

L1 Poetry and Moral Stories as a Factor Affecting Acquisition of L2 Oracy Skills in EFL Settings

Mahdi Aben Ahmed

Jubail English Language and Preparatory Year Institute, Education Sector, Royal Commission, Jubail, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—The current study works on the belief that literature (poetry and moral tales) can be a powerful tool for acquisition of oracy in an EFL setting and studies the impetus given to L2 learning as a factor of exposure to poetry and meaningful stories in L1. It aims to investigate whether students' L1 can play a positive role in reasonable L2 oral output on the premise of using literature in the classroom. The study also compares whether or not the students' scores develop significantly as a result of the intervention. It adopts a quasi-experiment design in which 75 level 1 Saudi EFL students at the Department of English and Translation participate by enrolling in a listening-speaking test in with evaluation is based on an ASL descriptors rubric. The intervention follows a version of Ochi's (2009) practice of Interpreting Training Method (ITM) using Quick-Response Practice and Sight Translation (Ochi also uses Shadowing and Summarization in addition to these). Findings show that using L1 literary genre can help in developing EFL students' oracy skills. Furthermore, the study reports that students gain in all the four elements as 2.7 points in comprehension and 3.8 in coherence, and 1.8 points in pronunciation and 1.4 in grammar/ vocabulary on a scale of 1-10, however, in comprehension and coherence the enhancement is significant, $p = 0.000$. It recommends EFL teachers to integrate the use of L1 literature in EFL classroom as inputs in facilitating L2 output.

Index Terms—L1 input, L2 Oracy skills, ITM, quick-response

I. INTRODUCTION

Poetry, tales, and fables have always been a part of the L1 user's repertoire and one that takes the learners to another amazing and fascinating world of imagination. The moral storytelling class and the genre of poems are activities greatly enjoyed by all age groups. The very significant idea behind their inclusion in the language curriculum is to sensitize the young minds to a wide range of human emotions that are believed to greatly contribute to building their social resilience, emotional stability, empathy towards fellow creatures, and literacy (Khatib & Askari, 2012). Quite certainly, the learning objective at this stage is not language acquisition (though it happens as an automatic process) but getting the learners acquainted with an entire spectrum of what may be called 'noble' abilities of the human race. They enrich their very existence, inspiring them to unearth 'selves' that help them as adults and enable them to co-exist fruitfully and symbiotically with their fellow human beings.

By extension, 'higher' training in these literature genres shows the universality of human emotions, sufferings, aspirations, and hopes. The current study is anchored on the Reader-Response-Theory in literature learning, which suggests that the reader constructs work and re-enacts the author's creative role. To reiterate, literature works provide clues or verbal symbols in a linguistic system, widely accepted by everyone who shares the language, but everyone reads their own life experiences and situations into them. The significance of words depends on the reader, even if they have a typical relationship. In every reading, there is an interaction between the reader and the text. The process of reading is an experience in which the reader tries to comprehend the literary work, which surpasses its full potential since it provides emotional and intellectual reactions that are not anticipated from the document but cannot be affirmed just by the reader as a part of the text. The idea is that the text forms the basis of a unifying experience. The reinterpretation of the literary text may transform it into a guiding principle to respond to actual experiences and personal memories.

The impulses delivered to the reader vary according to poetry or texts; nevertheless, the readers differ considerably even with the same materials. Literature, in general, imparts a supporting environment to the English learner that results in a stronger understanding of the language (Hişmanoğlu, 2005). Additionally, Khoiri and Retnaningdyah (2011) stated that EFL learners enhance their language proficiency when they supplement their language resources with literary texts. Short stories, fables, and drama play an equally important role in helping learners place the cultural and social aspects of different historical and social settings and interpret their significance. Collie and Slater (1987) affirmed that students shift from focusing on automated aspects of literature to relying more on features closer to their interests and cultures. Similarly, Zhen (2012) supported the observation by saying that the instructors can use literature as a tool that enlightens learners about the culture and civilization of a country so that they may learn to appreciate the differences between them. Khoiri and Retnaningdyah (2011) added that the literary texts support a learning environment where acquiring cultural and linguistic competencies are beneficial for the EFL learners.

Anyachebelu et al. (2011) stated that literature engages and involves EFL learners in the process of reading, which in turn boosts their reading and writing skills, augmenting their linguistic competencies. It is the process of understanding the factors involved in creative writing such as different settings, characters and plots that assist the EFL learners in developing problem-solving skills (Hişmanoğlu, 2005).

