

# *Yontoen* – the CERD Occasional Papers



Inagural Issue

## **Continuity and Change in English Literature and Literary Studies**

Spring 2004

Centre for Educational Research & Development

## **Yontoen the CERD Occasional Papers**

A Publication of the

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Spring 2004

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ISBN: 99936-19-03-5

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### Editorial note

*Yontoen* is a modest initiative to introduce the concept of *Occasional Papers* in our education system. The inaugural issue of *Yontoen* is dedicated to addressing the critical need to maximize the opportunities for integrating language and literature experiences in the programme of English Studies. Contributed by a highly versatile and well-established educationist, Ms Stella Katrina Smyth of Leicester University, the paper argues the case for the need to accommodate *the language model, the personal growth model, and the cultural model* in a holistic syllabus development.

By way of demonstration, the paper also suggests various possibilities for discussing Shakespeare both as an icon of high culture as well as a compelling model of popular culture. It is hoped that the publication of *Continuity and Change in English Language and Literary Studies* will enable our teachers and students as well as curriculum planners to exploit the possibilities that the marriage of language and literature unveils.

The paper is particularly insightful as we engage ourselves in a comprehensive review of our English curriculum, based largely on the recommendations made in *The Silken Knot*.

We invite our esteemed readers to take up any relevant issue in education and make your contributions to the future issues of *Yontoen*. We hope *Yontoen* will be true to its name – a bringer of light and learning.

Thakur Singh Powdyel  
Director.

**‘The old order changeth yielding place to new’<sup>1</sup> – Continuity and Change in English  
Language and Literary Studies.**

- Stella Smyth, ELTU, University of Leicester, England.

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## **Introduction**

Prevarication is a unique feature of all human linguistic systems; literature is married to ‘the power of a lie’<sup>2</sup> or committed to truth as the art of the imagination ; we can thus say that language and literature are inseparable and that to teach one removed from the other is untenable to the experience of learning and living. The question is : how has literature evolved and redefined itself in accordance with changing reading habits, the concept of a global culture and the dialogue between high and low art?

This article considers the interrelationship between English language and literature teaching in the context of globalization and ensuing approaches to English syllabus design.

### **It does this by first making some distinctions between**

- Literary and non-literary communication
- Literary Studies and Communicative Language Teaching
- Literature as experience and as a language teaching resource.

The possibilities for combining literature with language teaching are explored by looking at three complementary, pedagogical paradigms, namely, Carter and Long’s (1991) ‘Cultural’, ‘Personal Growth’ and ‘Language Model’; since these models offer guidelines for syllabus design. Secondly, I show how they relate to arguments concerning the maintenance of a literary canon, or a more flexible pedagogical interaction between canonical writings, popular literature and non-literary texts.

I conclude with some teaching activities to illustrate how canonical texts, such as Shakespeare, can be presented in the context of popular culture and in the merging of literary and non-literary works to promote linguistic, literary and communicative competence.

## **Literary and non-literary communication**

Literature is language but not all language is literature or literary. The most important feature of literature is that it is untrue; it has no literal or practical purpose, neither can it be seen as a form of behaviour, but as a mirror of human behavior, individual and cultural values. Winddowson (1975) Brumfit (1989) Mc Rae (1991) distinguish between referential and representational reading material’s in the sense that normal language usage refers to a social reality and form the basic of real social engagement. Language is used not only as a means of self expression, but as a practical instrument. Meanings are shared within a speech community. For instance, there is a common single interpretation of a public notice, a circular letter, and a business report.

Conversely there is no preconceived way in which the poem, the dramatic monologue, the novel should be understood by the reader or audience. Actors and personas in poetry and prose mouth all voices, emotions and experiences common to the universal, human predicament. In sum, life,

not language, is idealized in literature and open to multiple interpretations. Carter and Walker (1993, p6) observe that the literary experience, be it emotional, imaginative or intellectual, “is not a direct one, though readers may be able to relate it to direct experience; it is essentially an indirect representational one which readers undergo. The ambiguities and indeterminacies in experience are preserved’.

And surely this is what we wish to promote in the combined study of English language and literature.

Literary texts generally subscribe to the same rules of language use as non-literary texts. However, Crystal (2003) Widdowson (1975) Holten (1997) Carter and Walker point out that it is often the case that writers deviate from linguistic rules, and parody non-literary genres, such as letters, speeches, messages, notices.

In fact, Crystal (2003) provides details of how Shakespeare varies word-order in the interest of poetic rhythm, secondly, how he experiments with morphology and sound effects; thirdly, how he exploits multiple meanings of words through puns and ironic propositions. In his view (ibid, p151) Shakespeare thus offers great scope for developing language awareness because of his innovations in areas such as functional shift, affixation, idiomatic allusiveness and collocation.

Furthermore, this suggests that writers like Shakespeare teach us how to take unprecedented risks with the language and how to be creative and socially ambivalent with words. These are sophisticated communication skills that we emulate as proficient language users in non-literary contexts. They are also worth developing in the classroom through the medium of literature.

