

## Teaching language through literature: an ELT based study

Enseñanza del lenguaje a través de la literatura: un estudio basado en ELT

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aims to: firstly, highlight the effectiveness of using literature in ELT classes in an interesting and innovative manner in Pakistan; secondly, to help language teachers develop a thoughtful and principled approach to using literature in the language classroom; thirdly, to provide teachers with the tools for developing their own classroom materials and for using these materials in a way that is relevant to their learners' needs. This paper explores the text of 'Good Bye Mr. Chips', a famous novel by James Hilton (1934) for teaching at Intermediate level. For the analysis of data, insights are taken from the works of Dubin & Olshtain (1977), Collie & Slater (1987) and Robinette. B. W (1978). It was found that the activities like role plays and a lot of pair work and group work not only caused reduction in anxiety level of students but also increased their level of interest and enthusiasm. It also concluded that for facilitating language teaching and learning, formation of a variety of activities based on learners' needs from carefully and properly selected texts is unavoidable. The future researchers can exploit similar literary texts following the same frameworks for language teaching purposes.

**Keywords:** ELT, Language Skills, English Literature, Pakistani ELT Classroom, Innovation

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Recibido: 24/01/2019 Aceptado: 16/04/2019

## RESUMEN

El presente estudio tiene como objetivo: en primer lugar, destacar la eficacia del uso de la literatura en las clases de ELT de una manera interesante e innovadora en Pakistán; en segundo lugar, ayudar a los profesores de idiomas a desarrollar un enfoque reflexivo y basado en principios para utilizar la literatura en el aula de idiomas; tercero, proporcionar a los maestros las herramientas para desarrollar sus propios materiales de clase y para usar estos materiales de una manera que sea relevante para las necesidades de sus alumnos. Este artículo explora el texto de "Good Bye Mr. Chips", una famosa novela de James Hilton (1934) para la enseñanza a nivel intermedio. Para el análisis de los datos, se toman ideas de los trabajos de Dubin y Olshtain (1977), Collie y Slater (1987) y Robinette. B. W (1978). Se descubrió que actividades como juegos de roles y mucho trabajo en pareja y en grupo no solo redujeron el nivel de ansiedad de los estudiantes sino que también aumentaron su nivel de interés y entusiasmo. También concluyó que para facilitar la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de idiomas, es inevitable la formación de una variedad de actividades basadas en las necesidades de los alumnos a partir de textos cuidadosamente seleccionados. Los futuros investigadores pueden explotar textos literarios similares siguiendo los mismos marcos para la enseñanza de idiomas.

**Palabras clave:** ELT, habilidades lingüísticas, literatura inglesa, aula de ELT paquistaní, innovación

## Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that literature can be interesting and motivating for English language learners and can be used to prompt the responses of students studying language skills. It helps to stimulate the imagination of the learners, increase their comprehension and stimulate discussions. It helps students to get involved in the activities.

Communicative Language Teaching also recommends the use of literary text for language teaching. Learners can be easily engaged in the process of meaning production by the successful use of communicative approaches of language and the conversational nature of literary text can be greatly helpful in this regard. (Kramsch, 1993).

An experienced professional language teacher always prefers to adopt the eclectic approach, deciding on the most suitable techniques and applying the most appropriate methodology for that learner's specific objectives, learning style and context.

Use of literary text in language classrooms is also recommended by the present study. It is demonstrated that the major skills as well as different sub- skills of the learners can be used in language class effectively by using literary texts specifically novels. Some practical suggestions for teaching language through literature have also been provided through this study.

## Background of the Study

Not so many years ago, there seemed to be a decisive movement against literature in the English as a foreign language (EFL). Classroom literature was thought to be containing static, convoluted kind of language, for removed from the utterances of daily communication. Explanation of finer literary points was a very time consuming process. It was also considered to carry undesirable freight of cultural connotations. Dubin & Olshtain (1977) declared literature unsuitable for language teaching classes where only one skill is focused in one activity and the learners are

least motivated to learn anything. Rather they recommended Grammar Translation Method (GTM) as the most apt way for teaching literature.

Learners are introduced to literature in our (Pakistani) classrooms in a very traditional manner. The students sit in rows facing the teacher. The teacher stands near a blackboard and a desk. The desk is often an elevated podium to allow a better view of the whole class. From this position, the teacher is involved most of the time, in delivering a formal and frontal lecture. The students have very little opportunity of moving around in the classroom. They remain seated in their places for most of the lesson. Some have the advantage of seeing and hearing the teacher simply because they are lucky enough to set up front, others find it much more difficult to concentrate or feel involved in any real sense. In a traditional classroom a lot of teaching is carried out every minute of the lesson, but much less learning is possible. The teacher lectures on and the students listen passively. There is little interaction between teacher and learners.

Too many language classes have spent quantities of time on repeating sentence without giving enough consideration whether or not the meaning of the message was vital enough to students' interests to have mattered to them in the least. Parrots too can listen and repeat, but human beings can listen, understand, and continue to create and generate sentences of their own. The distance between practicing language substance in a language classroom and using a new language in real life situations is a vast no man's land which some never manage to cross.

