



**INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA UNIVERSITY
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**A Comparison of Form-Focused, Content-Based and Mixed Approaches to
Literature-Based Instruction in English as a Foreign Language to Develop
Learners' Speaking Skills**

(Language Teacher Candidates, Ishik University, Iraq)

Extended abstract of doctoral dissertation in Education Sciences

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I confirm that the work corresponds to the field, is characterized by novelty, scientific and practical value and is presented in the format defined by International Black Sea University.

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INTRODUCTION

The introduction includes information on background, purpose, rationale, significance, theoretical and practical value of the study, also presents statement of the problem, research questions, research hypothesis, methods of research, novelty, theoretical framework, and concludes with organization of the chapters.

Background of the Study

The last few decades have witnessed an ample amount of research on teaching English to speakers of other languages. A large number of studies evolved around the effects of formal instruction on second language acquisition because there was a growing consensus that high levels of linguistic competence was considered as a strong potential foundation for language learning. However, the center of attention has shifted from the structural properties of language to the comprehension and expression of meaning in recent years. Put another way, the effective integration of formal instruction and communicative language teaching has become a major concern in most of the recent foreign and second language instructional methods. Krashen (1981, 1982, 1985) in his well-accepted and widely known second language acquisition theory argues that desired outcomes in the development of language proficiency can be achieved more through comprehensible input rather than extensive use of conscious grammatical rules and he affirms that meaningful interaction in the target language is an effective way for maximizing the mastery of the language.

In the early 20th century literature was woven into language curriculum to endorse learners to acquire language structures and perform drills successfully (Durant, 1995). The actual use of the target language upstaged grammar instruction as the primary focus of language learning in the fields of language pedagogy. In the late 1960s and 1970s literature fell into disuse on the grounds that it was not in conformity with standard grammar rules (Topping, 1968) and the widespread perception was that literature was complex and inaccessible for learners (Vincent & Carter, 1986). In the late 1970s and 1980s a decisive swing against literature was experienced and literature came into prominence to enable learners to make huge leaps in language learning. Learners can reap many benefits from the inclusion of literature in foreign language teaching. In attempting to support their arguments of incorporating literature into language teaching a

considerable number of researchers (Durant, 1995; Duff & Maley, 1990; Collie & Slater, 1987; Ghosn, 2002; Lasagabaster, 1999; Maley, 1989; McKay, 1982; Swaffar, 1985) offer a number of reasons why literature is an ideal medium for extending language use. Language learners are at an advantage to acquire profound knowledge of language, develop their understanding and appreciation of cultural and ideological differences of societies and promote academic literacy and thinking skills.

It is rare for learners to reach high level of communicative ability from engaging in entirely language form either implicitly or explicitly. Likewise, focusing primarily on content may be a hindrance to embrace target language features. The integration of form-focused instruction in content-based classrooms has been effective because such an integrative pedagogy benefits learners' practice of target forms within communicative contents (Day & Shapson, 2001). Holding classroom discussions of literature offers learners an avenue to verbalize their interpretations. Form-focused and content-based approaches are two pedagogical frameworks that facilitate form-meaning connections in the field of second language acquisition (Valeo, 2013); for that reason it is hoped that the building of dialogic classroom which draws attention of learners to form-meaning relationship provides some of the strongest rationales for language acquisition.

Purpose of the Study

Language and literature are mutually supporting experiences. In fact, sufficiently sophisticated grasp of language is witnessed when literature is introduced in language study (Ghosn, 2002; McKay, 1982). Language is an input-rich source for coming to good terms with knowledge of language structures, reading proficiency, enriched vocabulary, improving skill in the target language, thinking skills, and cultural awareness. To put the matter at its most basic, language learners can accrue quite tangible benefits from exposure to literature. Literature-based approach to target language teaching is an excellent means for the development of oral and written communicative competence (Barnitz, Gipe & Richards, 1999).

It is noteworthy that, conducting literature discussions have boundless possibilities of encouraging substantive talk and developing oral language (Eeds & Wells, 1989). When language learners develop a critical stance towards discussions of literature, an interactive setting

to construct interpretations is created. The creation of space for voices of learners invites readers to argue for the use of language to articulate perceptions, verbalize points of view and transmit thoughts. Reading literature puts creating meaningful understandings to the fore. The premise behind engaging readers in unveiling the meaning in the text offers learners a medium for negotiation of meanings. Thereby, the use of literature is a useful resource to cultivate communication by virtue of transaction. The presentation of literature to learners can be an important initiative to better communicative competence. The instructional potential of discussions stimulates learners to put their energy into talk and knowledge-building (Nystrand, 2006). Attention to both form and meaning in literature discussions results in communicating meanings in an effective way. In line with this perspective, classroom discussions of literature espouse a focus on learning about and participating in. It is often the case that the establishment of communication calls for drawing attention of learners to certain features and meaningful use of the target language. The present study aimed to create a favorable condition for language learning through engaging learners into more interaction in which they become cognizant of target language features and produce more language output. For this purpose, the present study employed form-focused and content-based approaches incorporated in a literature-based program.

