



Literary Texts In Secondary Education: Teaching For Literary Creativity And Establishing Linguistic Proficiency — The Algerian School As A Model

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the primary purpose of integrating literary texts into the educational system and to uncover the hidden educational goals these texts carry, which predominantly rely on two elements: taste and language. Since language has always been and remains the focus of interest for specialists striving to teach it through the most straightforward methods, we have attempted to concentrate on researching how to refine taste and practice the use of language among secondary school students in the Algerian educational system. Secondary students, like those in other educational stages, face difficulties when trying to comprehend the programmed literary texts. Therefore, considering language within literary production can enhance its aesthetic appeal, facilitating students' understanding and comprehension of what the teacher intends to convey. One of the central questions of this study is: What methods can be followed to achieve linguistic proficiency and a refined taste in students?

Keywords: Creativity; Literary; Education; Competence; Language; Text.

Introduction:

Observing the realities of Arabic linguistic sciences reveals the vast knowledge of scholars in the Arabic language. Each of these scholars endeavored to theorize the science that serves Arabic, either through understanding and interpretation or by explaining the wisdom of its system. This system has posed challenges for learners in mastering its performance and expression. Various methods and programs have emerged to teach Arabic in school curricula, such as literary texts. In this study, we attempt to examine the linguistic and literary data that the educational system aims to achieve by employing literary texts in the teaching-learning process. The central question of this study is: How have literary texts been utilized in Algerian schools to develop literary taste and achieve linguistic proficiency among learners?

The study aims to explore the linguistic and literary aspects when using literary texts in the teaching-learning process and how to instill them in the minds of learners, relying on the descriptive method. The introduction of the article should include a suitable prelude to the topic, then present the research problem and formulate appropriate hypotheses, along with defining the research objectives and methodology.

Terminology and Concepts:

Access to the truths of sciences is only possible through understanding and comprehending their terms: "The keys to sciences are their terms," as expressed by Abd al-Salam al-Masdi (n.d., p. 11). To clarify the objectives of this study, we must understand its foundational terms, which we will explain below.

1. Concept of Didactics:

1.1 Etymology:

Didactics is an industrial derivative of the word "teaching." It comes from the verb "to teach," meaning "to master and know" (Al-Rajhi, 2004, p. 15). The term is a modern one that corresponds to the foreign term "didactique," which includes several meanings such as "didactics, instructions, the science of teaching, and teaching methods." The Greek origin "didaktikos" means teaching (Al-Barhami, 1998, p. 10).

1.2 Terminology:

Didactics is defined as "the scientific study of teaching methods, techniques, and forms of organizing learning situations that the learner undergoes to achieve the desired objectives, whether on the cognitive, emotional, or psychomotor levels" (Dreem, n.d., p. 120). Smith defines it as "the summary of the components and relationships between educational situations and their subjects and media. In other words, it is a science concerned with planning educational situations and how to implement, monitor, and adjust them when necessary" (Al-Hathroubi, 2012, p. 127).

Didactics is a science derived from pedagogy, and its subject is teaching. It has another concept, which is a systematic scientific study aimed at helping the learner achieve various goals, such as acquiring knowledge, learning values, or practicing a sport, in line with a scientific method (Jabari, n.d., p. 97).

From the above, it can be said that didactics focuses on educational and cognitive goals that enable the learner to acquire knowledge organized according to methods and approaches that can change based on the requirements of the educational process.

3.1.2 Key Elements of the Educational Process: The educational process is founded on three fundamental pillars: the teacher, the learner, and the content.

1.3.1.2 The Teacher: The teacher is a crucial component of the educational process and a source of knowledge, distinguished by competencies, qualifications, readiness, abilities, and a desire to teach. "The foundation of the educational process, whose success in achieving its goal depends on the success of the teacher, who is the primary leader and direct guide of this process" (Al-Hariri, 2010, p. 127).

2.3.1.2 The Learner: Mohsen Ali Atiyah, in his book *Teaching the Arabic Language in Light of Performance Deficiencies*, defines the learner as "the third pillar of the educational process, the target of the educational process. The learner is the essential being who does not live in isolation from environmental indicators, hereditary predispositions, and biological needs. Anyone dealing with this being must understand the learner, his nature, personal components, predispositions, motivations, emotions, intellectual and skill capabilities" (Atiyah, 2007, p. 25). This means that the learner is a primary pillar in the educational process due to his mental, psychological, social, and moral characteristics, as well as his motivations for learning.