### Significance of the Study

In the last decade particularly, there has been an upsurge of interest in how literature can be used with the language learner. This research explores the text of 'Good Bye Mr. Chips', a famous novel by James Hilton (1934) which has been a permanent component of the Intermediate Syllabus in Punjab for almost last five decades. This study works to improve the quality of English Language Teaching (ELT) and learning in Pakistan. It demonstrates the effectiveness of the use of literary texts especially novels in language classes for developing all the four language skills if learners in interesting and innovative manner. The exercises and activities that are based on the literary texts help the teachers in bringing about changes in conventional setup of ELT classes in Pakistan. The relationship has been explored in order to enhance effective teaching and learning of Literature and English Language that would ultimately contribute immensely in addressing the seeming poor academic performance in the context of Pakistani ELT classroom.

### Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the benefits of using literature in teaching language skills and to develop the appropriate classroom activities for facilitating language teaching and learning
- To broaden students' horizons by giving them a knowledge of the classics of literature
- To improve student's general cultural awareness
- To develop their appreciation of literature and to stimulate students' creative and literary imagination
- To add to students' knowledge of the world at large and to expose students to masterpieces in English literature as an educative experience

### Literature Review

Many critics raise objections against the use of literature in language classrooms. But researchers have established logical understandings of the use of literature in language learning classrooms. They focused that literature helps students in learning language skills in a natural way and meaningful contexts. A profound range of vocabulary, dialogues and prose, introduced through the literary texts can be used to prepare interesting activities in language classrooms. Different critics and researchers have conducted researches on this issue and gave strong points in favor of the inclusion of literature in teaching language skills.

Povey (1972) observed that literature helps to integrate all language skills. It is because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax. Practice in contextualized language provides ample insight and improves students' writing skills by familiarization with various features of writing style such as the formation and function of sentences, structural variation, coherence and cohesion. Brumfit and Carter (1987) proposed the point that the literary texts are authentic texts which can be real and can be responded directly. Such a text grips the Students' imagination is gripped by such a text and scopes for the examination of language is also offered.

Lazar (1990) provided various approaches for using novel in language-learning classrooms. He discussed various reasons for using novel for teaching language. The main reasons explored are developing students' interests, addressing to complex situations and adult dilemmas, cultural enrichment, need analysis. He explains that 'sense-making activities' must be employed in a language classroom. For example, the teacher must encourage the students to make predictions, draw inferences, and test out their hypotheses as they read. By doing so, a teacher must encourage their capacity for 'making meanings' in English. This struggle leads to increasing language awareness among learners. He further mentioned some activities for effectively using novel in teaching English language, such as problem and solution analysis, making them culturally enrich by introducing them to a foreign culture, etc.

Kramersch (1993:131) insists that "opportunities for the dialogic negotiation of meaning" can also be provided to the learners through literary texts. She further observes that literary text gives students "access to a world of attitudes and values, collective imaginings and historical frames of reference that constitute the memory of a people or speech community" (Kramersch, 1993:175). Language cannot be taught without context so literature provides context and authentic materials. The learners need authentic materials and literature can be beneficial resource for such materials.

Literature is helpful to develop interpretative abilities of the students. Lazar (1993: 19) says, "Literature is a particularly good source for developing students' abilities to infer meaning and to make interpretations. This is because literary texts are often rich in multiple levels of meaning, and demand that the reader/learner is actively involved in 'teasing out' the unstated implications and assumptions of the text."

Obediat (1997) discussed the efficacy of using novels as resource in a language classroom, literature enables learners to acquire a native-like competence, to find a platform to voice their ideas, to be familiar with the idiomatic expressions, to be familiar with old and modern English, and to be critical, logical and creative.

Butler (2002) has further accentuated the need for integrating language and literature in his article Language through literature through Language: An Action Research Report on the English 100 Course at the University of North West. Pulverness (2003) offered valuable advice for teachers to make learning English language a joyful journey. In order to draw the attention of students, teachers are expected to pay a lot of attention to pre-reading tasks, icebreakers etc. Students can be encouraged to modify the texts, change the ending etc. using their creativity, creativity etc. Murat (2005) speaks of the semiotic elements i.e. signifier and the signified, in literature which the students can learn while studying a poem (according to T. S. Eliot a poem refers to any literary piece of writing). Poems are actually wired signs which are a combination of two constituents: signifier and the signified, so says Hiller (1983) as seen in Murat (2005). Murat precedes his study with stating the benefits of different literary genres like drama, short story, novel and particularly poetry. Hismanoglu (2005) argued that for teaching both language areas (vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) and basic language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) the use of literature can be a popular technique. He provided some reasons for using literature in teaching English by quoting Collie and Slater (1990: 3). These are valuable authentic material, cultural enhancement, language enrichment, and personal involvement. Duff and Maley (2007) also proposed easy tasks to motivate the interest of students. One should move gradually from easy tasks to difficult tasks. Teachers can completely exploit the material by conducting brainstorming sessions, pre-reading tasks etc. for the benefit of students.