Van (2009) viewed literature as essential for students' exposure to texts with annotative language and compelling characters. Although integrating literature into the EFL teaching curriculum has multidimensional benefits (Alderson, 2000), there still seems to be a lot of ambiguity and differences among foreign language instructors on the ways to assimilate literature into EFL classroom instruction (Lima, 2005). No previous study investigates the role of poetry and moral stories in developing Saudi EFL learners' oral proficiency.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Educators have been using literature as a model in the past for teaching various features of the English language to EFL learners, and over the years EFL students have shown an appreciation for literary texts by understanding the writer's intentions behind a piece and articulating the language used in those texts (Khoiri & Retnaningdyah, 2011). Moreover, learners benefit by browsing through various literary texts in order to gain a better understanding of the human condition (Hişmanoğlu, 2005). According to Khoiri and Retnaningdyah (2011), using literature as a teaching medium not only provides pleasure and appreciation for aesthetic values but creates an environment where learners experience these life-size lessons individually or in groups of individuals. This is corroborated by Khatib and Askari (2012), who added that the main purpose of literature is involving the readers in living the experiences they read about in the texts.

Brindley (1980) found that the biggest obstacle in using poetry as a medium is its connotative and metaphorical language which makes it less favourable to classroom instruction. Zelenkova (2004) added that the cultural and rhetorical ambiguity surrounding the use of poetry for teaching EFL learners could be problematic for the EFL instructors. Lack of proper guidance in how to use poetry as the instructional medium also leads to the reluctance of its application (Štulajterová 2010). EFL teachers need to use poetry not only to facilitate learning but also to help learners express themselves using all the poetic forms available to them (Brindley 1980). Instructors can use poetry, which is considered an individual form of expression, and treat it as a synergetic and concerted effort at bringing the learners together to generate their ideas together, read, and listen to the poems in pairs or groups and become connected with the shared human experience (Moore, 2002). Hedge (2000) added that authentic poems enhance the receptive skills of the readers whereas reproducing a given poem develops the critical writing skills which may not be easy to teach otherwise (Alber-Morgan et al., 2007). Poems can also weave in universal themes such as love, happiness and grief which can create an environment of healthy discussion and interaction among the language learners (Maley & Duff, 1989). According to Riverol (1991), the appropriate choice of literary text to teach language, either through poem or short story, depends on the students' interests, knowledge and maturity level.

Researchers (e.g., Carroli, 2008; Cook, 1994; Hanauer, 2001; Shanahan, 1997), advocated the need to follow a content-based curriculum which has literary components (Liddicoat, 2000; Kramsch, 2013). Literature based curriculum enhances knowledge of words, phrases and expressions (Frantzen, 2002); knowledge of grammar (Tayebipour, 2009), and awareness of language used (Carroli, 2008). Also, a curriculum that promotes the reading of culturally supported literature is essential to the EFL instruction (Swaffar, 1999). Latest studies recommend that language teachers design a curriculum with a focus on language, literature and culture in the same expanse (Foreign Languages and Higher Education, 2007). Recent studies support the fact that literary texts are crucial to the EFL teaching programs, but they also allow for the fact that the learning process could be an onerous task for the instructor as well as the learner (Lima, 2010; Rice, 1991; Van, 2009).

Despite the wide consensus among the educators on the need to incorporate literature into their school curriculum, it has yet to be accepted as an established mode of instruction (Lima, 2010). Educators who do incorporate literature in their teaching plans face key hurdles in the form of lack of adequate preparedness, insufficient skills and knowledge in the field of literature, and a dearth of teaching material in the related fields (Edmonson, 1997; Lima, 2010; Khatib & Nourzadeh, 2011). Apart from that, the issues pertaining to the selection of text and syllabus for the literature curriculum in the EFL classrooms continue to influence learning of English as a global language (Carter, 2007).

In drawing a distinction between studying literature and using it as a method to study foreign language, Maley (1987, cited in Carter & Walker, 1989) asserted that literature is language that can be used for learning purposes. In this regard, literature could work as the essential tool that develops the reading ability and provides the experience that other interpretive texts cannot (Kramsch, 1993; Hess, 1999). Ample research is underway, identifying the impact of using literature in EFL teaching curriculum and syllabi, thus redefining the role of culture and literature for the learners of foreign language and establishing their connection to the literature of target language (Hanauer, 2001; Kramsch, 2013; Liddicoat & Crozet, 2000).