Statement of the Problem

A substantial number of literature-based classroom activities have been suggested to indulge learners in experiencing literature to recognize different uses of language (Kramsch, 1985). Although downgraded as it was thought to be inaccessible for language learners, literature has made a place for itself in language teaching and has prevailed as a contributing force in language instruction since the late 1970s. However, literature has been insufficiently used in language teaching at university level, besides it has been used either to develop accuracy of learners or provide contents for discussions. There are few researches that plunge learners into rich exposure by means of literature to form-meaning relationship and render it possible to learn grammatical features and develop communicative competence.

The inclusion of form-focused instruction in a content-enriched language instruction through using literary works offers learners discernible advantages. Literature gives a basis for group discussions; thus, it has communicative value (Shanahan, 1997). This study has been designed to

draw attention of learners to form and meaning simultaneously through integrating form-focused and content-based approaches by means of literature discussions. The acquisition of linguistic forms through exposure to instructional intervention enables learners to use the language with greater fluency and accuracy (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). Communicative tasks are valued much for their underlying construct of accuracy and fluency. Literature discussions have the potential to help learners notice language forms and integrate the knowledge into communicative activities (Nystrand, 2006).

Rationale for the Study

The pedagogic rationale for welcoming literature in multiple learning settings lies in the claim that it is conducive to language learning. The core premise of using literature is that it provides clear advantages for learners to perceive the characteristics of target structures in contexts and use these forms for communicative language use. Literature gives a basis for discussions thus serves as a source for comprehensible and creative language use. The embrace of literature is an essential need for meaning-making that results in meaningful communication situations (Redmann, 2008). Literature is an essential grounding for cultivating communication repertoires of language learners.

Communication has emerged as an important building block which involves the integration of structural and functional aspects of language. It has been suggested that language learning is not compatible with the development of communication skills when the primary focus in classroom activities is on specific language features. Likewise, meaning-based instruction does not lead to effective language teaching. A simultaneous focus on form and meaning exposes language learners to comprehensible input and provides them options of practicing their output to have complete acquisition (Norris & Ortega, 2000; Spada, 1997). Only through interaction can learners negotiate meaning and notice the linguistic features. The development of communicative competence entails productive use of the target language (Swain, 1985). With this focus in mind, literature has the potential to combine communicative language use with grammar instruction and provide comprehensible input for learners in meaningful interaction for language acquisition (Shanahan, 1997). Quality talk grows out of literature discussions. They serve as an avenue for language learners to articulate their opinions, ideas and interpretations. In this framework, considering that language learning does not spawn successful outcomes in the failure of form and

meaning balance, literature can bridge this gap and warrant proficiency in the target language. This study is premised on the belief that the combination of grammar instruction with communicative language use enables learners to produce accurate utterances, and the use of the target language to discuss content rather than form encourages learners to produce more language output. To put it another way, form-focused and content-based instructions were compared within literature discussions for the production of meaningful discourse. This proposed investigation is expected to create form and meaning balance using mixed approaches for effective communication through holding literature discussions.

Significance of the Study

Major premises of the present study are that literature can offer an acquisition-rich environment in order to explore the forms and communicative functions in the target language, attention to form embedded within communicative teaching by means of literature is compatible with language acquisition and the integration of language and content within literature discussions makes room for language proficiency. The ability to speak accurately and fluently in a foreign language is critically important in language acquisition. However, oral production has been a stressful situation for some foreign language learners. As literature offers an extensive range of enrichment in establishing form-meaning connection and uses it for expressing messages (Paran, 2008), this study aims to show that literature and language learning can work in tandem for the purposes of enhancing oral communicative competence of language learners.

In a language curriculum in which literature is deemphasized, the development of advanced-level foreign language competencies is unrealistic. Language learners can accrue quite tangible benefits from the use of literature in language teaching. The study explores whether well designed classroom discussions can become an integral part of language classes for generating comprehensible and coherent output in terms of both language and content.

Research Questions

This study is to answer the following research questions:

- 1) Does the use of literature-based instruction in English language teaching sharpen language awareness of learners?

- 2) Does the use of literature-based instruction bridge the gap between linguistic competence and linguistic performance?
- 3) Which approach to literature-based teaching speaking is the most adequate: form-focused approach, Content-based approach or a mixed approach?
- 4) How can form-focused and content-based approaches be integrated into literature-based approach?