Hussein and Ja'afar (2009) explored the effectiveness of using novel in teaching English as a foreign language. They suggested that for developing and enhancing the language skills novel plays the vital role. The basic reason might be because the full range and variety of English language is presented in novels with real examples of writing skill. They maintained that for students, a novel has two main objectives. First, it generates interest in students. Second, the novel is a rich source of vocabulary and practical grammatical structures. They explored reasons for using literature as a resource in teaching English language. They studied 60 students while aiming at teaching some extracts from the novel "Hard Times". Their purpose was to highlight importance of teaching novel from a linguistic point of view. They concluded their test results by declaring that if novel is used properly, it can be greatly fruitful in teaching English language.

Khatib & Rahimi (2012) also persuade that literature can be the suitable material for ELT classroom as it provides authentic and real contexts of communicative situations. It also provides the enjoyable experience of learning a new language innovatively. Reading of literature can also help enhance students' knowledge and experience of the world. Keshavarzi (2012) explored the reasons behind using literature as a good source in teaching English language. Literature-based programs focus on personal interpretation of the language so students begin to experiment with the language and incorporate this into their everyday speech and vocabulary. Therefore, literary texts help them to acquire the language as a means of communication. This literature would make them native-like speakers because grammar is acquired covertly, therefore, it is very important for making teaching English based on use and function-focus.

Literature is considered to be seminal in molding the character of the students. Different literary genres like poetry and drama deal with the psyche and nature of various literary personae and the use of different levels of language use. It is easy for the students to simulate with different character traits which help in developing intellectual faculty among the students. “There is a difference between teaching about the language and communicating in the language”, says Ali (2013). Dialogues, different levels of narration and conversation and verbal and non-verbal communication in dramas, novels and short stories can be helpful in inculcating language efficiency among the students (Ali, 2013). Yeasmin, Azad & Ferdoush (2013) conducted a case study on the “Reader’s Development Program” at English Department in ASA University Bangladesh in which they implemented various classroom activities from simplified versions of English texts. It was discovered through this study that literary texts allow multi-dimensional uses of language and offer real language use, at the same time, avoiding boring teaching methods such as G. T. Method and giving fascinating and interesting stories. If syllabus designing is done properly half the battle is won. The environment in the classroom changes unbelievably by introducing literature. Literature is for all ages and never ceases to inspire the students irrespective of their age and gender.

Chen (2014) explored the effectiveness of using quality literature for children for EFL acquirers of all ages. His research suggested literary instructional activities that provide comprehensible input, develop instinctive English speech patterns, and benefit reading development. He provided evidence in his study that suggested that meaningful instruction coupled with quality literature for children can be an effective approach to second and foreign language acquisition. Prasad. (2015) analyzed how literature can be used effectively for teaching technical English in engineering colleges. He also tried to find whether learning English language is likely through the use of literature. He suggested certain questions while selecting literary texts for the learners: 1. Is the material really interesting for the learners? 2. Is the literary style comprehensible? 3. Is it possible to complete the text within the schedule? He proposed that tasks should be used in a classroom to teach English and teacher should proceed from easy to difficult tasks. Teachers should completely exploit the material by brainstorming sessions, pre-reading tasks and icebreakers. He concluded that teacher has the crucial role in a language classroom and he must know how to use materials for teaching language effectively. Kennan et al (2016) investigated the usage of novel as a teaching tool to English learners in India. They studied a class of 50 students before and after using novel as a teaching tool. The findings revealed that novel as an innovative resource has kindled students’ knowledge of foreign language and culture.

### Research Methodology

The present research is qualitative in nature. The data are based on the text of the novel ‘Good Bye Mr. Chips’. This text is included in the compulsory course at intermediate level. All the activities have been devised by following the Eclectic Approach to teach English language through novel at Intermediate Level. The research endeavors to devise activities and exercises which are helpful in bringing about changes in the conventional setup of our Pakistani classrooms. The activities and exercises were devised according to the need of the students. This test was later on applied to students in a language classroom. These activities demanded from the students the use of the target language as much as possible and during this process all the four language skills were at play. Though some students at times, slipped or jumped to their native languages in group discussion but such mistakes, seldom took place, and were not only sign of learning but also increased students’ involvement.

### Research Questions

- Can the novel as a literary genre be exploited for language teaching purposes?
- If yes, how?
- What innovations can a teacher make in a language classroom?

### Frameworks used for Analysis

For the present research, insights have been taken from the works of Dubin & Olshtain (1977), Collie & Slater (1988) and Robinette. B. W (1978) who support the inclusion of literature in the language classroom because it provides authentic material, causes learners’ personal involvement’ cultural enrichment and language enrichment as well. Further the framework has been adapted to meet the needs of the present research and certain categories have been excluded and included as per requirement. All the activities have been devised by following the Eclectic Approach to teach English language through novel at Intermediate Level.

### Data Analysis

In the remaining part of this paper, the researcher explores the linguistic content of the novel ‘Goodbye Mr. Chips’ in the light of foregoing discussion on research methods. The analyses comprise of thirteen different activities

based on various chapters of the novel. All the activities contain a detailed explanation, complete instructions for the students and the relative work sheets. The answer keys are provided in the appendix.

### Activity 1

This exercise has been devised to check students' comprehension of the text. It went successful in both pair work as well group work. This exercise made students read the text very carefully in order to extract the information directly or to infer the correct answer.