Another research argument advocates for the essential integration of literary texts as part of language teaching exercise (Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010; Carroli, 2008). While the teacher facilitates the learning process, it is the student who is in control of their learning through literature in order to develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills (Belcher, 2000; Nasr, 2001). As it is pointed out, students' literary readings help kindle their

imaginations, enhance their core skills and develop their emotional intelligence (Lazar, 1993); the implementation of literary texts supports EFL instruction (Collie & Slater, 1987).

In instances where it is impossible to stay or visit the place where the target language is spoken, literature is arguably the best platform to familiarize oneself with the traditions and culture of the place. Literary texts help the EFL learners acknowledge and appreciate the cultural and ideological differences between their own and those of the target language (Carter, 1991). According to Van (2009) and Tayebipour (2009), literature is responsible for facilitating cross-cultural consciousness. Tayebipour (2009) noted that all forms of literary texts including novels, plays, short stories and moral fables share the universal demands and ease the communication contexts in the target language. Although the literary texts portray situations and settings that are largely fictitious, the descriptions of the settings and backdrops draw the readers into the other world. At the same time, the social, political and cultural circumstances taking place at a particular time in the society bring an added awareness in EFL.

Apart from the educational and instructional advantages of studying literature in an EFL setting, Ghosn (2002) asserted that learners develop emotional intelligence when reading literary texts. So also, Khatib et al. (2011) agreed with the assertion that literature nurtures sensitivity among the EFL learners, thus leading to emotional empathy and the capability to regulate learners' emotions (Averil, 2001).

While researchers (e.g., Gajdusek, 1988; Ghosn, 2002; Van, 2009) viewed literature as essential to improving critical thinking abilities in EFL learners, Ghosn (2002) added that literature guides students to observe, question, expound and cogitate on their own lives in context. All of this introspection and reflection might bring attitudinal changes among the EFL learners in how they view the world. In the face of all the advantages literature brings to the EFL classrooms, there are also multiple challenges in the instruction phase such as selecting texts and passages that are culturally appropriate (Lima, 2005; McKay, 2001; Savvidou, 2004).

At times, literature can also disrupt the learning process by providing examples that might be riveting for the native speakers but misleading and confusing for the EFL learners (Widdowson, 1982). According to McKay (2001), some cultural references in the literature might be frustrating for the inexperienced learner. Duff and Maley (1990) added that some objectionable cultural references might restrict their use for learning purposes (Collie & Slater, 1987). Tomlinson (2001) advocated for humanizing English textbooks by adding L1 concepts, Lima (2005) concurred that selecting the right kind of literary text for EFL learners can be a monumental task for language instructors as several factors such as age, gender and fluency level influence these decisions (Khatib et al., 2011). Duff and Maley (1990) also stated that the length of the texts, whether long or short, can cause hurdles without the right contextual support.

Many scholars consider the limiting nature of literature reading in meeting the demands of the EFL curriculum for higher education but they still affirm the importance of literature in motivating EFL readers in expounding a wide variety of texts for their reading purposes (Maley, 1989). With an understanding of the best approaches to use literature, EFL teachers can effectively integrate literature in classroom EFL instruction (Shang, 2006). Recent decades have seen literature in EFL classrooms shift from investigating at a syntactic level to promoting cross-cultural consciousness among the EFL learners and helping them view situations from a different perspective (Oster, 1989). This shift has led to researchers supporting the integration and incorporation of literary texts into EFL instruction (Dhanapal, 2010). Timucin (2001) used the traditional approach for teaching literature to Turkish undergraduate EFL learners and finds that the students resorted to memorizing texts and became dependent on books and teachers for help. On the other hand, when he used the integrative approach, he was able to bring in a lot of motivation and engagement to the learning process.

In order to incorporate literature into EFL teaching, students need to be exposed to authentic texts and not only a partial context offering a point of reference (McRae, 1991). Teacher's experience in interacting with EFL learners can be valuable in highlighting the usefulness of integrating literature in the teaching curriculum (Paran, 2008). In order to see whether the learning experience was not a set of different experiences but a wholesome experiment with the use of literature for the classroom instruction, Lattimer (2003) built her case over different models of teaching. She supported this with a set of six prototypes from different genres of literature. In these models of research, Cranston (2003) shared testimonials of several lessons where she used poetry in the classroom for EFL learners while Rosenkjar (2006) showed how an aesthetic analysis of the poem worked with her learners. Hess (2006) shared how short stories can be integrated to teach all four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening while Völz (2001) narrated how she used the same short fiction over a number of years to see how the pattern changes. It is clear that all the activities contributed to the experiment with literature successfully. The combination of efforts such as student involvement, level of eagerness for the content, and the degree of pleasure they find in the learning task makes for the successful acquisition of literature-based language class (Crook & Schmidt, 1991).