However, as Bowers (1992) Cook (1990, 1994) Short (1989) emphasize, figurative language, allusiveness, ambiguity and irony are a feature of non literary communication too.

Carter and McCarthy (1993, p307) maintain that one essential element in the literariness of language is that there is no simple one-to-one correlation between the language used and the meanings provoked.’ They proceed to argue that idioms, metaphors, proverbs and other extensions to what is assumed to be the core of language are frequent across all languages’. More importantly, they are not simply the domain of literary usage.

For instance, Carter and McCarthy (1993) Cook (1990, 1994) McRae (1991) demonstrate that advertisements as texts and advertising language depends on creative language play and on cultural references. Multiple meanings. Ambiguous allusions, morphological creativity to appear in non-literary allusions, morphological creativity do appear in non-literary texts and ordinary speech acts, but as Widdowson (1975, p 36) contends, they are often random features of communication and everyday, referential language. In contrast, these features are deliberately patterned by authors of literary texts. They are self-consciously and craftily chosen to inspire us, or shock us into a new awareness, or rethinking.

Nevertheless, if literary elements appear in non-literary guises, then to concur with Carter and McCarthy (1993) Grams (1993) Crystal (2003) Cook (1990, 1994) Short (1989), (1981), McRae (1991) there seems to be every good reason to enhance the comprehension and enjoyment

of literature by combining literary and non-literary texts in our classrooms. We should do this raise the level of language awareness in both L1 and L2 contexts where literature is being taught.

This is also a good reason to combine a concept of the old order or 'the literary canon' with diverse reading material, so broad indeed that literature can almost be understood as anything that can be read! But I will return to this I point later when I illustrate how Shakespeare may be explored and taught both as a high and low, cultural artifact.

### **Literary Studies and Communicative Language Teaching**

Traditionally, literary studies has been content-based, focusing on rhetorical features of texts, literary history, biographical information and practical criticism techniques, whereby literary scholars employ a range of meta-language to describe stylistic elements such as similes, metaphors metrical details in a literary work.

Longer responses to elements of characterization, plot, theme and the relation between style and writer's executions of an idea have been traditionally assessed in discursive literary essays.

In this content area of literary studies, background information, knowledge of literary conventions and of how a text achieves its effects, are prerequisites that assume high levels of literacy and linguistic competence.

### **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

In the 1970s' a more holistic approach to English language instruction appeared in Britain. Rather than focusing on grammar-translation methods, audio-lingual techniques of language habit formation and memorization, CLT turned instead to an analysis of language as communication, to the central tenet that there are 'rules of use without which rules of using would be useless'.

The principles of CLT can be summarized as

- A commitment to teaching language as discourse and to raising awareness that there is no one-to-one correspondence between form and function, between form and function between the purpose of an utterance and the English exponent that the speaker uses. For example, there are several ways of making an apology, an excuse, a request.
- There must be a purpose for all communication; outside the classroom we exchange ideas and information because of natural opinion and information gaps. Similar gaps should be created in language learning materials and techniques.
- Language skills do not operate in discrete areas, so that listening, speaking, reading and writing need to be integrated and taught simultaneously in a language syllabus.
- The making and finding meanings in speech and writings is more important than accuracy. Therefore, language learners should be engaged in meaningful classroom activities that motivate them to take risks with language.
- Errors are often evidence of language learning and experimentation. (We may wish to consider contrasting the notion of errors with creative, linguistic deviance in

literary sources, where rules are deliberately broken for a particular communicative effect).

- Language is behaviors and is culturally embedded; for this reason, authentic materials should be adapted to different levels of language instruction.
- Grammar is a means, not an end, to communication and has an important place in language learning.
- Learners have the potential to be autonomous and learn language better when motivated by creative, engaging and doable tasks.
- Language learning is a cognitive and affective enterprise.
- Language awareness and recognition of language patterns is just as important as language production.
- Communication is not a straightforward, transactional experience, it is just as important to know what speakers don't mean, to decode layers of meaning in politeness, apologies, common exchanges. This is an important element of communicative competence.

Communicative competence, the goal of CLT, also entails an awareness of register, the relationship between the addressee, appropriate choice of lexis and exponents

- Language behavior is unpredictable, effective communication required negotiation of meaning between listener and speaker, between reader and text. It also involves improvisation and creative response.

In the light of these principles of CLT, literature can be adapted as an authentic resource to teach more interesting and communicatively relevant language.

Not only does literature provide a range of communicative contexts, registers, speaker roles, relationships and language in use, it also embodies both interactional and transactional patterns of communication. In sum, it sets language learning in a broader and richer educational framework.

Maley (1989) Bassnett and Grundy (1993) McRae (1991) claim that literature should be part of complete language learning experience. They show how literature can be used to teach language at different levels.

Indeed, many published materials incorporating literature as a language learning resource promote the principles of CLT. These include:

Adkins & Shackleton (1980), Carter and Long (1987), Collie and Shater (1987), Shackleton 1987, Rossner (1988), Greenwood (1989), McRae and Pantaleoni (1990), Maley (1989), Duff and Maley (1991), McRae (1992), Lazar (1993) Tomlinson (1986). They combine literary texts with creative, communicative tasks.