Research Hypothesis

Hypotheses of the study are:

- 1) The integration of form-focused and literature-based approaches create opportunities to use grammar for communicative purposes with the intention of promoting accuracy.
- 2) Integrating language and content learning is a favorable condition for language learning for its advantages to engage learners into more interaction and provide output in meaningful communicative contexts.
- 3) Combining of language and content by mixed approaches using literary texts can bridge the gap between form-meaning relationships; thus enable learners to use the language with greater fluency and accuracy which are seen as central to communicative competence.

Methods of Research

An experimental research methodology was used to answer the questions raised by the study. The selected method was considered to be the most appropriate due to the purpose of the study which aimed to investigate whether the variables that were being manipulated had an impact on the results through using quantitative methods for data collection; thus, experimental study rendered it possible to assess the influence of the different treatments and measure outcomes. The experimental study took place in a university in literature classes. It was thought that, *The Great Gatsby* and *Lord of the Flies* were of interest to the target population of the study, which consisted of 60 undergraduate students in English Language Teaching department, due to their substantive plot, their clear sequential development and appropriate length. The genre, style and literary devices these two novels contained allowed learners boundless possibilities to have literature discussions.

Data were collected over one semester period through survey questionnaire, pre-and-post assessments, classroom discussions of literature and post interview. Both the preliminary survey questionnaire and the final survey questionnaire which included the same questions were administered to unveil the attitudes of learners towards the application of foreign language literature for teaching speaking. A pre-test, a post-test and a delayed post-test were conducted to measure the participants' progress in language learning. Each test consisted of two parts: grammar and vocabulary, and each part included 50 questions. All three groups (FFI, CBI and Mixed Approach) in the present study underwent different treatments to ascertain which of the treatment instructions used in this study provided more opportunities for learners with the promotion of communicative efficiency (Group 1 received the instruction that included form-focused and literature-based components; Group 2 received the instruction that included content-based and literature-based instructions; and Group 3 received the instruction that included mixed approaches). Informal interviews were conducted with all participants to access to their inner perceptions and gain perspectives about their experiences with discussions of literature. Data analysis was conducted through focusing on the quantity of participation, utterances, and accurate utterances in classroom discussions.

Novelty

The theoretical and research base has provided a substantial endorsement for the teaching of a nonlinguistic content through the medium of a language. While a considerable bulk of research has explored the integration of language and content to optimize content learning and language acquisition (Tedick & Cammarata, 2012; Pica, 2002), few studies have focused on language and content integration using literary texts for the development of language proficiency (Schulz, 1998). In particular, the combination of formal accuracy and content teaching to promote more language output in communicative contexts has been understudied. The study provides a new experience with language learning. The implementation of mixed approaches for the development of linguistic competence and communication skills has not been investigated in the country where the study was conducted. The originality of the present study lies in the fact that it collected multiple kinds of data which were subsequently interpreted and represented.

Theoretical Framework

In this study theoretical influences are directed by reader-response theory (Rosenblatt, 1960, 1974, 1977, 1978, 1985) which is based on the assumption that a literary work takes place in the mutual relationship between the reader and the text. According to this theory, the meaning is constructed through a transaction between the reader and the text within a particular context. The reader is the active participant in the reading process and the primary maker of meaning. By adopting aesthetic and efferent stances the reader maintains an active role in deriving meaning. In the aesthetic stance the reader is immersed in cognitive and affective elements to build his/her interpretation. In the efferent stance, the reader is absorbed in extracting information from the text. It is indubitably the role of the reader to make inferences in interpretation of literature and the meanings created are the reflections of both the reader and the text. Rosenblatt (1995) points out that reading literature is an exploration in which the reader is an experience builder and the text serves as a guide for interpretation.

Classroom discussions of literature allow learners to perform more adequately in response to texts and construct meaning (Rosenblatt, 1974), and encourage them to articulate their interpretations which helps them with the development of speaking skills. Readers assume multiple roles when responding to a variety of forms of literature. The process of developing responses facilitates active and meaningful reading and increases emotional and intellectual participation in the text that ultimately provides learners with better comprehension and awareness of the text. The potential value of classroom discussions augments learners to express their emotional reactions, to elicit their responses, to nourish their perspectives for furthering depth of their interpretation, to corroborate their opinions and share their responses for building a social relationship. It is crucial that learners are directed to perform more adequately in response to texts and actively engaged in dialogues to raise literal and inferential questions, to explore a range of possible meanings and to foster cognitive development and comprehension (Jewell & Pratt, 1999; Lehman & Scharer, 1996). In the process of meaning construction, learners experience other cultures, elevate thinking skills and promote interpretative skills.