Statement of the problem

Since the establishment of the communicative approach to language teaching-learning and the criticism of the grammar translation approach, use of mother tongue or L1 in second or foreign language classrooms has seen a southward trend. At the same time, the researcher's experience has shown that it is Utopian to expect a total exclusion of the mother tongue or L1 in an L2 classroom as class dynamics, including the motivation quotient and learning pressures make it imperative for the former to be employed, though the question of 'how' and 'how much' is open to debate and research. Moreover, L2 classrooms in Saudi Arabia do rely on the MT in English instruction: The problem

lies in the unformatted and uninformed manner of its inclusion. Further, the language education policy does not lay down any guidelines for English education and only broadly states its aim as the preparation of the Saudi learners to take their place in the global arena. Taking from this, teachers are wary of acknowledging the use of L1 stating that the communicative approach to language teaching does not make room for it. The researcher, however, feels certain that using the L1 in a systematic manner is likely to have positive impact on learners' motivation to learn in addition to enabling them to express in L2 as their cognitive abilities will be better utilized in an environment that nurtures their thoughts and feelings in L1 and gives them the tools of expression in L2.

Research objective

Deriving from the review of literature and the statement of the problem above, the study has a lone objective:

Evaluate if the inclusion of literary content in the MT enhances the oracy skills of the undergraduate learners in English (L2).

Research questions

1. Can L1 literary content in the form of poems and moral stories enhance learners' oracy skills in English?
2. In which of the four ASL descriptors do students score higher?
3. Is the change in learners' output after exposure to the intervention statistically significant?

III. METHODS

This is a quasi-experimental study conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2021-22. The study duration was six weeks totalling to 18 hours of class time fully devoted to the intervention. The study compares students' scores in the pre and post-tests (N= 75) for the academic year, 1443 AH, 2022 at a Saudi university. Students' performance on listening-speaking tests in a one-group pre-post-test design (conducted simultaneously for all participants in a Language Lab) was assessed. The intervention follows a version of Ochi's (2009) practice of Interpreting Training Method (ITM) using Quick-Response Practice and Sight Translation (Ochi also uses Shadowing and Summarization in addition to these).

A. Participants

The study comprises a convenience sample of 75 level 1 learners of EFL at the department of English language and translation, at a university in Saudi Arabia. The global language abilities of these learners are ranked at Intermediary with the GPA scores of the group skewed towards lower-intermediary. The sample is mostly homogenous; gender is not a considered variable in this study. The study recruited the intake class as sample. All participants are aged between 20-22 years with the group median age being 21.7 years. They share an equal number and nature of EFL education background and have had mostly urban exposure in their previous student years. The researcher got permission from the approval committee to conduct this research.

B. Intervention

The study takes from Ochi's (2009) ITM model, a method that was first applied with native Japanese learners of English. The model was tested over two years by Ochi in 2005 to improve learners' global language skills in English in senior high school. The method is composed of four components: Quick response practice, shadowing, summarization, and sight translation. The current study, however, only uses two of these components viz., *quick response practice and sight translation*. The reason for using only two of these was the shorter duration of the experiment as compared to Ochi's and the limited language ability of the participants. The researcher also appended English versions of these Arabic materials for participants to evaluate their performance in the Sight Translation activity. The activities were impromptu for the most part with the researcher pausing the text reading and discussion randomly and launching the class into two-minute quiz activities with part of the credits going into their university cumulative scores.

Four Arabic moral stories and two poems were chosen for the activities and the participants were familiarized with the methodology at the beginning of the experiment. The aim behind this was motivated by Widdowson (1982) who said that different opinions and ideas created by reading literary texts prompt students to stay motivated and engaged with other EFL students and teachers in the classroom. This is also reiterated by Brumfit (1986) who opined that the literature-led classrooms find the learners in an active role, interacting with others and trying to make sense out of the text and its language in a meaningful way. Carter (1991) voiced a similar view by pointing out that literature not only empowers the learner into a state of autonomy but also helps them evolve as an independent being and engage in relationships with others. In the current study's approach of using native language literature, it is ensured that the views of these linguists are fulfilled since literary pieces in the mother tongue had the learners more engaged, motivated, and autonomous. Finally, the pieces chosen were such that were part of the popular folklore, but the researcher ensured that he led the participants to explore their content more deeply as befitted their age and stage in learning.