Another advantage of this activity was that it not only helped the teacher check students' comprehension rather it also helped the students to make a summary of the novel by placing all the true statements together in sequence. A special care was taken while devising this exercise as the sequence of the statements needed to be in match with the sequence of the incidents as they occur in the novel.

Students found it very easy and interesting. They were more motivated because often they are asked about such questions in the examination. It was a student-centered exercise. Students were free to discuss within their groups. This work-sheet can also be given as home work for writing a summary of the novel. All the four skills of communication reading/writing/speaking and listening are working together in this activity.

### Work Sheet 1

Decide whether the following statements are true or false and then take out all the true statements and make a summary of the novel.

#### Work Sheet 1

1. Mr. Chips was appointed the schoolmaster at Brookfield Public School in 1870.
2. It was his first appointment as a school teacher.
3. In 1896, he went to the Lake District with his friend Mr. Rowden.
4. At that time he was 48 years old.
5. They spent their time in sight-seeing and mountaineering.
6. One day, when Mr. Chips was climbing on a hill, he saw a girl crying at the top of her voice.
7. When he met that girl, (Katherine Bridges), they both fell in love with each other.
8. Katherine was an unsocial and narrow-minded girl.
9. She liked Mr. Chips' decent habits and they both got married in 1896.
10. She could spend only two years with her husband and died in childbirth in 1898.
11. Mr. Chips was not affected by his wife's death.
12. In 1900, Meldrum, the old headmaster, died and chips became the acting head of the school.
13. Afterwards, Mr. Ralston was appointed as the new headmaster.
14. Ralston loved Mr. Chips.
15. He asked Mr. Chips to get retirement.
16. At first, Mr. Chips liked this idea.
17. Mr. Chips refused.
18. In 1913, Chips got retirement from his job because he was suffering from bronchitis and he was given a grand farewell party.
19. In his speech he remembered Ralston.
20. Chips' retired life was calm, busy, peaceful and silent.
21. He used to live far away from the school.
22. He used to remember his wife, his students and his beautiful past.
23. In 1917, chips became the acting head of the school.
24. He was a cruel headmaster
25. In 1930, he made his will and decided to write a book about his past memories.
26. After retirement, he lived with Mrs. Wickets.
27. In 1933, Mr. Chips died.

**Activity 2**

This exercise has been devised to help students improve their vocabulary. It is an interesting grammar based activity. Through this exercise students learnt to classify different word classes. This activity was easily conducted in pairs or students can also do it individually.

**Work Sheet 2**

Make adverbs and nouns from the following adjectives. First two are done for you

<b>Work Sheet 2</b>		
<b>Adjectives</b>	<b>Adverbs</b>	<b>Nouns</b>
Clever	Cleverly	Cleverness
Ambitious	Ambitiously	Ambition
Ruthless	Ruthlessly	Ruthlessness
Imaginative	Imaginatively	Imagination
Sympathetic	Sympathetically	Sympathy
Efficient		
Emotional		
Kind		
Conservative		
Gentle		
Keen		
Good		
Obstinate		
Bold		
Popular		
Evolutionary		

**Activity 3**

It is also a grammar based exercise or a vocabulary building exercise. It is an individual work. Students enjoy such easy and simple exercises for variety's sake.

**Work Sheet 3**

Find the opposites of the following words. First two are done for you.

<b>Work Sheet 3</b>	
<b>Words</b>	<b>Opposites</b>
Bold	Coward
Disciplined	Undisciplined
Efficient	Inefficient
Clever	Innocent
Gentle	
Imaginative	
Kind	
Lean	
Modern	
Old	
Popular	
Ruthless	
Senior	
Young	



**Activity 4**

It is a grammar based exercise again.

**Work Sheet 04**

Write the following words in their suitable columns i.e. verb, nouns adjectives & adverbs, sprightliness, swiftly, mercy, horrible, remarkable, courteous, enthusiasm, ordeal, lid, boastful, conceited, inadequacy, reliable, confess, decent, gymnasium, contaminate.

<b>Work Sheet 04</b>			
Nouns	Verbs	Adverbs	Adjectives
Sprightliness mercy	Confess	Swiftly	Horrible

**Activity 5**

Students learnt to make vocabulary cards of the difficult words from the text. These cards were very useful for them. A card consisted of three columns. In the first column, they wrote the difficult words and its word class. In the second column of the card was written the dictionary meaning of the word and in the third and last column was written the sentence, in which context, it was used in the text. To make this activity more interesting and attractive the students made use of three different colors to write with. They used a plain chart or even the back of a calendar paper which were no more in use. They put them in some sort of box or any other thing they liked. They played with them, read them and enjoyed them in their free time. So this activity solved students' one of great problems in an interesting manner.

<b>Work Sheet 5</b>		
Vocabulary Cards		
<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Sentences</b>
Acres (n)	Lands or estates	There were acres of playing fields beyond.
<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Sentences</b>
Caddies (n)	Small box for holding tea	His guests found it fun to watch him make tea mixing careful spoonful from different caddies.
<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Sentences</b>
<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Sentences</b>



**Activity 6 (A)****Group Work**

This exercise was devised for variety and linguistic practice. It also helped the students improve especially their writing skill. The researcher explained the importance of this exercise for motivating the students as it concerned one of the important events of the text and they were often given questions to narrate such incidents in the examination as well. The students found it easy and they really enjoyed doing it.