In this study theoretical influences are also directed by Krashen's second language acquisition theory (1981, 1982, 1985) which is based on the assumption that language proficiency development can be achieved more through comprehensible input and meaningful interaction in

the target language. Krashen (1982) argued that content-rich meaningful input suffices for the occurrence of language learning. This theory situates comprehensible input at the core of language acquisition and is grounded on the principle that language learners should be exposed to meaningful use of the target language.

Theoretical and Practical Value of the Study

Although a growing body of literature has investigated the supportive role of literature in attaining advanced-level language abilities (Paesani, 2005; Henning, 1993), a significant dearth of research has espoused literature for the combination of formal accuracy and content teaching to provide more meaningful input in communicative contexts (Mantero, 2002). There has been increased attention devoted for creating a climate of communication in language education (Richards & Rodgers, 2011). The present study addresses the issue of communication in the language classroom and focuses on implementable strategies and classroom activities to bridge the gap between language and literature. Literature is practical and enriches a fertile ground for using various approaches to teaching language. The findings of the research may not only stimulate teachers to employ literature-based teaching of target languages for its mightiness to develop oral and written language but also influence their teaching practices to enhance written and oral communicative competence of learners.

It is hoped that the study will contribute to the common belief held by language educators that literature and the experiment held can be used as a springboard for language acquisition process. The literature review and the experiment held in the study argues that the integration of language and literature is a viable approach for speaking proficiency development. Also the study supports the widespread belief that classroom discussions of literature in the language classroom act as a stimulus to motivate learners for the development of communication skills.

Organization of the Chapters

The details of the present study are presented in four chapters. Chapter 1 provides a summary of literature relevant to the study. Chapter 2 presents a review of approaches used in the study. The second chapter also presents a review of classroom discussions that were held utilizing form-focused, content-based and mixed approaches. Chapter 3 attempts to discover insights on the effectiveness of literary texts over simplified texts. Chapter 4 delineates the design of the study

and methodology implemented in the present study. Moreover, the fourth chapter contains the findings of the study, discussion of the findings, possibilities for further research and implications for theory and practice, and conclusion. The study concludes with references and appendices.

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review on the Use of Literature for Promoting Speaking Skills

Literature is a use of authentic and highly-skilled language that reflects human experience and it brings fore actions, thoughts, feelings and beliefs. Although the inclusion of literature in language teaching has long been contentious, it has prevailed as a contributing source. Incorporating literature in language teaching offers a motivating medium for profound knowledge acquisition. Literature provides an ideal context for language development, cultural enrichment and personal growth. Learners become cognizant of linguistic features of the language through literary texts. Literature introduces critical thinking as well as intellectual development to language learners. Literary texts help learners develop understanding of self and the world. Literature provides an avenue for coming to good terms with written and oral communicative competence. Classroom discussions of literature have the potential to create a conversational setting for learners to articulate their opinions, ideas and interpretations. Additionally, literature discussions engage learners in progress of language awareness and development of communicative skills. Considering these factors, the present study aims at investigating the role of using literary texts in drawing attention of learners to form and meaning simultaneously in the language classroom through holding discussions of literature. In other words, a learning setting will be created for the language learners to develop accuracy and fluency through the infusion of meaningful context. The premise behind holding classroom discussions of literature in the study is to offer learners an avenue to verbalize their interpretations.

CHAPTER 2

Implementing Classroom Discussions of Literature Using Form-Focused, Content-Based and Mixed Approaches

Form-focused instruction (FFI) draws attention of learners to target features to reach high levels of linguistic competence. The acquisition of linguistic forms provide clear advantages for language learners to perceive the characteristics of target structures in context and use the language with greater accuracy. Corrective feedback, a type of FFI, has been considered conducive to language learning as learners have the opportunity to correct their errors. Content-based instruction (CBI) is the simultaneous study of language and content. Content-based classrooms provide language learners occasions to negotiate form and meaning and promote their knowledge. Language learners construct knowledge and negotiate through the discourse contexts of interaction. CBI situates the comprehensible input at the core of language acquisition. The impetus of CBI to impact verbal interaction of language learners motivates them for successful outcomes.

As both approaches have advantages and disadvantages, the integration of FFI and CBI into literature-based classrooms provides an ideal context to attend to form and meaning and some of the strongest rationales for language acquisition as the disadvantages of one approach will be compensated by the advantages of the other. When FFI and CBI are integrated in conjunction with literature-based approach, learners easily perceive language patterns in the meaningful context, foster content learning and initiate production of the meaningful discourse. Simply put, the advancement of grammatical accuracy and content unveils improvements in language performance.