In the class time, the researcher timed the content in such a way that the short stories were amply discussed in the class in English with built-in quizzes to create opportunities for *quick-response practice*. Similarly, sight translation was encouraged wherever the content needed cultural awareness for translation to be coherent and meaningful. Every time a participant volunteered a response, the researcher noted it on a balance sheet whose cumulative score was later

converted into grace marks that went into the participants' internal assessment for the semester. This positive reinforcement was found to be a big hit with the participants.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Instrument 1: Pre and Post Tests

The researcher used SPSS to compute the descriptive data and found significant difference between the pre and post-tests, computing the p values in a paired samples t-test for each of the four descriptors to determine the significance of the gains in each case. Lower values would indicate that H_0 (the intervention is not helpful in improving learners' performance in the descriptors) is fit to be discarded. Comparison of p values obtained from the t-test show that gains are most significant in two of the four descriptors.

EFL learners in Saudi universities are required to take at least two Assessments in Listening and Speaking (ASL) tests. *Open Forum 1* course book is used for this purpose. The duration of these is forty minutes each and the content on which they are tested is a pre-recorded spoken description of a place or a person with questions meant to be answered orally at the end of the test. The responses are recorded electronically and assessed for oracy skills on a scale of 1-10. The pre-test comprised a description of a winter evening in New York City in authentic language, which means that the selection of language and syntax was not graded to suit the level of the participants. The questions at the end were based on general comprehension, appreciation, analysis, inference, and extrapolation. The post-test followed an identical pattern but with a different passage this time: A literary passage from Jerome's classic, *Three Men in a Boat*. But for the passages, the pre and post-tests were similar in terms of level of difficulty of language and variety and types of questions asked. The assessment rubric descriptors for the ASL are summarized in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
ASL RUBRIC FOR LEVEL 02-10

Marks allotted	10	08	06	04	02 and below
Comprehension	Can answer appropriately	Can answer but needs occasional teacher's prompts	Needs frequent prompting	Passive in answering	Very limited output
Pronunciation	Fully comprehensible with correct intonation	Articulate but with very few phonological errors	Mostly articulate with occasional errors	Frequently unintelligible with major communication errors	Very poor communication due to many errors and poor pronunciation
Coherence	Fluent with minimal hesitation and repetition	Speaks with a little repetition	Willing to speak but with noticeable hesitation and occasional loss of coherence	Poor coherence in complex formations, often hesitates, poor logicity	Frequent self-correction and hesitation, several breakdowns of logical speech
Grammar and Vocabulary	Uses complex syntax with variety of words and constructions	Can form complex syntax and vocabulary is adequate	Has limited flexibility and appropriacy of grammar and vocabulary	Rarely uses complex syntax, limited vocabulary, poor expression of ideas	Scarce flexibility, poor vocabulary, expression is very basic

Given the exhaustive nature of the rubric, the researcher spent almost three weeks to score the test data obtained. Both the tests were scored in one go after the completion of the experiment to ensure maximum neutrality of the researcher during the conduct of the intervention. It may be noted that in the usual course, one EFL teacher assesses a group of 25 learners in the ASL whereas the researcher single-handedly completed the assessments for all of the 75 participants.

Table 2 below shows the comparison of the actual group means for the assessment descriptors obtained in the pre and post-tests, along with group gains. In the pre-test the students scored an average score (4.625) in all the four elements. Their scores in the post-test showed hike in the average score (7.05) with a gain of (2.425). According to Table 2, students showed enhancement in comprehension as the gain score was 2.7 and coherence where the gain score was 3.8. Such gain in comprehension and coherence is significant because the p value was 0.000, which is considered statistically significant. Despite the gain achieved by the students in pronunciation (1.8) and in grammar and vocabulary (1.4), such gain is not significant because the P values scored 1.79 and 1.63 respectively.