**Work Sheet 6 (A)**

Read chapter 04 of the novel and complete the following sentences and write down the title for this incident.

**Work Sheet 6 (A)**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

In 1896, Mr. Chips was forty-eight years old. He went to the Lake District to spend his summer vacation. One day he was climbing on \_\_\_\_\_ (1) \_\_\_\_\_, he saw a girl on its top. She was waving her excitedly. Mr. Chips thought that she was in some \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ and was calling someone for \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_. In fact, the girl was an expert \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_. She was neither in trouble nor calling anybody for help. She was actually \_\_\_\_\_ (5) \_\_\_\_\_ her hand to her girlfriend, who was standing down the \_\_\_\_\_ (6) \_\_\_\_\_.

As Mr. Chips was a kind person. He, out of \_\_\_\_\_ (7) \_\_\_\_\_, rushed towards her to \_\_\_\_\_ (8) \_\_\_\_\_ her. During this effort, his foot \_\_\_\_\_ (9) \_\_\_\_\_ and he \_\_\_\_\_ (10) \_\_\_\_\_ his ankle. The girl saw all this. She realized that he had met the \_\_\_\_\_ (11) \_\_\_\_\_ due to her only. So she helped him and took him to the \_\_\_\_\_ (12) \_\_\_\_\_. Afterwards she used to go to nurse him and during these visits she fell in \_\_\_\_\_ (13) \_\_\_\_\_ with him. This encounter, eventually, ended in their \_\_\_\_\_ (14) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Activity 6 (B)**

The objective of this exercise was also the same as above. It is based on another important event of the novel.

**Work Sheet 6 (B)**

Read chapter 11 of the novel and complete the following sentences and afterwards write down the title for this incidence.

**Work Sheet 6 (B)**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Ralston was appointed the headmaster of the Brookfield Public School in 1900, after the death of Mr. Meldrum. He was a young man of \_\_\_\_\_ (1) \_\_\_\_\_. He was ambitious and \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ but ruthless. He was a scientific-minded man. He did not \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Chips. On the other hand, he also had no \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_ for Ralston. They both could not go on well.

One day, Mr. Ralston called him in his \_\_\_\_\_ (5) \_\_\_\_\_ and told him that he was \_\_\_\_\_ (6) \_\_\_\_\_ year old and could not do his work on account of \_\_\_\_\_ (7) \_\_\_\_\_. He also criticized his \_\_\_\_\_ (8) \_\_\_\_\_ method of teaching and discipline. He told Mr. Chips that it was an age of \_\_\_\_\_ (9) \_\_\_\_\_ but he still taught dead \_\_\_\_\_ (10) \_\_\_\_\_. He asked him to get \_\_\_\_\_ (11) \_\_\_\_\_ and assured him that he would be given handsome \_\_\_\_\_ (12) \_\_\_\_\_. Mr. Chips \_\_\_\_\_ (13) \_\_\_\_\_ to resign. As there was an exchange of hot words between them, a student overheard them and this news spread like a wild \_\_\_\_\_ (14) \_\_\_\_\_ in and around the school.

**Activity 7**

For this exercise, the students were provided with the sentences or phrases from the text, describing an action, an event or quoting a character. What they must do was briefly explained. The interest of the exercise lies in the fact that the answer is not often given in the text and is inferred from the rest of the information given. For this exercise, students re-read the text carefully and there was a lot of group discussion/students interaction in the classroom.

**Work Sheet 7**

Read the sentences in the first column and answer the questions in the rest of the four columns. First two are done for you.

<b>Activity 7</b>				
<b>Sentences</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>To whom?</b>	<b>When?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
"You are fitter than I am".	Dr. Merivale	Mr. Chips	He came to visit Mr. Chips	Because chips had no particular disease but old age.
"You, there in the fifth row, you with the red hair, what's your name?"				
"Your father was the first boy I ever punished, when I came here twenty-five years ago".				
"Of course, I shall call you chips, too"				
"You can go to blazes for all I care".				
"Please, Sir, what shall we do if we meet any strikers?"				
"Mr. chipping, have you ever thought, you would like to retire".				
"Pity, pity, he never had any children".				

**Activity 8****Focus on Characters**

This exercise helped the students to think about the main/important characters of the novel. It did not demand intensive text work. It encouraged the students to read confidently for the gist. The researcher involved the students, in devising this exercise, by asking them to take out the adjectives, used in the text, for the main/important characters i.e. Mr. Chips, Katherine Bridges and Mr. Ralston. It increased their interest, involvement and enhanced their motivation. Then, the investigator prepared the work-sheet 8 for further treatment. The students really felt proud of their contribution in the task. After the students had finished with this work-sheet, they were assigned to write down the detailed character sketches of these characters with the help of this work-sheet, working in different groups. It can also be an assignment for home-work.

The students were more willing and motivated as this activity was very helpful for them from examination point of view. They appreciated it very much and they really wrote down the character sketches with its help.

