroom for meaningful and authentic language practice.

Research methodology

The study falls into the qualitative paradigm and follows the case study method as its scope is limited to the undergraduate students (at the University of the Punjab) having exposure to Pakistani literary texts in English. The purpose of inquiry is exploratory as this research seeks to document the effectiveness of using native literary texts (both translations and Pakistani literature in English) at the undergraduate level for English language learning and teaching. For this purpose three research tools were employed. A random sampling was conducted through questionnaires distributed in the Punjab University eliciting responses regarding background profiles of students enrolled in the morning undergraduate programmes in terms of oral and written proficiency, their English language needs interest, motivation, and comfort levels, as well as a comparative evaluation of the effectiveness of English language instruction through indigenous and non indigenous texts. Semi-structured interviews of English Language instructors using

the course book containing passages from Pakistani Literature in English were also conducted. Another research tool used for this study was class observation. The teachers who were using the specified resource book were contacted, and after their permission was sought, the investigators made class observations regarding motivation and interest levels, teacher and student talking time, as well as the type, frequency and nature of English language usage in the language class.

At present English language is being taught at the undergraduate level in 36 departments in the morning and evening programmes at the University of Punjab. The Department of English Language and Literature provides centralized services to regulate the uniformity of syllabi, and makes suggestions regarding course books. It also recommends qualified faculty for teaching positions in the undergraduate programmes. On February 2nd, 2005 the Board of Studies in English recommended the inclusion of two new text books (also prescribed by the Karachi University) for the BA/B.Sc. (Pass & Hons) B.Com/B.Sc. (Home Economics) Examinations to streamline the teaching of English Language. These books were titled *English for Undergraduates* by D.H. Howe, T.A Kirkpatrick and D.L. Kirkpatrick (OUP 2005) and *Oxford Practice Grammar* by John Eastwood (OUP 2005). Not only was the former adapted to the Punjab undergraduate context in terms of addresses and places in the reading comprehension passages, but a selection of poems and short stories by Pakistani writers in English and in translation was also included and integrated skills based activities were designed by Professor and of the Head of the Department of English Shaista Sonnu Sirajuddin, Amra Raza (Assistant Professor) and Shireen Rahim (Assistant Professor) University of Punjab. Therefore the passages from native writers, included in this textbook, provided a sound basis for eliciting responses from undergraduate students regarding the effectiveness of teaching and learning of the English language.

Data analysis

Data for the study was collected through the distribution of questionnaires among Undergraduate students in the Punjab University, class observations of the English Language classes held in the latter, and interviews of Course Instructors designing syllabi and teaching the Language courses.

Questionnaires:

Four departments of the Punjab University were selected for the distribution of questionnaires to the Undergraduate classes (Please refer to Appendix 1 for a sample of the Student Questionnaire). Although the departments were selected on a random basis, the sample, for purposes of validity and uniformity the choice was restricted to those departments which were actually using the new resource book titled *English for Undergraduates* by D.H. Howe et al.

In total 108 questionnaires were distributed ; 44 in The Institute of Administrative Sciences (IAS), 10 in the Department of Mycology and Plant Pathology, 27 in Sociology, and 27 in The Institute of Business and Information Technology (IBIT). The data was compiled from 105 questionnaires which were returned in complete form. Since this margin is less than 3%, it does not influence the research results in any way.

The profiles of the students enrolled in the undergraduate programmes signify that 76.5% were females, whereas 23.8% were males. The fact that class composition is dominated by females indicates that more females meet the merit criteria of undergraduate University enrollment and have better grades than males. The large number of female course participants in a single English Language class may have significant implications for materials designing and adaptation. Further results show that the student's ages ranged between 17-22 years, but most of them were between 18 and 20 years of age (95.2%). The age factor, as well as the gender, would be important when designing and evaluating courses so as to address maturity and interest level. Most of the students (98.1%) had taken their intermediate exam with Arts subjects, whereas a negligible minority were students who had cleared their intermediate with Science subjects or had passed their A levels. The father's professions of the students, as reference points for career goals and objectives, had a wide range from banking, business, electrical engineering, engineering, government employment the merchant navy, private employment and retired personnel. The data collected showed that the fathers of most of the students (36.2%) were either businessmen, or employed in government jobs (24.8%). Most of the students reported that the medium of instruction in their department was English (80%)/ whereas some (16.2%) stated it was by bilingual as both Urdu and English. The fact that 1.9% of the students reported Urdu as a medium of instruction could be attributed to a misreading of the question taken to

refer to the medium in the institution which they had last attended, or the fact that they did not attend classes regularly and so would not be in a position to know. When the students were asked to identify their oral and written competency in the English Language, the majority of the students rated both their written competency as moderate (84.8%) and average (60%) for Spoken English. This implies that sample texts from Pakistani Literature as resource bank adapted for these students must include exercises to reinforce Writing and speaking skills.

Findings also showed that the greatest percentage of these young adults only used English 'occasionally' at home with family (65.7%) and with friends (61.9%), whereas 61.9% reported that they used English most of the time with teachers. However, the fact that a large percentage (32.4%) also stated that they used it only occasionally with their teachers is significant because it indicates that teachers need to encourage and persuade students to use more English in the classroom.

Most of the students reported that the medium of instruction in the department in which they were studying was bi-lingual (52.4%) by which they meant to signify that both English and Urdu were accepted, whereas an almost equal percentage (46.7%) reported that it was only English. Viewed against the result of a background question included at the beginning of the questionnaire regarding the department's medium of instruction in which most of the same students had said that it was English (80%), this apparent discrepancy may be explained by the fact that the earlier (background eliciting) question may have been understood to mean what the individual departments advertised *publicly* to be their medium of instruction, whereas this specific question would have been understood to mean the *actual* medium of instruction used by the students. 79% of the respondents reported that teachers used English most of the time. The fact that they did not speak English *all* the time, may be because they have a diverse proficiency group from various backgrounds and might feel the need to translate instructions, offer clarifications or explanations in the mother tongue occasionally. Moreover pressures of the semester system to cover courses, and lack of teacher training in recent ELT methodologies may also be accountable for this factor. This was also reflected in the fact that 61% of the respondents stated that teachers clearly expected them to use English in the classroom, whereas only 45.2% actually used it most of the time. These results highlight the need for communicative language teaching

activities which would facilitate increased English language usage in the classroom.

When the respondents were asked about their opinion regarding the importance of the English Language, most of them (50.5%) agreed that learning to communicate in English was important for establishing friendships. They were also of the opinion that it was very important in communicating with teachers (50.5%), for passing the exams (77.9%), getting employment (89.5%) and for professional progress (90.5%). No student opined that English was unimportant in getting employment or was not a major aid in professional progress. The majority of the respondents considered English very important for employment in the private sector (80%), business (58.1%) and the armed forces (57.1%), and important for employment in the government sector (52.4%).