TABLE 2
MEAN AND GAIN VALUES AND T-TEST IN PRE AND POST TESTS

	Comprehension	Pronunciation	Coherence	Grammar & Vocabulary	Average
Pre-test	4.4	5.1	3.6	5.4	4.625
Post-test	7.1	6.9	7.4	6.8	7.05
Gain	2.7	1.8	3.8	1.4	2.425
p values	0.000	1.79	0.000	1.63	

The above data depicted graphically in Figure 1:

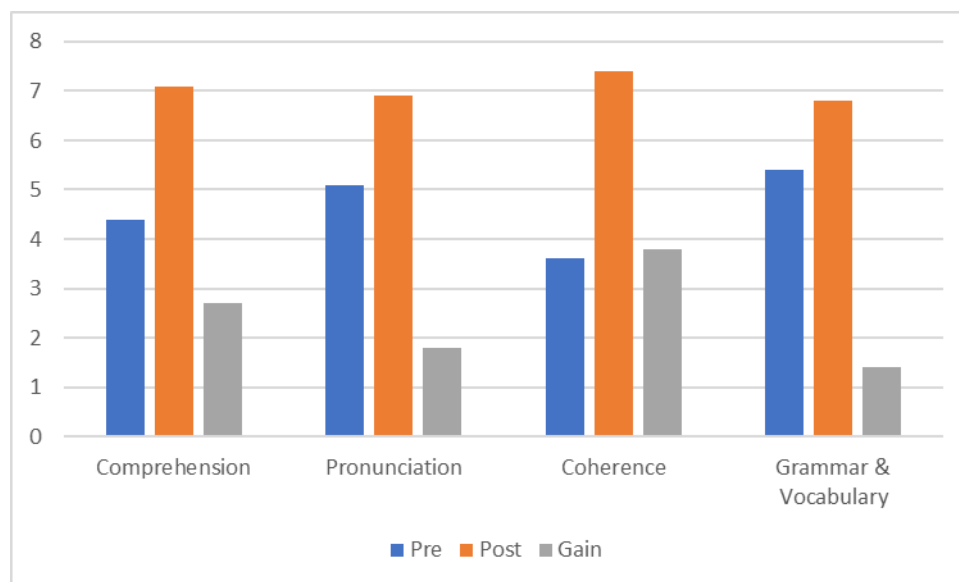


Figure 1. Pre-post Tests and Gains Scores

V. DISCUSSION

The study asked whether the use of L1 literary fiction develops EFL students' speaking and listening comprehension. Three questions led this study. They will be answered one by one.

The first query was, "Can L1 literary content in the form of poems and moral stories enhance learners' oracy skills in English?" As stated earlier, the only intervention for the group was the inclusion of L1 moral tales and poems, which were such as are part of any young person's repertoire in the country. In the pre-test of listening and speaking the students scored 4.625 in the four assessed elements, comprehension, pronunciation coherence, and grammar. These were again assessed after being exposed to the intervention reflecting 7.05 in the post-test. The gain achieved between the pre and post-tests was 2.425. Judging by the statistical data, it can be said that L1 literary content in the form of poems and moral stories can enhance learners' oracy skills in English. This finding urged EFL teachers to try the use of literary genre while teaching English to EFL students. This finding is confirmed by the beliefs of many scholars and researchers in the importance of integrating literature in the EFL classroom (Liddicoat, 2000; Kramsch, 2013). Likely, Foreign Languages and Higher Education (2007) called EFL teachers to include in their curriculum both language, literature and culture in the same expanse.

The second research question was, "In which of the four ASL descriptors do students score higher?"

According to the students' average scores in the post test and the gain achieved, it can be said that students achieved the highest scores in both coherence and comprehension. On the contrary, they gained lower in pronunciation and grammar and vocabulary. These findings show us that due to the long exposure to L1 prose and stories, which are based on narration, students' ability in comprehending the events and their ability to compose natural and logical utterances were developed. This finding is in line with (Alkhodimi & Al Ahdal, 2019; Carroli, 2008; Frantzen, 2002; Tayebipour, 2009). Frantzen (2002) stated that literature-based syllable develops students' knowledge in vocabulary. Similarly, Tayebipour (2009) stated that indulging in literature in EFL classroom enhanced students' grammar. Moreover, Carroli (2008) reported that using literature develops students' awareness and language use. Hauner (2001) found that poetry reading was beneficial when used in EFL classrooms comprising advanced students. It not only facilitates students' grammar, but it can open doors for attaining cultural knowledge as well.

