

## The Innovative Ways of Teaching Literature

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**Annotation:** This study aimed to identify the approaches employed by teachers in teaching Contemporary Children's Literature Program to upper primary school. Using classroom observations and interview as research instruments, this paper evaluates the approaches of five ESL teachers teaching Year 5 students and examines the various challenges faced by them in the teaching of literature. Preliminary findings on the approaches revealed that the incorporation of literary elements in the classroom was minimal. Teachers were lacked creativity and fully utilized the modules provided by the Curriculum Development Centre. The Pre, While and Post-Reading was not employed effectively due to the lack of textbook provided by the school. Nevertheless, the program provides great potential for enhancing students' language learning in the classroom. This study contributes to the field of curriculum and pedagogy for authentic learning from the evaluation of teachers' approaches in the classroom learning.

**Keywords:** past, create, literature, both, important

**Introduction.** The literature component in English is aimed at enhancing students' language proficiency, and it is also geared for the purpose of generating the aesthetic part of the language that is personal response from students. The English language Curriculum Specifications stated that the aim of literature is not only meant to address the interpersonal, informational aesthetic value of learning but also the learning of the English language in general. Similarly, this objective is in line to the curriculum of the Malaysia Ministry of Education (2009) that spells out the objectives of the introduction of literature component into the English language syllabus are to enable students to improve their proficiency through reading, respond to text, draw lessons and insights from slices of life, understand and appreciate other culture, relate to events, characters and own life as well as expose students to models of good writing. Literature in Education is aimed at developing the potential of students in a holistic, balanced and integrated manner encompassing the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical aspects in order to create a balanced and harmonious human being with high social standards. It is therefore, the primary aim of incorporating literature into the English Language syllabus is to improve students' language ability. As stated in the English Language Curriculum Specification, the CCL Program is aimed to help students improve their English through reading simple fiction, to provide a continuum for the literature component introduced in school and to create an enjoyable learning environment. In relation to this, literature is not only meant to address the interpersonal and informational aesthetic value of the learning, but also beyond that where the students learn about people, culture, ethics, behaviors and other social norms. Hence, the implementation of children's literature would help children to expand their imagination and to acquire literacy in their learning. There is a need to discover if the literature component in English is taught in line with its aims and objectives. Thus, a focus on the approaches employed by teachers in the teaching of literature component in English would be of great value and interest. This study focuses on teacher's approaches and challenges in the teaching of CCL Program in primary schools. The study will focus on the approaches employed and challenges encountered in the teaching of literature to upper primary students. Literature is meant to be enjoyed, as literature can be employed as a tool to promote literacy and proficiency in the language. It assists students to deal with problem of social, cultural, racial or problem that deals with life in the real world. The CDC of Malaysia Ministry of Education (2006) provides three benefits of having children's literature in primary schools' learning in the implementation of CCL Program. They are (1) the personal and emotional gains which offer enjoyment, enrich children understanding of themselves and the world around them, develops imagination, helps children make sense of their own experience and evokes one's feelings on issues related to life, (2) the learning gained allows children to learn new ideas and new knowledge, adds to their understanding

of concepts, allows children to understand cultural traditions and values and issues in life, allows children to develop respect for self and others, and encourages them to become aware of their audience, and (3) the language gain which help children develop an awareness of how language works in communication, develop an understanding of the meaning of words, allows them to experience new ways of using language that bridges the gap between written and spoken language and allows them to experience the form of narratives.

**Aims.** The learning outcomes of literature teaching are the expected skills, experience, attitudes or language that students need to gain. The outcomes are the fundamental elements that students need to attain in the objectives of literature learning. In the CCL Program, students are introduced to short stories, which is known as one of the components in prose, functions as a continuous piece of writing which consist of both fiction and non-fiction. Authors of short stories utilize language to raise issues related to human interest. Students are required to learn good values in them by comparing and contrasting different short stories. In order to achieve the learning outcomes of literature teaching and learning, the Malaysia Ministry of Education (2003) has specified the learning outcomes of the introduction to short stories as to (1) understand the content of the text, (2) recognize and understand the issues presented in the text, (3) understand the themes and messages in the text, (4) understand the plot in the text, (5) describe the characters and interpret their interactions and relationship with another, (6) understand and interpret the contribution of setting to the story, (7) understand the author's point of view, (8) identify common literary devices authors employ to achieve their effects, (9) communicate and inform personal response to the text, and (10) produce a piece of work in response to the text studied. Therefore, it is important to determine the approaches employed by teachers in the teaching of CCL Program in order to ensure the incorporation of models of teaching literature is taken place in classroom instruction, as well as to find out types of approaches utilized by teachers in the teaching of literature. Hence, the integration of Literature in Education and short stories' learning outcomes will be assessed as to what extent the implementation of CCL Program has achieved the objectives of each learning outcomes. In this study, the theories of cognitivism and constructivism as well as the social cognitive theory which provides the underlying principles of the study, underpinning the whole theoretical framework are integrated. The theory of cognitivism by Piaget plays a great role in understanding the learning process. Piaget sees the child as continually interacting with the world around them solving problems that are presented by the environment, and learning occurs through taking action to solve the problems (Phillips, 1969). These relationships exist between the cognitivism and the language learning process in classroom learning. Another theory outlines is the constructivism theory, which challenges the traditional goals of education and proposes restricted, innovative teaching approaches in which students will construct knowledge themselves rather than simply receiving it from knowledgeable teachers (Roblyer, M.D., Edwards, J. & Havriluk, 1997). It is significant to understand the theory of constructivism and how it is related to learning process due to its belief that people actively construct new knowledge as they interact with new environment. The theory of Vygotsky's Learning Theory (1986) is underlying in the present study. For the purpose of curriculum to be developmentally appropriated, a teacher must plan activities that include not only what children are capable of doing their own but what they can learn with the help of others. In this situation, teachers can use information about both levels of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development in organizing classroom activities via cooperative learning activities and scaffolding via a well-planned instruction. The Schema Theory of Rumelhart (1980) stated that all knowledge is packed into units, which is called schemata. It represents knowledge about concepts of objects and the relationships they have with other objects, situations, events, sequence of events, actions and sequences of actions. In other words, this theory states that all knowledge is organized into units, and within these units of knowledge, or schemata, information is stored in the learning process. It is therefore, these theories are relevant in understanding students' development in language learning particularly, in learning literature as discusses in this study.

**Conclusion.** This research utilized qualitative methodology. A descriptive research methodology was employed and it used a mode of classroom observation as the primary instrument, and semi-structured interview as secondary instruments. The sample population used in this study consisted of five randomly selected schools located in Kuala Selangor in the state of Selangor in Malaysia. In each school, one ESL teacher teaching Year 5 under the CCL Program was randomly selected, after securing permission from the school principals and the state education department. Hence, the sample population consisted of five ESL

trained teachers teaching Year 5 ESL classroom. Each ESL classroom was observed three times. In this study, the five teachers are referred to as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, and Teacher E. The first observation for each class was not taken into consideration to avoid what researchers call the researcher's paradox. Only data from the second and third observations were used for this study. All the classroom observations were audio recorded and field notes were taken to provide additional information on the classroom context. At the end, a total of 10 classroom observations were used for the purposes of data analysis.

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