**Work Sheet 8**

**Work Sheet 8**

<p><b>Katherine Bridges</b></p> <p>Ambitious</p> <p>Bold</p> <p>Climber</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <p>Boastful   Ambitious   Good   Kind</p> <p>Lean   Clever   Player   Lustless</p> <p>Young   Efficient</p> <p>Musician   Old   Disgraced</p> <p>Imaginative   Obstinate   Conservative   Ruthless</p> <p>Slovenly   Sympathetic   Revolutionary</p> <p>Highly qualified   Scientific minded   Emotional</p> <p>Master of Antique languages   Senior   Popular   Keen</p> <p>Gentle   Bold   Short tempered</p> <p>Youthful head   Modern   Old fashioned</p> </div>	<p><b>Mr. Chips</b></p> <p>Conservative</p> <p>Disciplined</p> <p>Gentle</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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**Mr. Ralston**

Clever

Highly qualified

Ruthless

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Activity 9**

The students have read the text again and again for doing different activities. It is the time to introduce such activities. This exercise is devised in order to check whether students can rearrange these strips (containing the events of the novel in summarized form) in logical sequence.

Here the summary is written in sequential order, but during the activity these are given in jumbled order. It is also a group activity and it also provides variety. The class is working again in six groups and the every group is given the story in jumbled order and a small prize or a token gift for the group that rearranges it first works a magic and students are more excited and motivated.

I give clear instructions before distributing the jumbled strips.

**Work Sheet 9**

**Strip 01**

Mr. Chips was a young man of twenty-two when he started his career as a teacher of Roman History, Latin and Greek languages. He joined Mulbury Public School and stayed there for one year. Then he joined Brookfield Public School and spent a long time there.

**Strip 02**

In 1896, Mr. Chips went to Lake District with his friend and a colleague Mr. Rowden. They spent their time in sight-seeing and mountaineering. Mr. Rowden had to leave Chips quite suddenly on account of some family affair. Mr. Chips lived there at the farm house. One day, when he was climbing a mountain, he saw a girl standing at the top of a dangerously high rock. He thought that she was in trouble and was calling someone for help. So he rushed forward to help her but his foot slipped and he sprained his ankle. She along with her friend helped him and took him to the farm house. She daily came to nurse him. They both fell in love and got married in London a week before the autumn term.

### Strip 03

Katherine could spend only two years with her husband. She died in child birth. Her death was the most tragic event of Chips' life. She died but her noble nature and charming personality kept her alive not only in the heart of Mr. Chips but also in the minds of Brookfieldian boys.

### Strip 04

In 1900, old headmaster Mr. Meldrum, who had succeeded Mr. Wetherby as head and held office for three decades, died. After his death, Chips became the acting head of the school. And afterwards Ralston was appointed the headmaster of the school. He was a young man of thirty-seven. He was a modern and scientific minded man.

### Strip 05

One day, Mr. Ralston called Mr. Chips in his office and asked him to think of his retirement as he was an orthodox teacher and had grown sixty. He also assured him about his handsome pension. Mr. Chips refused to resign and hot words were exchanged between them. Their conversation was overheard by a school boy who conveyed this news in and around the school. The chairman of the board of governors assured Mr. Chips that he could continue his service for as long as he wished and even to the age of 100 years if he liked.

### Strip 06

It had been a damp, foggy day and the walk across the quadrangle to the dining hall had given him a chill. The next day he was again in bed with bronchitis, and stayed there till after Christmas. But already on that night of November 11<sup>th</sup>, after his visit to the dining hall, he had sent in his resignation to the board of Governors.

### Strip 07

The authorities were not willing to accept his resignation but on Chips' repeated requests, he was honorably retired. He was given a grand farewell party. He was presented a wall clock, a writing desk and a cheque. At the end, Mr. Chips was requested to express his views. So he delivered a short, witty and impressive speech which was infused with jests. He remembered past days and his old brilliant students. He recalled the days when there used to be no gas and electricity. His speech aroused the laughters and cheers in the audience.

### Strip 08

Mr. Chatteris, the headmaster fell ill during the winter of 1917 and afterwards he died. Chips once again became the acting head of the school. The board of governors offered him the permanent headship but he refused because he could not continue it because of old age.

### Strip 09

Mr. Chips was ill. He was at the house of Mrs. Wicket. She called in Dr. Merivale and the head master Mr. Cartwright. The doctor told Cartwright that Mr. Chips had got married but two years later his wife died in a child birth and he was issueless. Mr. Chips opened his eyes and replied that he was not issueless all his students were his children. Then he closed his eyes and went to sleep. He looked so peaceful that they did not like to disturb him. Next day, they came to know that Chips had passed away from this world quietly.