The students were also asked to state their personal reasons for learning English. 94.3% stated that learning the English Language would facilitate access to a good job. In this connection many students (89.5%) reported that it would help them with their studies at the University and be useful in reading international books (81.9%), and international journals and periodicals (78.9%). A large majority (77.1%) also felt that it would definitely help them to travel to foreign countries, and 71.5% stated that English Language acquisition would prove useful in using the computer. Whereas 68.6% of the respondents thought that English would help them understand television programs of their interest and approximately the same number of students (66.7%) opined that it would facilitate listening to television news the majority of students (52.4%) thought that it was not important for understanding radio news. 64.8% of the respondents also reported that it might help them to gain access to English speaking circles in Pakistan. 62.9% believed that it would help them to acquire new ideas and broaden their outlook and an almost equal number opined that the English language would facilitate them in using the mobile (50.5%). Only 33.3% thought that it was important in helping them to become more modern, which is interesting because the general impression in the job market and social circles is that people who speak in English are looked upto.

When the respondents were asked to evaluate various aspects of the English language course being run by their departments and rate them on a scale ranging from Poor to Excellent, the majority (38.5%) stated that it was good in terms of its usefulness and in the creation of interest

(35.2%),but rated their courses as average (44.2%) in terms of being motivating and relevant to their English language needs (38.1%).The general opinion was that the quality the English language course being run by the departments was good (46.7%).

The data regarding the passages from texts by Pakistani Writers provided in the English Language courses elicited an overwhelmingly positive response from the majority of undergraduates under study. The specific texts included in the course were short stories such as, *My Fifty Years in Lahore* by Intizar Hussain, *Just Like Home* by Adam Zameendad, and poems such as “Cripple” by Maki Kureshi, “Man and Nature” by Allama Iqbal, “Geography Lesson” by Zulfikar Ghose, “Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan” by Moniza Alvi, and “Wedding in the Flood” by Taufiq Rafat. 51.4% of the students thought that the passage selections in their course were interesting, whereas 41.1% opined that they were very interesting. Most of the course participants rated these passages as relevant (51.0%)and very relevant(38.5%).The questionnaire results also showed clearly that 48.6% found the passages comprehensible whereas an almost equal number of respondents (40%) thought them to be very comprehensible. The selection’s utility towards facilitating English language acquisition was also considered very effective as an equal percentage of respondents (44.8%) rated the passages to be useful and very useful respectively. 46.7% of the students thought that these texts were very helpful and 45.7% thought they were helpful. 43.8% thought that these passages were motivating whereas 41.9% found them to be very motivating. The high ratings of the indigenous passage selections are clear indicators of the utility these texts have for teaching the English language effectively to young adult second language learners. It is also significant that these observations were based on the fact that a large majority (89.5%) had studied Short Stories, and 47.6% of the course participants had read Pakistani poetry in the English in their course. The fact that the data showed that a larger number of respondents had studied more short stories than poems, may be because of the fact that in the extended reading section the two Pakistani short stories precede the five poems, and teachers following a sequential teaching plan would simply have covered the course till a particular poem in terms of the text units at the time that the students filled in the questionnaires. Moreover, 58.1% of the respondents stated that they positively identified with the experiences in these native texts, and 34.3% said that they also identified with them to some extent. This was further corroborated by the fact that 49.5% stated that familiarity with the content or context facilitated their

understanding of the text. It may thus be concluded that learner motivation, interest, and comprehensibility increased with Language instruction using texts by Pakistani writers in English. These texts were also considered extremely useful and helpful as well as relevant for foreign language acquisition.

When the respondents were asked the reasons for their identification with native texts 71.4% reported that it was on account of familiarity with the cultural context whereas only 39% opined that they could identify with the political context. The majority (56.2%) thought that they understood the text because of their familiarity with the historical context and 51.4% stated that they could identify because of the religious context. The majority 61.9% also believed that it gave them an exposure to Pakistani English and 52.4% could identify with local landscape and people which enhanced their learning of the English language. And although 54.3% of the respondents reported that these texts did not present problems which they could identify with, nor did they contribute significantly (60.0%) to interactive discussion, yet they did provide good models for writing skills (54.3%), as well as meaningful and authentic language practice (59%).

The data collected from the questionnaires shows a strong support of the hypothesis that learning of the English Language at the Undergraduate level in the Punjab University is facilitated by exposing learners to Pakistani Literature in English.

Class room observations:

Class room observations have been included in the present research as tool and method to focus and substantiate the basic research question(See Appendix 3). The research question focused on the fact that literature by Pakistani writers can be more helpful in imparting language skills to the undergraduate class. For this purpose three class room observations were conducted and the general and specific findings incorporated in the study. The undergraduate classes which were selected for this purpose fall within the academic precincts of the University of the Punjab. For the sake of diversity undergraduate from different disciplines and departments, such as Law Studies and Clinical Psychological Studies, were selected. These undergraduate students were either placed in their first or second semester of the four year Undergraduate (Bachelor) Degree. The undergraduates normally select one subject as their major

besides other compulsory and auxiliary courses. English language is a compulsory component distributed over three semesters in terms of elementary and advanced skills. All the observations were of English Language classes in which the teacher was using native literary texts in English from *English for Undergraduates* by D.H. Howe, et. al (OUP 2005) in order to facilitate the acquisition of the language.

The first observation was on teaching English and vocabulary drills through poetry. The teacher selected Moniza Alvi's poem "Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan". The observation was conducted at the Centre for Clinical Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore. The observation was conducted on July 14th 2007 and the total duration of the observation was forty minutes.

As the observation began, students were individually reading poetry. The teacher was at his desk, answering questions and monitoring student progress. There was a quiet buzz among students, who appeared to be absorbed in their work. Rather than discuss the project himself, the teacher asked one of the students sitting nearby to read the poem and review the thematic content of the poem and the work they had done to date. This student proceeded to give a clear and detailed overview of the activity. After being given a short exercise, students were instructed to discuss the language of the poem.

Students reading the poem showed evidence of conceptual understanding, not just recall. Appropriate methods, fundamental concepts and vocabulary, construction of knowledge, and elaborated conceptual communication were the main achievements.

Students used a variety of methods. Discussions were substantive and thoughtful, and it was clear that the students took the task seriously. Vocabulary was relevant and appropriate to the task (love, marriage, culture, fate, death etc) and presumably discussions contributed to their conceptual comprehension.

Students were found engaged in activities to develop understanding and create personal meaning through reflection. Use of appropriate learning strategies, self-evaluation and revision of work, consideration of alternatives, intentional reflection, and focused feedback from the teacher and a substantive conversation made the class room activity more palatable and interesting. The students narrated personal experiences about the impact of a literature written by Pakistani writers.