Similarly, English language course books (Soars (1987 a, 1987, 1989) Bell and Gower (1992, 1999) incorporate poems and short stories in a topic-based approach to learning structures, functions, lexis, and register in a communicative framework.

Additionally, underlying the quest for a balance between the development of language and communication skills, and the acquisition of literary and cultural knowledge, Gower's seminal



work, *past into present* (1990) imparts literary knowledge and literary techniques alongside linguistic tasks based on texts representing core writers, e.g. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Browning in the English literary tradition.

Around the same time as CLT methodology was becoming integral to English language syllabuses (Munby 1978, Nunan 1988, Brumfit and Johnson 1979 Little wood 1981, Widdowsson 1978), literary studies in English universities were changing. English department broadened their curriculum, to accommodate new modules in other *English, Post colonial Literature, Critical Theory, Biography, Travel Writing, Women Writers*, This is just to name a few areas, and to indicate the espousal of broader definitions of literature.

### **The use of literature as a language teaching resource**

Let us now turn to the non-specialist study of literature, to its use as a communicative catalyst in extending students' language proficiency and cultural knowledge.

As Carter and Walker (1993, p5) note, literary texts can be treated in the language lesson in ways which may not be radically different from ways in which any other text is adapted. We will see this later in the variations of cloze exercises on Shakespearean quotations: Moreover, analogies can be drawn between non-literary and literary texts, in the interest of broadening the scope of classroom discussions, exposing students to a variety of genres and sensitizing them not only to examples of literary and non-literary language use, but to the concept of parody and the manner in which authors often juxtapose features of referential works with imaginative writing.

But as Lazar (1993) Collie and Slater (1987) Maley (1989) McRae and Pantaleoni (1990) demonstrate, when using literature as a resource for language learning, for integrating the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing with vocabulary development and a variety of language awareness exercises, such as analyzing cohesion in texts, graphological, phonological, syntactic features, tone, imagery and theme, the literary experience need not be compromised.

The essential principal is to adapt the task to the unique features of the literature in question, and to enable learners to personalize the literary experience.

### **The relation between linguistic and literary competence.**

Using literature within the broader frame of English studies should inculcate sensitivity to the linguistic means by which a text achieves its effects. In this respect, language awareness exercises analyses the choices the writer makes, when using particular words, structures, sound and visual effects. Indeed, linguistic proficiency is a prelude to increasing literary competence. Fostering literary competence will entail drawing students' attention to literary properties in a text, rhetorical features, and background information about the context in which it was written.

Additionally, it will involve consideration not only of what the text says, but what it implies, and what it omits; so that literary competence will eventually hinge on the development of higher order reading skills such as reading for inference, making critical conclusions about the author's intentions and the unity of style, form and message.

The ability to articulate and comment on the experience in the text – the reader’s imaginative transference in relating literary themes to other situations, making analogies and distinctions with other writings-are further aspects of literary competence.

Furthermore, literary competence involves an awareness of particular literary styles and conventions. This can be developed by extending learners’ exposure to texts representing different literary periods and genres.

In effect, linguistic competence facilitates literary competence but does not necessarily create it. Not all L1 or L2 readers share the same depth of response or ability to expound on the theme and methods of its execution in a literary work.

Moreover Brumfit (1989, p 27) notes that literary competence implies a degree of familiarity with particular cultural conventions. Similarly, for learners of English as a foreign or second language, a range of non-literary sources in English, including newspaper articles and advertisements, require cultural knowledge of the political social and economic allusions in the writing.

Let us now look at how Carter and Long’s (1991) three different models for the teaching of literature correspond to principles of CLT, to overt changes in lifestyles and communications systems, and thirdly to the concept of English as a broader subject of inquiry.

### **Three interrelated models for planning an English language and literary studies syllabus.**

Carter and Long (1991) outline three models for teaching literature, namely: ‘The language Model’, ‘the Personal Growth Model’ and ‘The Cultural Model’.

The first uses literature in a language-centered way. The teacher’s linguistic analysis of literary texts precedes the formulation of tasks designed to examine features of literary style, register, syntax, tense patterns, cohesive devices and the bottom-up processing of literary discourse. We could say this is heavily influenced by the insights of stylistics (Widdowson 1975). But a frequent criticism of a purely stylistic analysis is that it does not accommodate the cultural mindset of either the reader or the cultural conditions in which the text was produced.

By contrast, ‘the Personal Growth Model’ focuses on the reader turning into the experience and feelings of a text before carrying out a close analysis of its language and organization.

It promotes strategies whereby the learner can respond emotionally to the literature, engage with it by forming a personal relationship with the characters, the situation or experience it communicates. We can relate this to the insights of reader-response theory, where the reader enters into a partnership with the text and recreates its meaning in accordance with his or her value system, experiences and cultural context.

In this sense, we might be looking at how an extract or quotation from Shakespeare can be transposed to a different time and place, how the reader can identify with the characters and find contemporary, cultural parallels for the conflicts, issues or moral dilemmas.