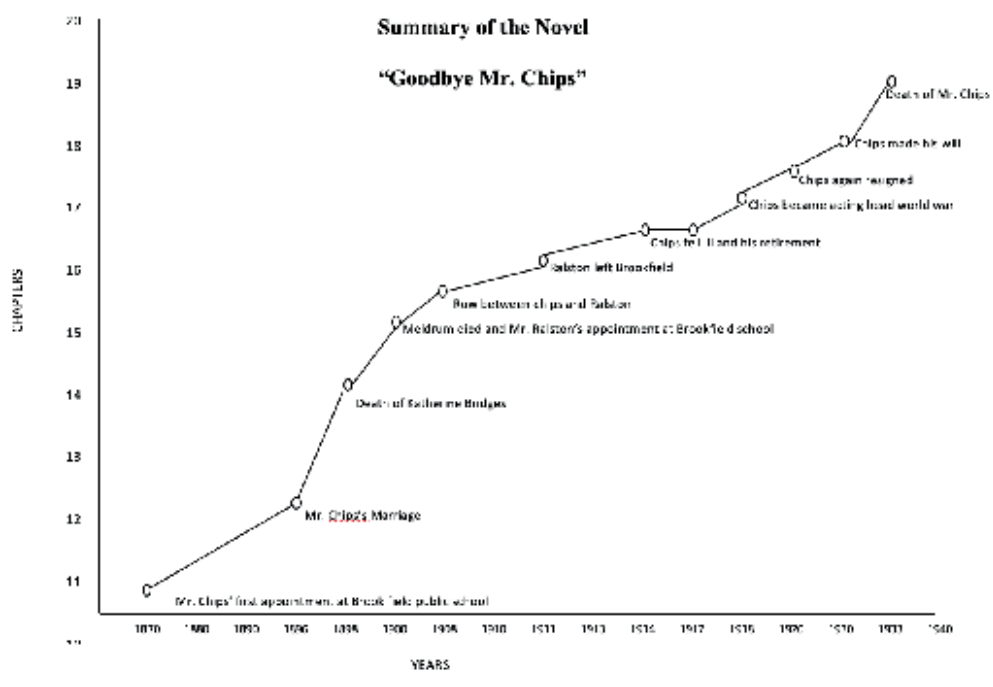
### Activity 10 (Group Work)

This activity is the outcome of the previous one. It helped the students to remember the story of the novel (in sequential order), in few main point only. Later on, they can explain these points and make a detailed summary of it. For this activity the researcher took the help of the whiteboard in the beginning. She explained to the students that as they had read the novel again and again to find out different information out of the text, they could now easily understand this activity. The researcher drew the dates and the respective events on a line on the whiteboard.

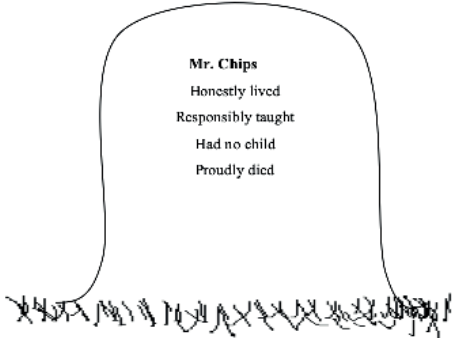
Students found it very easy to remember this line and develop a summary from it. The investigator also guided the students to draw a graph with the help of the same information by writing the numbers of chapters along the X-Axis and the years along the Y-Axis. This activity proved very easy and interesting and it brought in variety. It showed best results when done in pair work in the class.

**Activity: 10**

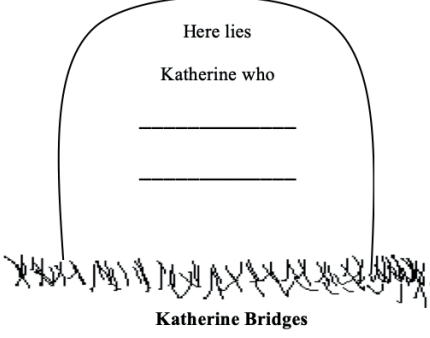
(Pair Work)



**Activity 11 (Pair Work)** This activity helped students in reviewing the characters especially who had died in the novel. Here they learnt to write epitaphs for them. An epitaph is an elegant and exact comment on a deceased character. This was an excellent pretext for a very brief appreciation of a character. It proved very much interesting for the students. The novel ended with the death of the main character, Mr. Chips, so this activity automatically fitted very well here. The researcher wrote the two sample epitaphs, for Mr. Chips and his dead child on the whiteboard and asked the students to write down the epitaphs for Katherine and Meldrum, keeping activity 09 in mind. They worked in pairs.

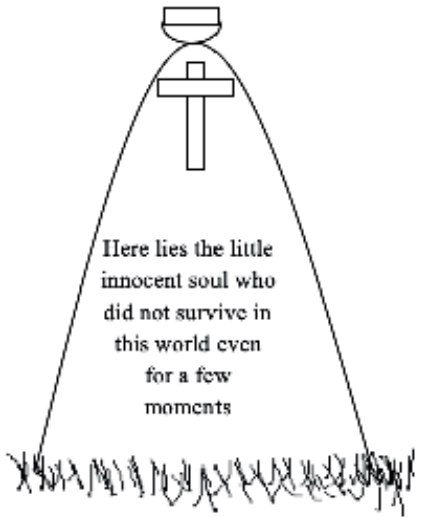


**Mr. Chips**  
Honestly lived  
Responsibly taught  
Had no child  
Proudly died



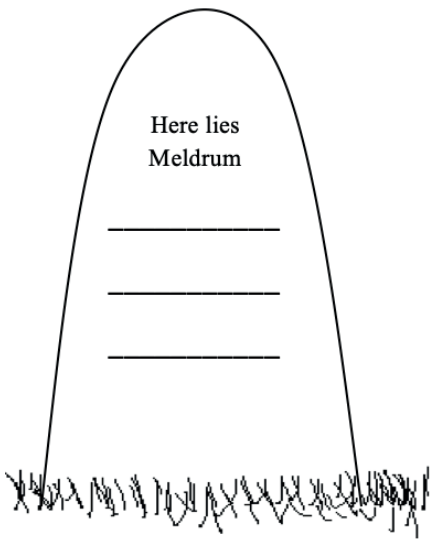
Here lies  
Katherine who  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Katherine Bridges**