Feedback from the teacher as well as student conversations both led to reflection and understanding. Through discussion with group members and/or the teacher, students contemplated on the given piece of poetry and contributed their subjective perceptions. The nature of the task was such that students were required to think critically, and indeed there was no way the students could have completed it *without* a certain amount of analysis and higher-level thinking. Teacher feedback to students was impressive in the way it probed their thinking, and the conversations between students were substantive, serious, and appeared to be 'usual' and routine for this class.

It was observed that the application of knowledge in real world contexts was the most important benefit that the course participants gained from native literature oriented texts. Students also discovered that knowledge is connected with relevant personal experiences and connected across disciplines and/or to real world problems.

Students took the personal appeal of the poem beyond the walls of the class room and narrated their personal anecdotes on the given topic. The poem overwhelmingly piqued their sensibility as they demonstrated an active participation, exploration, and research. They generated their own ideas, questions and hypotheses.

Students in this class were involved in a lesson that exemplified collaboration. Their discussions were thoughtful and serious, and their interactions were positive and productive. Although unstated, there appeared to be some who would want to try their own hand at writing poetry in English.

This lesson, both in terms of planning and facilitation by the teacher, and understanding of the students, was an excellent example of how a challenging, conceptually rich curriculum can be designed and presented to students. The teacher provided enough background and structure to engage students, while leaving the task reasonably ambiguous so that students had to stretch their thinking. Not only did students appear to be collaborating by using the English Language, but they were also motivated and challenged by the task.

The second observation was based on a reading of a short story titled "The Wrath of God" by Tariq Rahman and the observation was conducted at the University Law College University of the Punjab,

Lahore on July 14th 2007. The duration of the observation was about forty minutes.

Two groups of students were working on various reading tasks. One group was involved in a literature discussion group with the teacher. Each group was reading the same short story. The observation focused primarily on the discussion group. Listening to the discussion, it appeared that all students had read the short story proved by the fact that all students contributed ideas and examples trying to use English to express themselves. The prime aim seemed to be fluency instead of accuracy.

Their utterances showed evidence of conceptual understanding, and not just recall. Appropriate methods, fundamental concepts and vocabulary, construction of sentences, and communication skills were improved. Both the short story and a discussion guide were used to facilitate an analysis of the story, and several different strategies were employed to develop conceptual understanding. These included the consideration of alternatives, prediction, comparison and contrast, and a discussion of cause and effect. Specific lexical items were repeated and students encouraged to appropriately use theme (regarding setting, illustration, communicate, character, rhythm, etc). There was an elaborate discussion between students and teacher as to how they were able to make sense of the story. Guiding questions and statements by the teacher such as "Let's review the events of the story", "Who are the characters in this story?", "How would you describe them...what about physical attributes?" and "What do we mean by delineation and plot?" illustrate the way in which discussion was generated and new vocabulary introduced. This technique also sensitized the learners to the nuances of the English Language.

Various strategies were used to help students understand the story. Intentional reflection was an important part of the literature circle discussion. For example, the teacher asked students to reflect on their own personal trials, and themes that emerged from the reading. Students did this, and some volunteered to share their thoughts with the group. In another instance, they were asked to think about what the author meant by the word 'wrath' in the title of the story or in other words the symbolic impact of the title. The entire discussion was a substantive conversation that encouraged critical thinking, helped students make

sense of the story, and prompted them to consider some important aspects of the human experience.

The Pakistani culture and its norms engaged the students' attention and generated a lively discussion. The story helped students dwell upon local themes and the appropriateness of certain English expressions to adequately describe an element of landscape or feeling of a local character. This was evidence of forging connections between personal experiences and the world at large. Students were provided with several opportunities to meaningfully reflect upon, and then share, their personal experiences related to the story. In addition to this, the teacher directed the lesson on diverse cultural traditions including the Pakistani context. This lesson also focused on the collective sharing of personal experiences and the learning was different from the previous observation in that different groups read different short stories. This generated critical thinking and related to students' experience.

The lesson also emphasized conceptual understanding because of the ways in which students were asked to respond to, and analyze the short story. Comprehension questions (both for written and oral responses) encouraged higher-level thinking and consequently experimentation with more complex and compound sentence structures. Secondly, the independent work in which students were engaged was clearly motivating. Thirdly, there was an invitation to explore and conduct literary analysis which allowed for freedom of ideas. Elements of the story were discussed seriously (theme, setting, character, climax, etc) and students were encouraged to relate the plot and themes to their own life experience. The class room participation ratio was high.

The third observation was based on a poem titled "Geography Lesson" by Zulfiqar Ghose. The observation was conducted at the Centre for Clinical Psychology, University of the Punjab on September 10th 2007 and the duration was thirty minutes.

It was observed that students read the poem individually, and were asked to initiate a discussion on various aspects of the poem. The observation focused primarily on the discussion which different individuals generated. Listening to the discussion, it appeared that all students had read the poem proved by the fact that all students contributed ideas and examples in English readily.

The critical analysis of the poem was very engaging and indicated conceptual understanding. Summary skills were employed in that the learners often had to choose collective nouns and choose generalized names for specific items. A comparison and contrast with previously read poems enhanced the level of interest and resulted in the reinforcement of previously learnt vocabulary. New English vocabulary (regarding setting, illustration, communicate, character, flow, etc) was relevant and appropriately used. Questions such as “Let’s find out the figure of speech?”, “How would you describe the poem personally?”, and “What do we mean by ‘persona’?” posed by the teacher illustrate the way in which discussion was generated by the course instructor amongst the students.

Various cross-cultural references were used to help students understand and relish the poems written by Pakistani writers. Intentional reflection was an important part of the poetry discussions as students relied upon subjective analysis. The teacher asked students to reflect on their own personal interpretations related to the poetry written in other local vernaculars. Students did this, and some shared their thoughts. In another instance, they were asked to think about what the author meant by “Geography” drawing attention to the denotative and connotative aspects of words in their literal and symbolic import. The entire discussion encouraged critical thinking, helped students make sense of the poetry, and prompted them to consider some important aspects of the human experience translated in the poem. Students were provided with several opportunities to meaningfully reflect on, and then share, their personal experiences as related to the story.

The students’ participation ratio was very encouraging as the poem highlighted modern man’s predicament and they relished the obvious and subtle appeal of the poem. First, the lesson emphasized conceptual understanding because of the ways in which students were asked to respond to, and analyze. Comprehension questions (both for oral and written responses) encouraged higher-level thinking and personal reflection. Secondly, the independent work in which students were engaged was clearly motivating. Finally, there was a depth to the literature analysis that was engaging which affirmed the learners aim to employ newly learnt vocabulary purposefully.

In the first observation (based on poetry) the majority of students expressed the pleasure of recognition and related their experiences. In the

second observation (based on short story) the students used the given content for language and grammar activities. Therefore, although there was a lot of English language communication with the teacher and amongst the students themselves, in both classes the short story reading was comparatively more productive in eliciting communicative responses from a wider range of students in class.