Thirdly the 'Cultural Model' subdivides into a definition of literature as a timeless artifact and as a cultural commodity like any other piece of writing. As a prime linguistic heritage, it consists of the clearest, most interesting, most profound and original thoughts expressed in English.

This understanding of the canon includes some of the mainstream literary writing in English that Eliot (1948) that Eliot (1948), Lavis (1948), Bloom (1994) would argue represents some of the most profound thoughts in the English language in the best of styles.

Writers such as Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, are seen as representing High English Culture and the greatness of the English literary tradition. Moreover, the English canon depends on the classification of literary periods such as the English Renaissance, the Restoration, The Romantic Age and of selecting the best representatives of these periods and corresponding literary genres.

However, Carter and Long's (1991)' Cultural Model' does not imply that an English language and literary studies syllabus should be confined to mainstream texts produced in a British context, or dominated by the concept of Literature as High Art. Indeed, how we value literature may say more about our value system rather than the values in a text. Therefore, linking a syllabus to the canon, or deviating from it forces us to reconsider our priorities in selecting and teaching Literature in incorrigibly plural" global contexts.

Within the 'Cultural Model', We can also include the notion that all Literature belongs to a socio-political context. All writing is social in that it shares and arises from a common language; writers are cultural ciphers. They are often but not solely a window into times and places and the lifestyles of their lifetime.

A Sean O'Casey (reprinted in O'Riordan 1984), p76) has so aptly expressed.

*What we called culture isn't just the theatre here, the other arts there, music yonder; culture is the life we live...culture is expressed, shown in the schools where we are taught, the homes where we live, the factories and fields where we work, the street we walk through, the simple things we use when we eat and drink, and the packages that carry them safely into our homes, the very bindings on the books we read, the*

Classifying some Literature as High Art would suggest that texts by Shakespeare, Austen, Wilde and other literary classics are of similar status to works by famous classical music composers, such as Mozart or Beethoven, and internationally renowned paintings by artists like Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, who had all become invaluable cultural icons in the western artistic heritage.

"The complete quote is "World is saddened than we fancy it. World is crazier and more of it than we think, incorrigibly plural", as taken from Louis MacNiece's poem. Show, reprinted on p 230 of The Oxford Short Book of Poems, (1985), edited by p.J. Kavanagh and J. Michie. Oxford.

*Clothes we wear, the way we live and move and have our being. It is far more than books on our shelves and pictures in our galleries; it is all that is within us, all without, coloring all our activities.*

Bearing this in mind, we should also be looking for opportunities to find cultural similarities and differences between the world of literary texts and the worlds of students, the links, for example,

between some of the themes of Shakespeare, some of the stories in his plays and Bhutanese writers.

### **How can these three models be reflected in approaches to designing an English language and literature syllabus that accommodates the impact of globalization?**

Today, expanding globalization and the post-modern focus on pastiche and inter-textuality in popular modes of communication, such as films, the media and marketing contexts, has meant that students require exposure to Shakespeare and the literary canon to understand the humour, impact and cultural associations of contemporary discourses. Literature has become branded in new modes of literacy that transcend historical, national and cultural boundaries.

As Ferguson (2003) has noted, English is entrenched as the global lingua franca. Western philosophy, human rights and economic theories are regenerated in communicative channels such as Hollywood films, the internet, trade and flexible transport systems; all of which have promoted English in all its variations, in traditional and contemporary genres.

Consequently, the impact of the global village, the movement of people and ideas across nations, the sharing of economic and political concepts and the spread of western consumerism have created a pedagogical need to inform and expose students to Shakespeare and other canonical writers' works; because as images, logos, decontextualized quotations, disembodied English voices in a tidal wave of multicultural and media influences, they are an important element of modern communication.

Once more, we may observe a breach between that of writing literary texts and how that writing comes to be shared, used or appreciated as societies evolve in all directions.

The writings of 'great' authors be it in extracts, abridged or unadulterated forms, may therefore serve as flight tickets from the classroom in to the world of business, travel and the workplace; they are at the intellectual interface between the past and the present.

While not suggesting that serious literary study of Shakespeare is now redundant or that we can reduce either his genius or our appreciation of his poetry to random extracts, the following activities suggest ways of exposing learners whose first language is not English to some of the concepts, characters, linguistic features of both the high and low cultural aspects of his writings.

They are included in the article primarily as samples of what can be selected, adapted and used to develop awareness of language at play and the meaning of literary connections across time and national boundaries.

In short, the activities exemplify ways in which Shakespeare can be adapted as a resource for learning about language and culture.

### **Some classroom activities on Shakespeare**

These activities are included as task types rather than in any particular teaching order; the principle of each activity could be focused on working with one particular play, or similar exercises could be designed to focus on a variety of Shakespeare's plays. They are geared for students whose language level is upper intermediate or above. They integrate skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and seek to foster linguistic, communicative and literary competence in different degrees.