Here lies the little  
innocent soul who  
did not survive in  
this world even  
for a few  
moments

**Their Son**



Here lies  
Meldrum  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Activity 12 (Role Play)

In this activity the two most intelligent, bold, and leading students of the class may well play the roles of Mr. Chips and Katherine Bridges. The investigator has very successfully conducted this in her class. She selected the two suitable, willing, bold and intelligent students, and provided them with the dresses required for both the characters. Both of them had a conversation in front of the class. It was really very remarkable and excellent activity. The whole class appreciated and liked it very much. It demanded a great effort on the part of the teacher.

### Activity 13 (Individual Work)

At this stage, the student can create something of their own about this novel, after doing all the activities successfully. Then the researcher assigned them some task. Every student in the class was asked to write down an essay on any one of the following topics:

- i) My favourite teacher
- ii) Qualities of a good teacher.

### Discussion

When analyzed in the light of the works of Dubin. & Olshtain. (1977); Collie & Slater (1988); Robinette (1978) it becomes evident that communicative activities in a language classroom are a vehicle through which the learners can be helped along the road to fluency. These activities help in giving more language practice and at the same time, enable them to appreciate literature in a more relaxed and better environment.

Monotony causes boredom in the class. Therefore, a wide range of learner-centered activities prove vital to motivate the students, who are mostly unwilling to read anything in English language classes. Another important thing which I have cared for is that most of these activities are examination oriented and this think is highly desirable for achieving learners' involvement and high degree of motivation. Psychologically the average students are never willing to read the text (Novel) because they are in habit of cramming and memorizing typical aspects of the novel which are very important from the examination point of view. They find it an easy short-cut for success. Through these activities, they unconsciously go through the text many times in the class. So learning to use a language is like learning to ride a bicycle. Just as it is easier for the cyclist to ride the bicycle on the leveled ground, so it is easier for the language learner to sail on the smooth sea of simple and easy language.

### Findings & Discussion

The findings of the proposed research indicated that novels as a literary genre could be exploited for language teaching purposes. When analyzed in the light of the work of Dublin & Olshtain (1977); Collie & Slater (1988) and Robinette. B. W (1978), it became evident that communicative activities in a language classroom prove a vehicle which helps the learners along the road to fluency. The research shed light on the process of language learning skills. The activities and exercises also brought a new change in the atmosphere of traditional language classroom. These activities not only helped in giving more language practice but also got the students involved and at the same time, enabled them to appreciate literature in a more relaxed and better environment.

Monotony causes boredom in the class. Therefore, a wide range of learner-centered activities proved vital to motivate the students, who were mostly unwilling to read anything in English language classes. Another important thing which the research cared for was that most of these activities were examination oriented and this was highly desirable for achieving learners' involvement and high degree of motivation. Psychologically the average students are never willing to read the text (Novel) because they are in habit of cramming and memorizing typical aspects of the novel which are very important from the examination point of view. They find it an easy short-cut for success. Through these activities, they unconsciously went through the text many times in the class. So learning to use a language is like learning to ride a bicycle. Just as it is easier for the cyclist to ride the bicycle on the leveled ground, so it is easier for the language learner to sail on the smooth sea of simple and easy language.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of the present research revealed that using appropriate classroom activities facilitated students analyze the novel effectively in a restricted time and improve their proficiency levels in literature learning programs and were consistent with the prior literature. It was found that the activities like role plays and a lot of pair work and group work not only caused reduction in anxiety level of students but also increased their level of interest and enthusiasm. It also concluded that for facilitating language teaching and learning, formation of a variety of activities based on learners' needs from carefully and properly selected texts is unavoidable. Literary texts were useful and effective for teaching language as they provided an authentic model of real life language use. Literature encouraged students' cultural and personal growth through moral and spiritual development. Students analyzed the novel intensively in a shorter time and improved their proficiency levels in literature learning by using various appropriate classroom activities. Literature is not a finale; it develops creative ability which helps students relate themselves to their socio-psychological and cultural context.

- The proposed research is helpful in understanding how novels as a literary genre can be exploited for language teaching purposes. The research will be helpful for the novice teachers to integrate successfully all the four skills in language classrooms to make it motivating and interesting for the students. The future researchers can exploit similar literary texts following the same frameworks for language teaching purposes. Further research needs to be conducted on larger groups of participants regarding different variances such as the effect of specific methods, materials, teachers, environments, psychological, social and cognitive factors on success and improvement of language skills of the students. The future researchers can also exploit similar literary texts following the same frameworks for language teaching purposes.



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