On the basis of data collected from the class observations, conducted in the Undergraduate classes at the Punjab University, it may be concluded that literary texts in English by local writers can really help in generating an interest-based acquisition of English Language skills. It may also therefore be reliably inferred that this lacuna has been one reason that has made the English Language, a trite and excessively unfriendly task for the undergraduates at the Punjab University. Stemming from this perspective it is strongly recommended that more native literature-based instruction be incorporated into the curricula and syllabi as an effective and quick method of English language acquisition. Many postcolonial societies have improved in different professional and non-professional areas because they have successfully incorporated their Pakistani Literature texts (in translation) with the local. Resultantly we find an increasing readership and motivated teachers prepared to contribute to the enrichment of native literature besides developing a genuine liking for the English language in its multicultural dimensions. This is supported by the pleasure of recognition, familiarity with context and critical thinking which were evident in all the class observations.

Course Instructor Interviews:

Three English Language instructors teaching Undergraduates at the University of the Punjab were interviewed for this study (Please refer to Appendix 3 for detailed interview transcription). They were teaching the English Language at the BA/B.Sc level in the Departments of Plant Pathology and Mycology, Clinical Psychology, Psychology, Sociology and the Institute of Administrative Sciences. All three teachers were using the Pakistani texts in English included in the textbook in addition to other materials.

The interview was conducted in the Department of English Language and Literature, Punjab University, in the office of Dr. Amra Raza (the Interviewer) as all the teachers had completed their Master's in English from this Department and had been referred through the Chairperson to

various Head of Departments interested in running English Language courses in their respective Departments.

The interview was based on the Semi –Structured format and questions posed for each instructor were related to the English language needs of the students, the role of motivation in learning, variations in course participants' attitudes, motivation or interest levels when they are taught English through Pakistani texts in English, and ways in which these texts are exploited to teach grammar, skills and vocabulary. The interview also aimed to elicit information regarding the presence of any differences in terms of class participation and interaction when teachers employed texts by local writers in English as compared to texts by English writers, and whether increasing the exposure to indigenous texts in English would reflect positively on the ELL process. Besides these important areas background information regarding class size, duration of the class and years of teaching experience were also elicited.

All of the course instructors interviewed were experienced and were taking two to six English Language classes per week in their respective Departments. The duration of the Language class was between one to one and a half hour. All the interviewees agreed that the responsibility of student motivation falls mainly on the teacher and that the passages in the textbook by Pakistani Writers have a positive effect in stimulating the students' interest and language discussions. This is made evident by the increased interest, class participation and comfort level. Moreover, students try to guess the meaning from the context which they very often are familiar with, generate discussions using the Target Language with the teacher and amongst themselves and also overcome their inhibitions to speak and write in English .One of the teachers even mentioned the excited class response when the students read about Lahore by a Pakistani Writer writing in English. The interviewees also reported that when they were using the English passages by Pakistani Writers the students attempted to use the English Language creatively as well, because they found it easier to identify and imagine themselves in similar situations as the characters, and enjoyed generating parallel narratives using the English Language. One of the teachers mentioned that she found that she could use native literary texts in English very effectively for group and pair work because they generated a lot of discussion on account of students familiarity of context.

Besides teaching the Pakistani Literature texts included in *English for Undergraduates* by D.H. Howe, T.A Kirkpatrick and D.L. Kirkpatrick (OUP 2005), all three course instructors mentioned that they used these passages effectively to teach a wide range of Language components through these texts such as grammar, vocabulary, tenses, idioms suffixes and prefixes, and communication and reading comprehension as well as writing skills such as paragraph and essay writing.

All the interviewees agreed strongly that increasing the exposure to native texts in English would reflect positively on the English Language process.

Conclusion

The data collected diversely from questionnaires, class observations and interviews acknowledge the fact that literary texts (poetry and short stories) by Pakistani writers writing in English have facilitated the acquisition of English language amongst Undergraduate students at the University of the Punjab. Therefore it might be reasonable to infer that introducing Pakistani Literature in English may have positive effects in other institutions as well.

Works Cited

- Howe, D.H., T.A Kirkpatrick and D.L. Kirkpatrick. English for Undergraduates. Karachi: OUP, 2005. Print.
- Maley , Alan Duffy. Drama Techniques in Language Training: A Resource Book of Communication Activities for Language Teachers. London: Cambridge University Press, 1978. Print.
- Spivak, Gayatri. The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies ,Dialogues.
- Teaching Adults Through Poetry. Web. 05 October 2005
- Viswanathan, Ghauri. Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India. New Delhi: OUP, 1989. Print.

Works Consulted

- Bailey, Richard. W. Images of English: A Cultural History of Language. Ann arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991. Print.
- Belsey, Catherine. Critical Practice.London:Methuen,1980. Print.
- Carter, Roland .Language and Literature :An Introductory Reader in Stylistics. New York: HarperCollins, 1982. Print.
- Caudry, Tim .Increasing Students' Awareness of Genre Through Text Transformation Exercises: An Old Classroom Activity Revisited. Vol. 3. 03 September1998. University of Aarhus. Web. 17 Nov 2005
- Do-Seon Eur. "English Language Acquisition through English Poetry in ESL/EFL." Web.28 Sep 2005.
- Dybdahl, Claudia. "Teaching Reading Through Poetry." Web.28 Sep 2005.
- Eastwood, John. Oxford Practice Grammar .London: OUP, 2005. Print
- Fein David A. Teaching English Through Literature. Web. 25 Sep 2005.

- Hawanum Hussein. Using Simple Poems to Teach Grammar. Web. October 01, 2005
- Kuskin, Karla. "Poetry writing with Karla Kuskin." Web. October 02, 2005.
- Lehmann. "Copy change-poetry." Web. 05 October 2005.
- Malik, Farida Javed. The Teaching of English in Pakistan: A Study in Teacher Education. Pakistan: Vanguard, 1996. Print.
- Mansoor, Sadiha. Punjabi, Urdu, English in Pakistan: A Sociolinguistic Study. Pakistan: Vanguard, 1993. Print.
- Naipaul, V.S. Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey. London: Vintage, 1981. Print.
- Rahman, Tariq. Language and Politics in Pakistan. New York: OUP 1996. Print.
- Simpson, Paul. Language through Literature: An Introduction. London: Routledge, 1997. Print.
- Toolan, Michael. Language in Literature: An Introduction to Stylistics. New York: Arnold, 1998. Print.
- Using Literature In Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language. Web. 06 October 2005
- Widdowson H.G. Text, Context and Pretext: Critical Issues in Discourse Analysis. UK: Blackwell, 2004. Print.