Before choosing the activities or designing similar ones, it may be useful to reflect on ways in which a complete play, a longer or shorter Shakespearean extract could either be used on its own or combined with advertisements, the lyrics of a pop song, a screenplay, newspaper headlines to:

- Teach good citizenship
- Help students form relationships with imaginary
- Characters and to identify with their experience
- Involve students in the story of the play.
- Teach aspects of the cultural setting of the play and how it relates to learners' culture.
- Light up or lighten up the poetry of Shakespeare.
- Raise learners' awareness of figurative language, rhyme, rhyme, syntactical relations, and punctuation.
- Integrate listening, speaking reading and writing skills.
- Raise moral questions.
- Develop students' awareness of the functions of different genres, newspaper articles, advertisements, comic, pop songs and the way Shakespeare is alluded to in a variety of discourses and products.

In this regard, increase students' understanding of the way Shakespeare can be seen as a bridge between high and low culture, through examples of inter-textuality.

### **ACTIVITY ONE**

**Objective :** This activity engages learners in the idea that art is given value by society but those values may change, Therefore we see writers being reappraised posthumously, We see the canon being challenged, we see Shakespeare becoming part of popular culture as we as retaining his literary status. Secondly, the activity exploits a natural information gap in eliciting background knowledge on Shakespeare; the fluency work or discussion involved students producing language about an open-ended topic and exercising thinking as well as language skills.

#### **Discussion questions for students:**

1. In your opinion which living or dead artist representing any of the Arts, such as music, painting, literature is the greatest. Why? Could this person be turned into a tourist attraction for foreigners visiting Bhutan? Why/why not?
2. Why do you think Shakespeare is important for tourism in Britain?
3. Why is Literature important in Bhutan?
4. What do you know about William Shakespeare, how many sub-topics can be divided into, can you put something under each heading?

5. How has Shakespeare affected the English Language? Do you have any words or quotations that he invented?

## **ACTIVITY TWO**

Objectives: Learners have to contextualize language, negotiate meanings, in this sense they may have to decide whether to interpret the quotation literally or metaphorically when negotiating matches with other learners they are therefore

Exercising interactional skills with the short texts and with each other. Some quotations could be matched with more than one item (a to s below) and this is likely to make the discussion more animated. The activity takes Elizabethan poetry and transposes it to a modern variety of spoken and written statements.

Students often memorize the quotations quite naturally; just as many phrases and particular vocabulary items that Shakespeare invented constitute the linguistic repertoire of native English speakers who may not realize where they originated. Moreover, this activity highlights the fact that de-contextualized quotations adopt meanings of their own which can then be used to express a variety of language functions. Learners and teachers may wish to consider the extent to which a quotation needs to be read as part of an extended piece of discourse to be fully comprehended. They can see how an example of figurative language, such as 'tis an unwedded garden that grows to seed', can be understood in a literal way by matching it with (a) or interpreted metaphorically by matching it with (q)

This activity should also develop some awareness of irony, and this is why quotations 8 and 12 have been selected. Alternatively, students and teachers may wish to consider how a quotation can become a complete text and/or how the meaning can be complemented with a range of visuals and intonation patterns.

### **Selection of de-contextualized quotations taken from a Variety of Shakespeare's plays:**

In small groups, students discuss which quotation they could use for the different purposes listed in a to s:

- a) to sell weed-killer
- b) a customer persuading a shopkeeper to lower his price
- c) the shopkeeper refusing to lower his prices or to give any discount
- d) to describe a divorce
- e) as a protest against capital punishment
- f) two parents wondering why the son they loved has committed a terrible crime
- g) to insult somebody
- h) to compliment somebody
- i) to express disappointment when your favorite team has lost an important match
- j) to advertise a credit card
- k) to insert in to a monarch, prime minister or president's speech in a national emergency
- l) as a caption for a new, popular hairstyle
- m) as a description of a famous person
- n) as a poster for cheap airline tickets

- o) as a newspaper comment on a revolution
  - p) accepting a mistake
  - q) a teacher scolding a lazy pupil for not using his brain
  - r) a soldier giving an order in time of war
  - s) to encourage somebody to take a sleeping tablet.
- 1) "Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them" (*Twelfth Night*)
  - 2) We have seen better days (*As you like it*, 11)
  - 3) 'Tis true that we are in great danger; the grater therefore should our courage be" (*Henry V*, IV I.,I)
  - 4) Society is no comfort to one not sociable'. (*Cymbeline*, IV.ii. 12)
  - 5) The fashion is the fashion (*Much Ado about Nothing*, III.iii.122)
  - 6) 'Tis an unwedded garden that goes to seed. Things rank and gross un nature possess it merely' (*Hamlet*, I.II 135)
  - 7) Neither a borrow nor a lender be' (*Hamlet*)
  - 8) Parting of such sweet sorrow' (*Romeo and Juliet*)
  - 9) Dream on, dream on' (*Richard III*, V.iii.172)
  - 10) How many ages hence  
Shall this out lofty scene be acted over' In states unborn and accents yet unknown;  
(*from Julius Caesar*)
  - 11) What done cannot be undone' (*Macbeth*, V.a.71)
  - 12) We are not the first  
Who will best meaning have incurred the worst' (*King Lear*, V,.iii.4)
  - 13) Sell when you can' (*As you like it*, 111.iv.75)
  - 14) Friend or brother  
He forfeits his own head that spills another' (*Timon of Athens*, iii.v.87)
  - 15) Off with his head' (*Richard III*, 111 iv 75)
  - 16) I do desire we may be better strangers' (*As you like it* 111.ii.256)
  - 17) 'Thy that laugh win' (*Othello*, iv,i.124)
  - 18) 'Men of few words are the best mean' (*Henry V*, 111.ii.37)
  - 19) 'Travelers must be content'. (*As you Like it* 11.iv,17)