CHAPTER 3

The Exploratory Study

The supportive role of literature into language classroom is worthy of concern. Based on the foregoing experiences, the researcher concludes that literary texts are excellent models for learners with providing comprehensible input that can enable them to become cognizant of

linguistic features. In addition, real examples that language learners are exposed to in literary texts enhance their language awareness. With this aspect, when learners experience different uses of language and the interaction of language features in a text, they stand a better chance of maximizing their language proficiency and become capable of applying the same strategies during communication. The researcher has long been interested in investigating whether language learners can accrue tangible benefits through exposure to literary texts. The first step would be to discover insights on the effectiveness of literary texts over simplified texts. As there were no earlier studies in the university where the study took place for reference, an exploratory study was conducted in 2016 to understand whether the participants could reap more benefits from the inclusion of literary texts in language learning. The major purpose of the exploratory study was to investigate whether literary texts or simplified texts encourage Iraqi learners more to promote language development. Based on the collected data from the tests, it can be concluded that advanced-level language competencies is realistic when literary texts are emphasized in the language classroom. Results indicate that students scored higher results during the experiment (increased by 28 points or 41.2%) when authentic literary materials were employed in the language classroom.

CHAPTER 4

Research Method

1. Research Context

The context of this study was within an ELT program in English education in one of the major universities in Iraq which offered student-centered teaching. The curriculum of the four-year undergraduate program is designed to help students acquire theoretical and practical knowledge connected with foreign language skills and critical thinking development. The curriculum includes teaching the four basic language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and the development of communication skills to have complete mastery of the language during the first two years. In the third and fourth years the curriculum covers the study of the principles of language teaching and learning and the introduction of communicative approaches. ELT curriculum at the university has been designed to foster language education to meet the needs for well-educated language teachers who can teach competently.

2. Participants

The study was conducted in an English Language Teaching (henceforth ELT) undergraduate program in which students met three hours a week. Each 50-minute class aimed at analysis of literary texts with a focus on oral communication. Each class had 20 students (Class 1, n=20; Class 2, n=20; and Class 3, n=20) who were assigned to their class groups randomly and a total of 60 students (39 females, 21 males) in three groups, an optimal class size for classroom discussions, participated in the study. There were totally 60 senior-year students enrolled at the university in ELT department, and they all took part in the study. The students volunteered to participate in the study. All participants, whose ages ranged from 19 to 29, were in their fourth year of university and majoring in ELT. In terms of nationality, 12 students were from Turkey and 48 students were from Iraq. All participants were of language backgrounds other than English.

3. Treatment

After the approval for the present research was granted from the university where the study was carried out, the researcher organized the classes to conduct the study. The study lasted for 12 weeks and included 26 days of treatment instruction (26 hours) and 12 days of non-treatment instruction (12 hours). Pre-tests were delivered before the treatment instruction started and post-tests were delivered after the treatment sessions ended. Delayed post-tests were delivered three months after the study ended. During the 12-week period of the instructional treatment Group 1 received the instruction that included form-focused and literature-based components. Group 2 received content-based plus literature-based instructions and Group 3 received the instruction that included mixed-methods (form-focused, content-based and literature-based methods).

4. Discussion of the Findings

The discussion of findings is divided into four subsections. A rationale for the use of literature in language development presents the findings of the questionnaire and the interview which address the issues of welcoming literature for maximizing the mastery of the target language; A rationale for the use of literature in cultural development and a rationale for the use of literature in

personal development present the findings of the questionnaire and the interview which hinge upon the use of literary texts as catalysts for cultural enrichment and personal growth; and finally the role of literature discussions in promoting communicative skills presents the findings of the classroom discussions of literature which are directly related to the primary purposes of the study. The study of literature in the foreign language class is a useful context for developing advanced language competence. The findings from the survey questionnaire and the interview suggest that literature is an important component of language curriculum to develop language proficiency. The results of the study indicate that advanced-level foreign language competencies become feasible through an integrated curriculum in which language, content and literature are taught as a continuous whole. Literature-based approach will be maximally effective, if combined with a mixed approach. Out of three approaches which were employed in the study, the mixed approach was the most useful in order to develop communicative skills of the students. The exploration of using literary texts in the language classroom raises several issues. This part of the study will comprehensively deal with these issues.