Appendix 1 STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This study aims to explore the impact of using Pakistani texts on the teaching and learning of English. Kindly spare some time to fill in the responses on the basis of personal preference. Your responses would be valuable in restructuring course contents of the English Language syllabus and selecting / adapting course material at the undergraduate level in the Punjab University. Thank you for your cooperation.

Age: _____ Gender: Male Female

Last degree Attained: _____ Department /Program in which enrolled: _____

Father's Profession: _____ Medium of instruction in Department: _____

Please tick the appropriate response:

a. What in your opinion is your competency in Written English?

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Full competency | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Moderate competency | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Mild competency | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> |

b. What in your opinion is your competency in Oral/Spoken English?

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Average | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Good | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> |

c. How often do you use English?

- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| With family | Mostly <input type="checkbox"/> | Occasionally <input type="checkbox"/> | Never <input type="checkbox"/> |
| With friends | Mostly <input type="checkbox"/> | Occasionally <input type="checkbox"/> | Never <input type="checkbox"/> |
| With teachers | Mostly <input type="checkbox"/> | Occasionally <input type="checkbox"/> | Never <input type="checkbox"/> |

d. What is the medium of instruction in the department that you are studying in?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Urdu | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. English | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Bilingual (Urdu and English) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

e. How often do your teachers speak English in the class room?

- 1. Always
- 2. Most of the time
- 3. Some times
- 4. Never

f. How often do your teachers expect students to speak in English in the class room?

- 1. Always
- 2. Most of the time
- 3. Some times
- 4. Never

g. How often do you actually speak English in the class room?

- 1. Always
- 2. Most of the time
- 3. Some times
- 4. Never

h. In your opinion how important is English for communication:

- 1. With friends Very Important Important Not Important
- 2. With teachers Very Important Important Not Important
- 3. Passing the examination Very Important Important Not Important
- 4. Getting employment Very Important Important Not Important
- 5. Professional progress Very Important Important Not Important

i. How important is English for employment in?

- 1. Private Sector Very important Important Important
Not important to some extent
- 2. Government Sector Very important Important Important
Not important to some extent
- 3. Business Very important Important Important
Not important to some extent
- 4. Armed Forces Very important Important Important
Not important to some extent

j. What are your reasons for learning English (Tick as many as applicable)?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Getting access to good job opportunities. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Becoming more modern. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dealing with studies at the university. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Acquiring new ideas and broadening one's outlook. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gaining access to English speaking circles in Pakistan. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Travelling to foreign countries. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Using the computer. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Using the mobile. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reading international books | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reading international journals and periodicals. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Understanding television programmes of interest. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Listening to television news. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Listening to radio news. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

k. Evaluate your present English Language course in terms of the following:

- | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Usefulness | Poor <input type="checkbox"/> | Average <input type="checkbox"/> | Good <input type="checkbox"/> | Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Motivation | Poor <input type="checkbox"/> | Average <input type="checkbox"/> | Good <input type="checkbox"/> | Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Interest | Poor <input type="checkbox"/> | Average <input type="checkbox"/> | Good <input type="checkbox"/> | Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Relevance | Poor <input type="checkbox"/> | Average <input type="checkbox"/> | Good <input type="checkbox"/> | Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Quality | Poor <input type="checkbox"/> | Average <input type="checkbox"/> | Good <input type="checkbox"/> | Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> |

l. Do you think that the passages from texts by Pakistani writers provided in your course are?

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Very Interesting | <input type="checkbox"/> | Interesting | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Interesting | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Very Relevant | <input type="checkbox"/> | Relevant | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Relevant | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Very Comprehensible | <input type="checkbox"/> | Comprehensible | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Comprehensible | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Very Useful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Useful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Useful | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Very Helpful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Helpful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Helpful | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Very Motivating | <input type="checkbox"/> | Motivating | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Motivating | <input type="checkbox"/> |

m. Please tick the specific genre/category of the passages by a Pakistani writer that you have studied in class (You may tick more than one):

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Poetry. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Drama. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Short story. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Any others. _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

n. Do you identify with the experiences in a text in English by a Pakistani writer?

- 1. Yes
- 2. To some extent
- 3. No

o. Is this identification because of? (You may tick more than one):

- 1. Familiarity with cultural context.
- 2. Familiarity with political context.
- 3. Familiarity with historical context.
- 4. Familiarity with religious context.
- 5. Exposure to Pakistani English.
- 6. Familiarity with local landscape and people.
- 7. Identification with native problems.
- 8. Generation of interactive discussions.
- 9. A good model for writing skills.
- 10. A good model for meaningful and authentic language practice.
- 11. Any other _____

p. Does your familiarity with the content / context facilitate your understanding of the text?

- 1. Yes
- 2. To some extent
- 3. No

Appendix 2

Holistic Observation 1

Subject: Literature in English

Grade Level: Undergraduate

Topic: Poetry and vocabulary in Moniza Alvi's "Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan"

Date: 13th July, 2007.

Duration: 30 Minutes

Place: Centre for Clinical Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore.

Background

As the observation began, students were individually reading poetry. The teacher was at his desk, answering questions and monitoring student progress. There was a quiet buzz among students, who appeared to be absorbed in their work. Rather than explain the project himself, the teacher asked one of the students sitting nearby to read the poem and review the thematic content of the poem and the work they had done to date. This student proceeded to give a clear and detailed overview of the activity. After being given short exercises, students were instructed to discuss the language of the poem.

Component 1: Work shows evidence of conceptual understanding, not just recall. (Appropriate methods, fundamental concepts and vocabulary, construction of knowledge, and elaborated conceptual communication)

Students used a variety of methods. Discussions were substantive and thoughtful, and it was clear that the students took the task seriously. Vocabulary was relevant and appropriate to the task (love, marriage, culture, fate, death etc) and presumably discussions contributed to their conceptual comprehension.

Component 2: Students are engaged in activities to develop understanding and create personal meaning through reflection. (Use of appropriate learning strategies, self-evaluation and revision of work, consideration of alternatives, intentional reflection, focused feedback from the teacher, substantive conversation).

Feedback from the teacher as well as student conversations both led to reflection and understanding. Through discussion with group members and/or the teacher, students contemplated on the given piece of poetry and discussed their subjective perceptions. The nature of the project was such that students were required to think critically, and indeed there was no way the students could have completed it *without* a certain amount of analysis and higher-level thinking. Responses by the teacher to the students was effective in the way it probed their thinking, and the conversations between students were substantive, serious, and appeared to be ‘routine’ for this class.

Component 3: Apply knowledge in real world contexts. (Knowledge is connected with relevant personal experiences; knowledge is connected across disciplines and/or to real world problems).

Students did take the poem beyond the walls of the class room and narrated their personal anecdotes on the given topic. The poem overwhelmingly piqued their sensibility.