### ACTIVITY THREE

**Students insert the missing words in each quotation (the words that would be omitted have e been underlined)**

**Objective:** Depending on which words the teacher chooses to omit in each quotation, this variation on a standard cloze exercise can sensitize students to aspects of creative language use in Shakespeare, such as morphological innovations, unusual syntactic patterns puns, collocation, metaphors and similes. Students can be given a choice of words to be inserted in each quotation, or the exercise can be made more difficult by asking them to produce the missing words. Secondly, it can be used to check students' knowledge of people and events in the particular plays that they are studying, for instance in (2) where the quotation includes the name Brutus.

By focusing on the development of both linguistic and literary competence, the activity can also be a revision exercise, checking retention and understanding of quotations that are very significant in the overall development of the play's theme.

1 O brave new world

**That has such people in't!**

**(The Tempest, v.i.183)**

Which of the following words is the missing one? And why?

- (i) **Inventions**
- (ii) **Animals**
- (iii) **People**

All these nouns would fit grammatically, but the point is to elicit the different implications of a new type of society, new species (for example cloned animals) and new technology (inventions).

2. Men at some time are masters of their fates:  
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

**(Julius Caesar, 1,ii.139)**

- (i) Wives
- (ii) Fates
- (iii) Dogs

The word masters collocates with wives and dogs, but the focus on 'fates' encourages students to look at the cohesive link between 'fates' and the expression, 'in our stars'.

3. Our doubts are traitors  
And make us lose the good we oft might win  
By fearing to attempt

**(Measure for Measure, 1. iv.77)**

- (i) **good**
- (ii) **traits**
- (iii) **traitors**

'Good' can be eliminated as a choice because to insert it would contradict the logic in the second line. This encourages learners to process the quotation as a chunk of discourse. Traits (meaning characteristics) would fit grammatically, so the exercise highlights the way Shakespeare has created a metaphor, by choosing a people noun- 'traitors.'



4. There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so  
(Hamlet, 11. ii.253)

Which of the following words is the missing one? And why?

- (i) evil
- (ii) goodness
- (iii) thinking

The logic of this utterance rests in the choice of a neutral abstract noun – ‘thinking’

- 5 The end of war’s uncertain

**(Ciruilanus V.iii.141)**

Which of the following words is the missing one? And Why?

- (i) certain
- (ii) uncertain
- (iii) death

Grammatically, any of these words would fit, so discussion might follow on why the outcome of was can either be seen as certain or uncertain and why it is reasonable to assume that in either case it leads to death.

- 6. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners  
(Othello, 1.iii.315)**

Which of the following words is the missing one? And why?

- (i) my**
- (ii) we**
- (iii) our**

Grammatically, only the possessive adjective; our’ will fit here. Learners can also examine the effect of homonyms (are/our) and repetition in this proposition.

7. That we would do  
We should do when we would for this would changes and hath abatements and delays as many as there are tongue, are hands, are accidents

**(Hamlet, iv. ii.118)**

Which of the following words is the missing one? And why?

- (i) will**
- (ii) would**
- (iii) intention**

The omitted word “would” draws attention to Shakespeare’s inventiveness in using the modal verb ‘would’ as a noun and the pleasing word effects of this. Technically, ‘will’ and ‘intention’ would also fit, but would reduce the poetic effect. Variations on the cloze exercise can thus be adapted to focusing on the development of both linguistic and literary competence.

An alternative task would be to select quotations students have read in the context of a longer extract, or the whole play. Replace certain words and ask students to identify the single words that are not Shakespeare’s in each modified quotation which will still make sense, but its meaning will have altered. Students can then compare the meaning of the original and the modified version of each quotation. Journalists often play with words in quotations to achieve similar effects, so this is quite an authentic reading task.

In fact, this activity draws attention to spelling, the importance of particular words or word forms in changing the message, the importance of applying literacy schema to understand why a Shakespearean phrase might be altered to refer to a contemporary situation in the news etc.

Consider the quotation below:

### **Original quotation**

*A little more than kin, and less than kind*  
**(Hamlet 1, ii,65)**

### **Change to**

*A little more than King and less than kind.*

### **Original quotation**

Tis not the many oaths that make the true  
***But the plain single vow that is vowed true***

**(Alls Well That ends Well IV, ii. 21,)**

## ACTIVITY FOUR

**Objective:** Students explore a central conflict in a key Shakespearean scene that they have not experienced before, and appropriate it personally through drama activities. The three preliminary questions allow them to engage with the issues in the extract, along the lines of Carter and Long's 'Personal Growth Model'

**Students are asked questions about names and their implications before doing the two progressive role plays on Rameo and Juliet.**

Why are name important?