4.1 A Rationale for the Use of Literature in Language Development

Table 4.52. The findings about the use of literature for language development

Areas	Categories	Numeric Findings
The use of literature enhances language development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of literature is a valuable strategy • Learner Autonomy • Authentic materials • Acquisition-rich learning setting • Student Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to the first five questions (1-5) in pre-and post-survey questionnaire in all groups FFI (mean rose from 1.54 to 3.25) CBI (mean rose from 1.56 to 3.02) Mixed Approach (mean rose from 1.54 to 3.6) • Interview Results Language learning with literature is a new experience .92 Engagement .87 Learner Autonomy .78

The application of literature is a valuable strategy in EFL instruction for upper-intermediate and advanced level learners. Examination of the statistics showed that students indicated strong agreement with the incorporation of literature into language curriculum as it offers linguistic, methodological and motivational medium for learning. The findings from the survey questionnaire and the interview in the present study show that the use of literature in the language classroom became favorable after the treatment sessions among the students who participated in the study. It is increasingly clear that literature-oriented classes advance reading skills, writing competence, develop critical awareness, and raise willingness to discuss the issues embedded in texts (Durant, 1995). Moreover, literature-based language activities engage students in linguistic forms and communicative functions to decipher language patterns. Literary encounter motivates and inspires students for language learning and makes students sensitive to the reading process. The study revealed findings similar to those of Collie and Slater (1987) who argue that the use of literature in language learning is an enormous source for language development.

Engaging in the act of reading and interactions in classroom discussions of literature develop learners autonomy. The findings of the interview reveal that the percentage of the participants who reported that reading literature develops autonomy was comparatively higher than that of participants who deny it. One of the objectives in classroom settings is empowering students to gain autonomy. Through shifting our role as teachers from “sage on the stage” to “guide on the side” (Olson, 2003, p.51), we can help students develop into autonomous learners and make them “responsible agents for learning” (Blau, 2003, p.5). It would be unlikely that without providing massive reading opportunities, students become good readers. This finding is in consistent with that of Lasagabaster (1999) who argues that literary texts are authentic materials which promote student autonomy.

Literary texts expose students to a rich sample of input of linguistic information and foster language learning. More than 70 % of the students in the survey questionnaire showed agreement that literature fosters language learning; in the same vein, more than 80 % of the students in the interview showed agreement that literature enhances linguistic accuracy. These findings are consistent with those of McKay (1982); Ghosn (2002); Lazar (1993); and Liaw (2001) who argue that the use of literature in the language classroom fosters linguistic accuracy,

facilitates language learning, enhances language development and allows learners to use language skills in the target language. Literature illustrates language use and can offer students an acquisition-rich learning setting in which all language applications can function. The use of literature in language classes is a teaching aid that enhances listening skills when used aurally, fortifies oral practice when used in discussions, and extends linguistic knowledge when used for language learning. The attainment of these qualities paves the way for mastery of the language. The development of oral and written language hinges upon literature-based pedagogy (Hoecherl-Alden, 2006). Literature-based curriculum spawns skills of lexical and grammatical structures, and enhances conceptual understanding. All of the above indicate that, the acquaintance of literature can be used for the purposes of language acquisition.

Literary texts serve as authentic materials. A considerable number of the students viewed literature useful means of language learning. The high number of the positive views of literature in the language classroom in the survey questionnaire shows that the use of authentic materials was more suitable to language learning which is consistent with the findings of Collie and Slater (1987); Swaffar (1985); and Elliott (1990). Lasabagaster (1999) also argues that literary texts serve as authentic materials and have been a sine qua non condition to raise language awareness. Authentic texts are intended to communicate meaning and they are tailored to engage students in decoding language systems for themselves (Swaffar, 1985).

Literary texts and literature discussions can sustain student engagement to create meaningful understandings. The finding from the interview shows that literacy environment boosts engagement. 87 % of the students who participated in the study stressed the importance of using literary texts for providing a venue to engage in learning. The acquisition-rich environment of literature increases students' familiarity with the language. It goes without saying that, language learning is best advanced through displaying active engagement in meaningful communication. The instructional potential of classroom discussions of literature in the language classroom offers students an avenue to integrate linguistic knowledge into communicative practice. The building of a dialogic classroom in this study encouraged students to participate actively in literature discussions and verbalize their interpretations. These practice arenas in which students utilized the linguistic knowledge they acquired from literary texts spawned engagement and developed their sensitivity how language could be used to communicate.

4.2 A Rationale for the Use of Literature in Cultural Development

Table 4.53. The findings about the use of literature for cultural development

Areas	Categories	Numeric Findings
The use of literature fosters cultural development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to cultural and social values of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to the questions 6 and 9 in pre-and post-survey questionnaire in all groups <p><u>Question 6</u></p> <p>FFI (mean rose from 1.80 to 3.50) CBI (mean rose from 1.95 to 3.50) Mixed Approach (mean rose from 1.85 to 3.60)</p> <p><u>Question 9</u></p> <p>FFI (mean rose from 1.55 to 3.25) CBI (mean rose from 1.60 to 3.10) Mixed Approach (mean rose from 1.65 to 3.50)</p>

Literature is valued as a tool for raising cultural awareness because it has the potential to expose students to cultural and social values of others. The findings from the survey questionnaire indicate that a great number of the students considered literature as an enormous source of cultural enrichment. At this point, the findings are consistent with those of Lasagabaster (1999); Collie and Slater (1987); Alvstad and Castro (2009). When students are triggered by cultural issues, they grow curiosity over other people with differing cultural backgrounds and become willing to pose questions to learn about cultural practices that are unfamiliar to them (Kim, 2004). Literature fosters cross-cultural understandings (McGroarty & Galvan, 1985) that aids students to overcome even insurmountable cultural barriers between people and lead them to tolerate cultural diversity. Moreover, the indissoluble relation between language and culture uncover the idea that cultural competence nurtures communicative competence (Lasagabaster, 1999).