Finally, the third research question was, "Is the change in learners' output after an intervention statistically significant?" Statistical analysis above showed that the success of the intervention with significant gains achieved in two of the four oracy descriptors, i.e., comprehension and coherence for both of which the p values were significant, $p < 0.05$ justifying the use of the ITM method in the L2 classroom as contributory to oral language enhancement. Further, these descriptors are the foundations of not only oracy but also, writing skills in a foreign language. Not only at the level of scores, learners volunteered on the last day of the intervention to share their views about the new L1 in L2 class approach. This finding is supported by the many claims of previous research. Völz (2001) narrated that all the activities connected with using literature in the EFL classroom contributed to the experiment with literature successfully. Similarly, Crook and Schmidt (1991) asserted that the acquisition of literature-based language can be motivated by the combination of student involvement, level of eagerness for the content, and the degree of pleasure.

About the importance of integrating literature in EFL classroom for developing students' oral competency, Akyel (1995) affirmed that when a poetry component was added to the teacher training course, it was found that poetry-centered activities added a new dimension to teaching and created a positive vantage point for the instructors involved. Nasr (2001) reported that using literature was useful in teaching all four skills, regardless of the age and maturity level of the EFL learners. However, Ur (1992) reported that this indicated that more research is needed to ascertain whether the selected poetry was influential in their understanding of the thoughts implicit in the text

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The questions of 'how' and 'how much' of L1 in the L2 classrooms have long haunted foreign language teachers. The plus point is, however, that general agreement prevails on the constructive role of literature in language acquisition. The current study set out to examine the efficacy of Ochi's Interpreting Training Method (ITM) which brings L1 literature into the L2 classroom as an effective learning tool. The literary items used were short stories and poems in the mother tongue to enhance learners' oracy skills. Such inclusions have been supported by earlier literature. The results obtained from the ITM intervention in this study and the evidence of previous studies thus, supports the approach that takes a midway between Grammar translation on the one hand and Communicative language teaching on the other. However, the choice of materials and classroom methods need to be tailor made to suit learner needs.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite much research conducted on the role and importance of literature in language learning, linguists such as Edmonson (1997) question the conceptual usefulness of promoting foreign language literature for classroom teaching. There is scope for more empirical evidence and class-based research to back the findings on using literature for EFL classroom teaching, there is a wide consensus on conducting further empirical research from both the supporters (Shanahan, 1997; Hanauer, 2001) and the opponents (Edmonson, 1997) of the use of literature in EFL instruction that will support the existing studies and promote the use of literature in EFL classrooms. Based on this discourse, the present study recommends a formatted inclusion of L1 literary texts in the EFL classrooms. This would also bring in the offing orienting the prevalent pedagogies and classroom philosophies and gearing them towards a more judicious use of the L1 in the EFL environment.

VIII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The study worked with a reasonable number of 75 participants with gender not being a considered variable. However, it may be more pertinent for future research to take into account factors in addition to gender, such as, data across urban and rural universities in the country, existing proficiency of the participants, intrinsic factors such as motivation to learn, learning strategy preferences etc.

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Mahdi R. Aben Ahmed is an Assistant Professor of English Composition, TESOL and Applied Linguistics at Jubail English Language and Preparatory Year Institute at the Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu, Saudi Arabia. Mahdi has a PhD in English Composition and Applied Linguistics from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and has a Master of Arts in English Studies and Communication; and TESOL Graduate Certificate from Valparaiso University in the U.S. He has extensive experience as a faculty member and administrator, and has played various roles in CEA accreditation process for his current and previous institutions. During his 15 years of experience, Dr. Mahdi has contributed to the field of English education in different general and higher education institutions including Ministry of Education, Community College of Allegheny County, Mohammed Al-Mana College for Health Sciences (MACHS), Arab Open University, and Baheth Company for Research and Medical Sciences. He has also served the English profession in a number

of different capacities such as Head of Preparatory Year Department at MACHS for five years, Director of Baheth Institute for Languages and Training. He serves as CEA accreditation peer reviewer, MEXTESOL Journal reviewer, and as an editorial board member and reviewer for Professional and Academic English (ESP) Journal at IATEFL. He also acts as a TESOL Convention reviewer for Culture and Intercultural Communication Strand. His research interests include English for Specific Purposes (ESP), intercultural business communication, workplace literacy, ELT leadership and Program Evaluation, scientific teaching (STEM), and second language acquisition and teaching.