Would you like to change any pat of your name”

When do people change their name?

**Example of a role-play based on an adaptation of Romeo and Juliet: the role card is open-ended in the sense that it allows learners to insert familiar cultural details about the setting, choice of register and cultural background of the characters.**

**Your name is R. You are a handsome criminal n the run. You have just me a beautiful girl; you’ve followed her to her home, a high building on the other side of a dangerous city. If the guards outside K’s house find you, they will kill because they hate the look of you and despise you family’s name and reputation. You climb into the grounds. I is high above in a lighted room, talking to herself, first she is embarrassed when she sees you, then she talks to you.**

In groups of three, students:

- choose type of building,
- speculate on the crime Romeo has committed, the reason why the city is dangerous, the full names of R and J, (they can be turned into popular male and female names in Bhutan),
- speculate on what sort of guards are outside the window,
- imagine what the ground s are like,
- think a what Romeo’s family are known for,
- imagine what Romeo looks like,
- speculate on what Juliet’s age and appearance is,
- Imagine how Romeo will get Juliet’s attention.
- Decide what kind of body language each character will use, and their attitude: nervous, frightened, friendly, unfriendly, surprised, and aggressive.

Students can present brief notes outlining their assumptions about these points, before developing the cued dialogue in pairs, with a director in each group

### **Example of student role cards (cues)**

#### **ROMEO**

- **Greet Juliet**

- Tell her your family doesn't matter; you'll do anything for her. Try and persuade her to run away with you.

#### **JULIET**

- Respond to Romeo, warn him what your father will do to you both if he catches you.

#### **ROMEO**

- Force Juliet to make a promise that she will go away with you

#### **JULIET**

- Agree to Romeo's demands

This is a communicative exercise since the dialogue has a purpose, its language and register is unpredictable; students focus on fluency, on creating the dramatic tension and on completing the task. The ensuing performances fill gaps about each pair's interpretation of the characters and the background situation. These enactments should also provide interesting insights into the way learners insert details from their own culture to develop the scene.

### **ACTIVITY FIVE**

**Objectives :** This activity follows naturally from activity four and is aimed at introducing students to the overall meaning of the extract. The reformulation exercise is a means of decoding the language of Shakespeare and of comparing a literary and non-literary style of communication. The extract for this kind of activity should be intrinsic to the play's overall methods of characterization, plot development, and main conflict; so even though we are primarily using it as a language resource, we are adhering to aspects of the literary experience and acknowledging literary design.

Students match the modern English sentences with particular parts of the extract. This activity could be made more complex if the reformulated items were not presented in the same order as the original meanings in the text, or if only a small number of reformulated items is given, so that other parts of the extract remain unmatched.

- 1 O Romeo, Romeo, why are you called Romeo?
- 2 Deny your heritage and give up your family name or if you won't tell me you love me and I will give up my name and family.
- 3 Romeo (aside) shall I listen or speak now?
- 4 It's only your name and the fact that you come from a family that my family hates. You are more important than your family or your family name.
- 5 Give up your name and have me!
- 6 What man is hiding outside, in the dark, and has been talking to myself?
- 7 I've only heard the man speak less than a 100 words but I recognize his voice.
- 8 How did you get inside this orchard?

- 9 The orchard walls are very high and if my father's guards find you they will like you because you are a family enemy.  
10 Nothing can stop a person in love from doing what he wants to do  
11 I am more concerned about an angry look from you than your father's guards attacking me with 20 swords

**Romeo and Juliet Act II scene 1 (as printed in Favorite Shakespeare: Classic FM, edited by John Bunning PP 56-58)**

JULIET

(not knowing Romeo hears her)

*O Romeo, Romeo, where for art thou Romeo?  
Deny the father and refuse thy name  
Or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,  
And I will no longer be a Capulet.*

ROMEO

(aside)

*Shall I hear more or shall I speak or this?*

JULIET

*Tis but thy name that is my enemy.  
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.  
What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot, Nor arm,  
nor face, Nor any other part . Belonging to a man.  
O, b some other Name! What is in a name?  
That which we call a rose. By any  
Other word would smell as sweet.  
So Romeo would, were he  
not Romeo called, Retain that dear perfection  
which he owes without that title. Romeo,  
doff thy name,*

*And for thy name-which is no part of thee.  
Take all myself.*

ROMEO

(to Juliet)

I take thee at thy word. Call me but love and I'll be newly baptized. Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET

What man art thou that, thus be screened in night,

So stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO

By a name

I know not how to tell thee who I am.

My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself

Because it is an enemy to thee.

Had I it written. I would tear the word.

JULIET

My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words

Of my tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.,

Art thou not Romeo , and a Montague?

ROMEO

Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.