Component 4: Students are engaged in active participation, exploration, and research, generate their own ideas, questions and hypotheses

Students in this class were involved in a lesson that exemplified collaboration. Their discussions were thoughtful and serious, and their interactions were positive and productive. Although unstated, there appeared to be an expectation that students would be encouraged to write poetry, especially as some of them expressed an interest in doing so.

Component 6: Students are presented with a challenging curriculum designed to develop English Language skills. The Lesson emphasizes conceptual understanding, and the central ideas and concepts of the subject are covered in depth.

This lesson, both in terms of planning and facilitation by the teacher and understanding on the part of the students, was an excellent example of how a challenging, conceptually rich curriculum can be designed and presented to students enriching their vocabulary, and encouraging experimentation with the English Language. The teacher provided enough background vocabulary and grammatical structure to engage and direct students, while leaving the task reasonably ambiguous so that students had to stretch their thinking. Not only did students appear to be collaborating and learning, but they were also motivated and challenged by the task.

Holistic Observation 2

Subject: Reading Short story The Wrath of God by Tariq Rahman.

Level: Undergraduate

Topic: Literature/Short story

Place: University Law College ,University of the Punjab, Lahore.

Date: 14th July 2007.

Duration: 40 Minutes

Background

Two groups of students were working on various reading tasks. One group was involved in a literature discussion group with the teacher. Each group was reading the same short story. The observation focused primarily on the discussion group. Listening to the discussion, it appeared that all students had read the short story proved by the fact that all students contributed ideas and examples in the Target Language.

Component 1: Work shows evidence of conceptual understanding, not just recall. (Appropriate methods, fundamental concepts and vocabulary, construction of knowledge, and elaborated conceptual communication).

Both the short story and a discussion guide were used to facilitate an analysis of the story, and several different strategies were employed to develop conceptual understanding. These included the consideration of alternatives, prediction, comparing and contrasting, and a discussion of cause and effect. Vocabulary was relevant and appropriately used (setting, illustration, communicate, character, flow, etc). Elaborated communication between students and teacher was important in how they were able to make sense of the story. The following examples of the questions posed by the teacher illustrate the way in which discussion was generated:

T: "Let's review the events of the story."

T: "Who are the characters in this story? How would you describe them...what about physical attributes?"

T: "What do we mean by delineation and plot?"

Component 2: Students are engaged in activities to develop understanding and create personal meaning through reflection. (Intentional reflection, pleasure of recognition).

Various strategies were used to help students understand the story. Intentional reflection was an important part of the literature circle discussion. For example, the teacher asked students to reflect on their own personal trials, a theme that emerged from the reading. Students did this, and some volunteered to share their thoughts with the group. In another instance, they were asked to think about what the author meant by the word 'wrath' in the title of the story or in other words the symbolic impact of the title. The entire discussion was a substantive conversation that encouraged critical thinking, helped students make sense of the story, and prompted them to consider some important aspects of the human experience. The teacher encouraged fluency, even though accuracy was compromised on several occasions, to increase confidence in speaking amongst learners.

Component 3: Apply knowledge in real world contexts. (Knowledge is connected with relevant personal experiences, knowledge is connected across disciplines and/or to real world problems, community resources are involved, student work is produced for an audience beyond the class, students connect with the world outside school via field experiences or technology).

Students were provided with several opportunities to meaningfully reflect on, and then share, their personal experiences as related to the story. Aside from this, the lesson did a lot to connect the story to real world experiences and the immediate cultural context.

Component 5: Teacher builds the lesson on diverse cultural traditions including the Pakistani Context

This lesson built on student experience and interest, to a certain degree ("Who has read.....?"), and the learning was differentiated in that different groups read different short stories.

Reading short stories with drills generated critical thinking related to students' experience. This was strength of the lesson.

Component 6: Students are presented with a challenging curriculum designed to develop depth of understanding (Lesson presented emphasizes conceptual understanding, and the central ideas and concepts of the subject are covered in depth).

The lesson emphasized conceptual understanding because of the ways in which students were asked to respond to, and analyze the short story. Comprehension questions (both for oral and written responses) encouraged higher-level thinking and personal reflection. Secondly, the independent work in which students were engaged was clearly motivating. Thirdly, there was a depth to the literature analysis that was impressive. Elements of the story were discussed seriously (for e.g. theme, setting, character, climax, etc) and students were encouraged to relate the story themes to their own life experience. Finally the class room participation ratio was much higher.

Holistic Observation 3

Subject: Reading

Grade Level: undergraduate

Topic: Literature/Poetry Geography Lesson By Zulfiqar Ghose

Date: September 10th 2007

Place: Centre for Clinical Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore.

Duration: 30 Minutes

Background

During the time of observation students (individually) read the poem and were asked to initiate a discussion on various aspects of the poem. The observation focused primarily on the discussion which different learners generated. Listening to the discussion, it appeared that all students had read the poem indicated by the fact that all students contributed ideas and examples attempting to use the Target Language.

Component 1: Conceptual understanding, fundamental concepts and vocabulary, pleasure of recognition.

The critical analysis of the poem was very engaging and was a clear evidence of conceptual understanding. Comparing and contrasting with

previously read poems enhanced the level of interest. Vocabulary was relevant and appropriately used (setting, illustration, communicate, character, flow, etc). Extended communication between students and teacher was important to indicate how they were able to make sense of the poem. The following examples of the questions posed by the teacher illustrate the way in which discussion was generated:

T: "Let's find out the figure of speech?"

T: How would you describe the poem personally?"

T: "What do we mean by 'persona'?"

Component 2: Students are engaged in activities to develop understanding and create personal meaning through reflection (Intentional reflection and familiarization with the context).

Various strategies were used to help students understand and relish the poetry written by Pakistani writers. Intentional reflection was an important part of the poetry discussions as students relied upon subjective analysis. The teacher asked students to reflect on their own personal reflections related to poetry written in other local vernaculars. Students shared their thoughts using the Target Language repeating and thus reinforcing certain vocabulary previously introduced by the Course Instructor. In another instance, they were asked to think about what the author meant by "Geography" in its literal and symbolic import. The entire discussion encouraged critical thinking, helped students make sense of poetry, and prompted them to consider some important aspects of the human experience translated in the poem.

Component 3: Apply knowledge in real world contexts. (Knowledge is connected with relevant personal experiences as manifested in the nature and the quality of the interaction.

Students were provided with several opportunities to meaningfully reflect on, and then share, their personal experiences as related to the story in English.

Component 4: Students are engaged in active participation, exploration, and research. (Student generate their own ideas, questions and hypotheses).

Students generated their own ideas and questions, particularly those participating in the literature circle.

Component 5: Students' participation ratio

First, the lesson emphasized conceptual understanding because of the ways in which students were asked to respond to, and analyze .Comprehension questions (both for oral and written responses) encouraged higher-level thinking and personal reflection. Secondly, the independent work in which students were engaged was clearly motivating. Elements of the poem were discussed seriously (theme, tone, intension, social relevance, context, local appeal etc) and students were encouraged to write a poem in the English Language too.