4.3 A Rationale for the Use of Literature in Personal Development

Table 4.54. The findings about the use of literature for personal development

Areas	Categories	Numeric Findings
The use of literature provides personal development	Enhance imagination/critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to the questions 7, 8 and 10 in pre- and post-survey questionnaire in all groups <p><u>Question 7</u> FFI (mean rose from 1.85 to 3.60) CBI (mean rose from 1.95 to 3.60) Mixed Approach (mean rose from 1.95 to 3.70)</p> <p><u>Question 8</u> FFI (mean rose from 1.65 to 3.50) CBI (mean rose from 1.70 to 3.40) Mixed Approach (mean rose from 1.55 to 3.70)</p> <p><u>Question 10</u> FFI (mean rose from 1.85 to 3.30) CBI (mean rose from 1.70 to 3.15) Mixed Approach (mean rose from 1.70 to 3.55)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview Results Personal development .85

The lure of literature is its valuable contributions to personal development. The findings from the survey questionnaire and the interview show that a great number of the students reported that literature has a pivotal role for personal development. In the survey questionnaire the students in all groups reported agreement that literature extended their personal experience. Literature reflects people's needs, concerns, and values. It depicts situations that are familiar to all human beings. It brings out feelings common to numerous people. It discusses human condition and exhibit experiences of people. Daily activities carried out by people are the root of literature. The universality of literature extends to issues, significant ideas and attempts to unravel them. Literature offers students a natural milieu to develop the understanding of the world. Students gain insight into feelings of other people and experience their difficulties. When dealing with

conflicts of others students are given the opportunity to discover solutions to their own difficulties.

Students exert their imagination to interpret the hidden meaning. From participants' responses in the survey questionnaire it can be concluded that the use of literature in the language classroom is a viable approach to enhance imagination and critical abilities. Particularly, 85 % of the participants in Group 3 reported that literature has the potential to promote thinking skills. Literature makes an interactive demand on students (Gajdusek, 1988). In reading literature, students are obliged to create meaning from the text. An interaction between the reader and the text occurs in the reading process (Widdowson, 1979). This interaction necessitates students to negotiate meaning by concept comprehension and language decoding. Literature inspires learners to seek for discovering deep meaning in the text through going beyond the literal meaning. Students can take the advantage of boosting their interpretative skills through an attempt to elucidate a text in their own way.

4.4 The Role of Literature Discussions in Promoting Communicative Skills

Table 4.55. The findings about the use of literature for the development of communicative skills

Areas	Categories	Numeric Findings
The use of literature promotes communicative skills through interactions in classroom discussions of literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop oral communication • Promote accuracy • Promote fluency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to the questions (11-15) in pre-and post-survey questionnaire in all groups FFI (mean rose from 1.60 to 3.31) CBI (mean rose from 1.62 to 3.27) Mixed Approach (mean rose from 1.59 to 3.57) • The results of pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test in grammar FFI 64, 74.8, and 77 CBI 66.1, 69.3, and 70.8 Mixed-Approach 63.8, 78.1, and 80.8 • The results of pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test in vocabulary FFI 60.4, 64.8, and 66.4

		<p>CBI 58.9, 69.9, and 72.9 Mixed-Approach 61.8, 75.4, and 78.8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of utterances produced in each group FFI 1572 CBI 1852 Mixed-Approach 2112 • The number of accurate utterances in each group FFI 1269 CBI 1284 Mixed-Approach 1829 • Accuracy achievement FFI .80 CBI .69 Mixed-Approach .87
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In the language classroom, literature forms the basis for discussions (Long & Porter, 1985); and encourages oral practice (Enright & McCloskey, 1985). This study closely analyzed to what extent literary texts and classroom discussions of literature pushed students to elaborated language use. The findings from the classroom discussions of literature show that the discussions played primary importance on the development of oral language. The finding is consistent with that of Shanahan (1997); Barnitz et al. (1999); Davidheiser (2007) who argued that exposure to literature culminates in communicative competence development. Literature is rich in real-life language examples; therefore, offers a motivating medium for communication development. The variety of models that occur in different situations demonstrate students how to use the language for communication. It is worth mentioning that literature discussions provide ample opportunities for more meaning-focused interactions (Johnson, 1995). Students constantly engage in constructing, expressing and clarifying meaning and produce more extended output that helps them with the development of communicative competency of the target language (Swain, 1985).