JULIET

How cam'st thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?

The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,

And the place death, considering who thou art,

If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO

With love's light wings did I o'er perch these walls,

For strong limits cannot hold love out,

And what love can do, that dares love attempt.

Therefore thy Kinsmen are no stop to me.

JULIET

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

ROMEO

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye

Than twenty of their swords. Look thou but sweet,

And I am proof against their enmity.

#### ACTIVITY SIX

Objective : Assimilating and activating Shakespearean language by using it to express particular functions, such as making a request, a promise, a denial, a comment, a compliment. This builds on the learning outcomes of activities three, four and five.

Consequently, the role play engages students in using figurative language as a natural means of communication. Students stay in the same pairs, but this time find ways of inserting some of

Shakespeare' language into their ole plays; they can insert the quotations in any part of their conversation but must use them all in a meaningful way.

The can also swap some of the lines, so that Romeo does not have to use the same quotations, as in the extract, for example Romeo could say, 'my ears have yet not drunk a hundred words of thy tongue's uttering.'

**Do the role-play again-insert the following quotations in your conversation. Negotiate who will say them and when.**

- My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words of thy tongues' uttering
- That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet
- With love's light wings did I oerperch these walls for stony limits cannot hold love out..
- I am proof against their enmity.

**Some further activities on the Romeo and Juliet balcony scene:**

### **Linguistic competence**

- a) Find examples of conditionals. Write them as more direct grammatical sentences, insert them into the lines, how does this affect the sound and imagery?
- b) Which words refer to different parts of the body? Why do you think Shakespeare uses this vocabulary in the extract?
- c) What comparison does Juliet make between a family name and a rose?
- d) What does Romeo call Juliet, why do you think he uses this words? What other complimentary words or phrases could he have chosen instead?

### **Literary competence**

- a) How does Juliet indicate that she had fallen in love with Romeo?
- b) How old do you think Romeo and Juliet are? Why?
- c) How old do you think Romeo and Juliet are? Why?
- d) What are some of the differences between Romeo and Juliet's characters here?
- e) Why do you think the scene opens with Juliet talking to herself
- f) Which parts of this scene are the most tense? Why?

### **Cultural Awareness**

- g) What word would you use to praise a girl like Juliet? A man like Romeo?

### **Changing the addresser and addressee, relationship, role and register.**

- Imagine these are two friends in the twenty-first century, not lovers: They can be male or female friends in a dangerous situation. Without altering the sequence of events in the extract, what words and details concerning the setting in this piece,

will you change to indicate that this is no longer a romantic relationship between two people addressing each other, but that the friendships is very strong so that R is prepared to visit J in the middle of the night and to risk death.

**Prepare to act out the new scene – 2 students + one director in each group**

Follow up: Choose any song (if possible the music and the text) and write a short account of why you think it could be compared with this scene, or played as background music, if you were filming your new scene.

**Bridging the old and the new in terms of objectives for an English Language and Literary Studies Syllabus.**

In the light of what I have discussed about the interrelation between literature language and culture, an English Language and Literary Studies Syllabus might include:

- a) Studying a variety of literary genres namely poetry, short stories, extracts from novels and plays alongside non-literary texts and a selection of audio-visual materials and films.
- b) Some biographical information about the authors as a means of placing the writing in the English literary tradition, and broadening students' general knowledge about the historical, political and economic background of literary works.
- c) Exploring the concept of inter-textuality and textual comparisons; for instance the retelling of stories in contrasting genres, the way writers borrow quotations, characters, plots from previous literature or sources. Examining how quotations and literary works adopt new meanings in new contexts.
- d) Developing awareness of how language works in literary and non-literary texts and acquiring critical reading skills for processing all kinds of discourse
- e) Transposing themes to parallel circumstances, cultural contexts and individual experience.

Corresponding discussion on these ideas and suggestions for their implementation in Bhutanese schools can be found in *The Silken Knot* (2002, pp 64-68)

Additionally, Rodrigues and Badaczewski (1975: pp5-11) provide some alternative approaches for designing a literary syllabus. They are

- i) Organization by genre
- ii) Organization by chronology
- iii) organization by topic
- iv) organization for rhetorical awareness-using texts to develop oral and writing communication skills, for instance students might study the craft



- of speech making by examining Mark Antony's oratory in Shakespeare's play, *Julius Caesar*, and comparing it with a speech by a contemporary political leader
- v) the study of a single text in depth, such as a novel.
- vi) Organization by correlation, for instance studying literary texts in an interdisciplinary manner, where students might learn about the history and geography of the Roman empire by studying Shakespeare's Roman plays.

All of these options for syllabus design reflect different levels of interaction with the canon" and opportunities for combining literature with the development of literary, general knowledge and language teaching.

## Conclusion

This article has linked the rationale for integrating literature and language teaching to designing a syllabus that could accommodate 'the Language Model', 'the Personal Growth Model' and 'the Cultural Model' in a complementary framework. In a smaller way, it has suggested some activities for fostering linguistic, literary and communicative competence when working with Shakespeare.

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