Appendix 3

Semi Structured Interview Questions for HEC Sponsored Research: Using Pakistani Literature for English language instruction at the Undergraduate level at the University of the Punjab

- Q.1 Please introduce yourself?
- Q.2 What are your qualifications?
- Q.3 What is your professional experience?
- Q.4 How many BA/B.Sc classes do you teach in one week per course?
- Q.5 What is the duration of the class?
- Q.6 How many students do you have in your class?
- Q.7 Do you design your own course outline?
- Q.8 What in your opinion are the English language needs of these students?
- Q.9 What do you think is the role of motivation in learning?
- Q.10 Do you feel any difference in the course participants' attitudes, motivation or interest levels when you teach English through a Pakistani text?
- Q.11 Other than the exercises in the course book in what ways do you exploit the native texts?
- Q.13 Are there any differences in terms of class participation and interaction when you are teaching the Pakistani text in English as compared to texts by English writers?
- Q.14 Do you think that increasing the exposure to Pakistani texts in English would reflect positively on the ELL process?

TRANSCRIPTS OF INTERVIEWS**Interview 1:**

Interviewer: Uh...Could you please introduce yourself and tell me something about your qualifications?

Interviewee: Uh... my name is Ferzana Aslam. I have... I have done my Masters from the Punjab University and also from National University of Singapore; and I am currently teaching at Punjab University, Department of English Language and Literature uh... to MAs and Linguistics and ELT Students.

Interviewer: Uh...What is your professional experience ...umm Ferzana?

Interviewee: Professional experience in terms of?

Interviewer: ... Uh ... teaching. In terms of English Language Teaching.

Interviewee: Uh... I have uh..... professional experience in what I mean? Uh... is it ... uh ...

Interviewer: In your English Language instruction in the University or outside the University? What experience do you have?

Interviewee: Uh... I, I basically have three years experience and I'm teaching in different departments as well; teaching PhD students uh... Communication skills. I'm also teaching B.A. Hons, B.Sc. Hons and MA students in this as well other than my department.

Interviewer: How many B.A. or B.Sc. classes do you teach in one week per course?

Interviewee: I'm taking 2 classes per week, 2 classes per week uh... in ... Department of Psychology, Clinical Psychology, it's... uh..... It's for 2 uh... 2 semesters a year and twice a week.

- Interviewer: What is the duration of the class?
- Interviewee: Uh... one and a half hour.
- Interviewer: And how many students do you have in your class?
- Interviewee: Almost 35, 36... 35 to 36.
- Interviewer: Do you design your own course outline?
- Interviewee: I do at times if I feel that students are unable to understand and to make the concept clear may be then I design my own outline at times.
- Interviewer: What in your opinion are the English Language needs of these students?
- Interviewee: I feel that students are very poor in terms of grammar, they are weak in grammar, language skills uh.... as well as in their expression so uh.... I try my best to ... help them out ...mm... design certain activities that might help them to overcome this problem.
- Interviewer: What do you think is the role of motivation in learning?
- Interviewee: Students get bored very easily. They are not very motivated to learn especially the English language. They want something that is very interesting, something like in terms of short stories. They are very interested in reading short stories or may be poems at times, but they are not interested especially in grammar or in other any grammatical rules. So they are not that motivated as they should be especially in an English language class room.
- Interviewer: Uh...do you feel any difference in the Course participants' attitudes, motivation or interest levels when you are teaching English through an Pakistani text.
- Interviewee: There is There is difference to some extent because they are motivated especially when they try to relate that literature, that piece of text with their own culture, with

their own context because they are familiar to....., with it to some extent so that might help them uh..... in understanding some of the concepts and they you know because uh.... I normally work with them in terms of groups so they are very interested, especially when they are working in groups because they can come, they can discuss and, then come up with different interpretations regarding one particular piece of text of the native literature.

Interviewer: Other than the exercises in the course book, in what ways do you exploit the Pakistani texts that are included in the course book.

Interviewee: In what way...?

Interviewer: Other than the exercises that are already given...

Interviewee: Basically what I try to do is that I try to teach them uh.... Language. Points uh.... from the text like I teach them suffixes, prefixes, verbs, adjectives, nouns from that piece of text because there was a short story ,I think about, may be it was written by one of the Pakistani writer's, so I taught them grammar through that, so it was like teaching grammar or teaching language through literature.

Interviewer: Was that more effective?

Interviewee: It was very effective because students not only understood the text but they were also able to come up with different uh grammatical aspects as well like they ,they found out adjectives, compound nouns, verbs and even some phrases and idioms as well, so it was like integration of literature with uh..... And language as well.

Interviewer: Why do you think that that would have been more effective... the native text would have been more effective in generating this sort of discussion.

- Interviewee: Because... uh... because they feel very facilitated, because they feel comfortable uh... because uh it is very much related to the Pakistani context and culture as well ,so they feel like they are one of the characters in the story and they are also very uh... interested in coming up with different answers.
- Interviewer: Mm...uh Ferzana, do you think there are any differences in terms of class participation and interaction when you are teaching the Pakistani text in English as compared to texts by English writers?
- Interviewee: There are, because what I personally feel is that there is a lot of difference in terms of the language because the language of uh... these uh... Pakistani writers is quite easy as compared to the foreign text because students uh...uh find it very difficult to understand any other piece of text written by some.... someone else other than a Pakistani writer so the terms, the vocabulary is very simple and they don't have to refer to the dictionary even, because they can easily uh.... come up with appropriate meanings with the help of the context, so background knowledge is already there which is very much present in the text itself so they find it quite easy to uh.... to answer questions.
- Interviewer: Do you think that increasing the exposure to local texts in English would reflect positively on the English Language learning process?
- Interviewee: It will in the long run, but it depends, it depends... I mean how uh.... also it depends very much on the teacher, how is she teaching the students ,because the teacher's play, the teacher plays a very important role you know in teaching them, so I think if she or he is doing uh.... his or her job well, students will easily understand, whatever you know...
- Interviewer: Thank you very much.

Interview 2

- Interviewer: Uh...could you uh...please introduce yourself?
- Interviewee: Uh..... I am Tahir Sarwar; and I'm teaching... uh... M.A classes in the English Department of Punjab University. Along with that I teach in the Institute of Administrative Sciences where I, where I teach undergraduates and I teach English in Business Communication.
- Interviewer: How...uh...what are your qualifications?
- Interviewee: Uh..... I did my MA in English uh.... from the English Department of Punjab University.
- Interviewer: And...umm...what professional experience do you have now?
- Interviewee: I have taught for 21 years at different levels uh.... MA classes, undergraduates, even in the Defense Forces.
- Interviewer: How many BA or B.Sc classes do you teach?
- Interviewee: Uh.... in one week per course I teach about 4 to 6 classes.
- Interviewer: And what is the duration of the class?
- Interviewee: Uh..... one and a half hour.
- Interviewer: And how many students do you have?
- Interviewee: At, at the present I have three classes and in one class I have about 62 students whereas in the other two classes I have 51 and 52.
- Interviewer: Do you design your own course outline?
- Interviewee: Uh.... for the, before the midterm in one of the institutes we design our own course, whereas in the Institute of

Administrative Sciences we teach the books recommended by Punjab University.