Conclusion

The present study set out to determine whether a literature-based approach combined with form-focused and content-based instructions constitutes an ideal medium to promote communicative competence of learners. The findings of this study illuminated the effects of literature discussions on language learning outcomes. The results suggest that literary texts were considered as a new material in target language learning by a vast majority of the participants. The big difference between the preresponses and postresponses in the survey questionnaire provided further insight into attitudes of the participants towards the use of literary texts in the language classroom. Those participants who showed favorable attitudes toward literature-based instruction purported that literature is a potentially worthwhile source of comprehensible input that enables them to become proficient in the target language. The results of the questionnaire highlighted the premise that the incorporation of literature into foreign language teaching program was shown to be a powerful tool for offering motivational basis for language learning, creating a medium to venture into other cultures and delve into social interactions and dialogues, and more importantly building an ethos for extending linguistic knowledge and promoting language awareness. A large majority of the survey participants indicated vested interest in the inclusion of literature in language learning owing to its effectiveness as a valuable tool on personal development and augmentation of language learning.

The findings from the interview revealed similar results to those from the survey questionnaire. Although a small number of the participants questioned the effectiveness of literature for the development of language proficiency, a large number of the participants, regardless of the treatment, enumerated several reasons why literature was worth considering in language instruction. For them, literature was a new language learning experience and it was suitable to improve accuracy and fluency, promote engagement, enhance personal development and develop learner autonomy that enabled them to assume more responsibility to regulate their own learning. Pre-assessment and post-assessment results showed that learner made measurable gains in language learning outcomes. The findings of the study support the claim that literature is an effective means of developing grammar and vocabulary knowledge. The findings demonstrated that the value of literature is its merit to integrate attention to language form and content

knowledge to render learners' form and meaning connection. Also it was seen that, the students were able to retain newly acquired knowledge for a long time when form and content was integrated in the language classroom.

The study found that classroom discussions of literature were essential grounding for producing output in meaningful communicative contexts. Classroom discussions offered a continuum for dialogic talk that stimulated learners to construct and argue for their interpretations and build knowledge. The combination of grammar instruction by means of FFI with communicative language through literature discussions helped learners express more accurate messages although a notable improvement in the quantity of the utterances could not be achieved. Similarly, the study showed that the implementation of CBI in literature discussions encouraged learners to engage in more verbal interaction. Although more language output was produced in this approach, a noteworthy development of accuracy was not accomplished. However, collaborating FFI and CBI within classroom discussions of literature created learners occasions to negotiate form and meaning that provided that the strongest rationales for attending to linguistic accuracy and fluency simultaneously to involve in effective communication.

Overall, this study revealed the potential of using literature in language instruction. In particular, it unveiled that the improvement of communication skills through holding classroom discussions of literature was not negatively affected by the inclusion of language and content. By contrast, the study demonstrated that creating a classroom environment that placed literature discussions at the heart of language learning by combing form and meaning brought in the essential knowledge and skills necessary for successful language acquisition. The provision of language forms in meaning-based tasks is an optimal path for language learners to attend to language forms within communicative practice. Literature discussions built an ethos for language learners to achieve the desired outcomes for oral language development through enabling them to perceive the connections between language and communication. Also a comparison of pre-assessment and post-assessment speaking scores of the students revealed that the best progress was made by the students who attended to form and meaning simultaneously during speech production.

The number of participants and materials in the study is limited. A large sample size would reveal more accurate information; thereby, the study calls for further investigation with an

increased number of participants and materials to have better insights into the effectiveness of literature discussions in the language classroom on speech production. The present study used novels in discussions. Further research would be truly beneficial in which different literary genres are used to measure gains of students in the development of speaking skills.

PUBLICATIONS in which the main ideas of the dissertation are reflected

- 1) Mart, T. C. (2012). Developing Speaking Skills Through Reading. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(6), 91-96.
- 2) Mart, T. C. (2015). The Effect of Reading on Improvement of Communication Skills. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World*, 5(1), 39-46.
- 3) Mart, T. C. (2016). The Use of Literature in Language Teaching. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World*, 6(2), 77-83.
- 4) Mart, T. C. (2015). Combining Extensive and Intensive Reading to Reinforce Language Learning. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World*, 5(4), 85-90.
- 5) Mart, T. C. (2017). Literary Texts: A Means to Promote Language Proficiency. *Journal of Education in Black Sea Region*, 2(2), 44-55.