Interviewer: And what in your opinion are the English Language needs of these BA/B.Sc students?

Interviewee: Over the years what we have seen is, that I don't know whether it is because of the defect of the system or the learning by heart, their basic grammar is very weak and that is the area where we are required to work very hard.

Interviewer: What do you think is the role of motivation in learning?

Interviewee: Uh... role of motivation of course is very good if teachers are dedicated to their job I can I, I, I'm sure they can pick up the students.

Interviewer: Do you feel any difference in the course participants' attitudes, motivation or interest levels when you teach English through a native text?

Interviewee: There has, a ... we have noticed a change over there because then the... students can relate themselves to the subject that is being taught like in one of the books we have an essay on Lahore and ...uh... it is so interesting that almost uh.... everybody was uh..... quite interested in reading that because they could understand the language and cultural background and everything else.

Interviewer: Other than the exercises ...uh...in the course book in what other ways do you exploit the Pakistani texts?

Interviewee: Apart from the exercises that are given in the book and, because there are a number of exercises given in the book uh.... I give them short essays to write, I give them short paragraphs to write uh..... depending on the essays of the book, which is always very interesting and they perform very well in that.

Interviewer: Are there any differences in terms of class participation and interaction when you are teaching the Pakistani text in English as compared to the English Writers?

Interviewee: Uh..... definitely, one thing which I noticed was that when I was teaching these writers almost everybody participated, even the students who normally do not participate they too came up with questions and very interesting questions.

Interviewer: So do you think increasing the exposure to native texts in English would reflect positively on the English language learning process?

Interviewee: I think this is uh.... a very good example and we must uh.... try to use it more and more because it helps the students and it will definitely help to increase..... improve their English Language also.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Mr. Tahir Sarwar.

Interviewee: Thank you.

Interview 3

Interviewer: Could you introduce yourself please.

Interviewee: My name is Fatima and I have just left teaching uh.... the undergraduate programme. I was teaching in the Department of Plant Pathology and Mycology. I was also teaching the uh..... the PhD students over there uh.... communication skills .I have done my Master's in English in Language Literature and MBA from the Lahore School of Economics.

Interviewer: Okay, so what...umm... qualifications do you have? What is your professional experience?

Interviewee: Uh.... I have worked in a school uh.... an elementary ,on the elementary level, then I worked in a few agencies and then I worked in *Niralla Sweets* in their Art and

Design department and then I have worked in Punjab University as a teacher.

Interviewer: How many BA/B.Sc classes do you teach in one week per course.

Interviewee: Uh...four.

Interviewer: Four?

Interviewee: Four classes in the Mycology and Plant Pathology Department in the University.

Interviewer: And in one week, per course, how many classes?

Interviewee: Uh..... I... six classes.

Interviewer: What is the duration of the class?

Interviewee: One hour.

Interviewer: And how many students did you have in your class?

Interviewee: Uh.... in PhD we have, we don't have many students, we have six students and in B.Sc we have 50 students.

Interviewer: For the B.A. /B.Sc particularly, do you design your own course outline?

Interviewee: Yeah, I've designed my own course outline for the B.A., B.Sc. in which I've included the things that I have already mentioned in this book that has vocabulary, that has comprehension, that has tenses and I have used every thing almost from this book because it was easy for students you know to understand and comprehend.

Interviewer: By this book you mean English for Undergraduates.

Interviewee: Yes, it is for undergraduates.

Interviewer: By D.L. Kirk Patrick and D.H Howe?

Interviewer: What in your opinion are the English language needs of these students?

Interviewee: It is a bit different from Ok...OK in my opinion Ok. They know what are tenses but they don't know how to apply them, how to use them. So we should emphasize on the usage and how to teach them, how to speak, sorry uh... in a sense like they know what a teacher is saying but they don't know how to convey their responses and how to answer and for that I think the most effective way is to give them things that are from our own context, from our own culture and make them present and that helps them a lot and you know coping with these weaknesses in these areas of the spoken and written English.

Interviewer: What do you think therefore is the role of motivation in learning?

Interviewee: Uh... it depends on the teacher. I think a teacher should have a lot of energy to motivate a student, if a teacher does not have that energy and that motivation the voice does not travel to the students and they will not respond.

Interviewer: And do you feel any difference in the course participants, attitude, motivation or interest levels when you teach English through a Pakistani text?

Interviewee: Uh... when, well, I taught for two semesters, and during the two semesters I felt a great change because uh... because these texts uh... have all those things which are going on around us and students have an... easier way to comprehend these and you know to cope with these things, like they can imagine themselves in a situation, ok fine this is a surrounding and this is something that is going on, and then it, it becomes easier for them you know to relate it to themselves and then answer and respond.

- Interviewer: Uh...other than the exercises in the course book in what ways did you exploit the native texts?
- Interviewee: Ok, I have uh... exploited them in a way that I have used the tenses plus the comprehension, I have given them different uh... exercises to do and then they had to solve those things in the class and at home.
- Interviewer: What sort of exercises?
- Interviewee: Uh... I gave them let's say if the tenses... if the present tense is used... Can I talk about the tenses?
- Interviewer: Yes!
- Interviewee: Ok, uh... if uh... the students have to ,you know, they know what is the present tense like it has had, indefinite and everything, but they don't know that when they are, you know doing the commentaries or they have to you know give an interview they have to respond in the present tense. So we conducted interviews in different uh... places and I told them you know uh...communicate in present tense and...
- Interviewer: Did you use any Pakistani texts in English to exploit this?
- Interviewee: Yes.
- Interviewer: Ok.
- Interviewer: Um...are there any differences in terms of class participation and interaction when you are teaching the native texts in English as compared to texts by English Writers?
- Interviewee: Yes, there is uh... I can give you an example. I have taken different articles from the books of A-levels and then I have taken articles from these books. The response that I got from these books was much greater than the response that was given after reading the articles

from the A-levels books. The reason being the language again. Because from the very beginning we have not been ,you know taught such vocabulary and different uh... things that should be taught to us in school.

Interviewer: So therefore do you think increasing the exposure to Pakistani texts in English would reflect positively on the English Language process?

Interviewee: Uh... definitely, it will have a very positive effect on the students as well as the teachers I guess.

Interviewer: Okay... thank you very much.