3.3.1.2 The Content: The content, or educational material, is the message between the teacher and the learner, and it is a fundamental aspect of the teaching process. It is of great importance because, without it, true knowledge cannot be imagined (Zaytoon, 2005, p. 84). In other words, the content consists of a set of precise knowledge, data, and subjects.

2.2 The Concept of Teaching and Learning:

1.2.2 Teaching: Teaching is the process of transferring knowledge and information from the teacher to the learner in a situation where the teacher plays the most influential role, while the student's role is limited to listening, memorizing, and reciting. "Teaching is also considered a humanitarian educational mission concerned with training individuals to understand life matters, how to interact with others, acquire experiences and skills to develop their talents and faculties, help them overcome problems, find solutions, and innovate and create in their fields of specialization, qualifying them to assume leadership responsibilities and build an advanced society that moves towards improvement" (Jirjis, n.d., pp. 191-192). In other words, teaching involves imparting information and experiences to the learner, delivered in specific ways within the educational institution.

2.2.2 Learning: Learning is a broad term within the educational process, and its definitions vary. It is described as "everything an individual acquires from education, teaching, and training, which causes a modification in the learner's behavior. Thus, it is defined as the behavior modification desired by education. Learning accompanies education, teaching, and training, and the best education, teaching, or training is what leads to the best learning" (Atiyah, 2006, p. 56). It is also defined as "a result of practice or experience that manifests through the learner's behavior, representing a quasi-permanent change in behavior that is demonstrated through performance" (Al-Sharqawi, 2013, p. 12).

Based on the above, learning is a process of modification and change evident in an individual's behavior as a result of education. It encompasses everything an individual acquires from experiences and practices. Learning is a voluntary process that originates from the learner's own initiative, where they attempt, err, and correct until they learn.

From the preceding discussion, it is evident that learning and teaching are interdependent processes, with one incomplete without the other. Learning is an internal effect emanating from the individual towards the outside, representing creativity, while teaching is an external effect directed towards the self, where the individual receives a set of knowledge and experiences internally. There is no learning without teaching. "The term 'learning' itself has now gained significant importance, even though it is the counterpart of the term 'teaching.' It is said: 'I taught him, so he learned,' with the source of the first verb being teaching, and the source of the second being learning. Hence, there is no teaching without learning" (Al-Samman, 1983, p. 13).

Therefore, achieving educational goals can only be realized by relying on both learning and teaching, as the former necessarily leads to the latter.

3. Concept of the Literary Text: Before defining the concept of the literary text, it is essential to understand the concept of the term (text) on its own and then define its literary qualification.

3.1 Definition of Text:

Linguistically, the concept of text among Arabic linguists is described as: "Nassast the thing, I raised it, from which comes the bride's platform, and I raised the hadith to so-and-so, meaning I brought it to him... and I scrutinized the man if I inquired about something until extracting what he had. The end of everything is its text" (Al-Jawhari, n.d., p. 1/830). It is also said: "Metaphorically, the hadith is attributed to its owner" (Al-Zamakhshari, 1998, p. 2/275). Another definition states: "Text: attribution to the highest authority, a halt, a designation on something" (Ibn Manzur, 1955, p. 7/98). These definitions revolve around the meanings of elevation and attribution.

Terminologically, the term 'text' has varied and different meanings in Western contexts. The Latin word "Textus" derives from the verb "Texere," meaning (weaving), thus a text is a fabric (Al-Sabihi, 2008, p. 108). Julia Kristeva defined a text as "a trans-linguistic device that redistributes the linguistic system by linking communicative speech aimed at direct information with various types of prior and concurrent utterances; a text is productivity" (Kristeva, 1997, p. 25). Therefore, a text represents a system distributed according to linguistic units or a replacement process through which new texts are formed.

In Arabic tradition, a text is "what the book has fully clarified, needing no other explanation" (Al-Shafi'i, 2005, p. 5). Al-Sharif Al-Jurjani (d. 816 AH) defined a text as "what becomes more explicit than the apparent meaning due to a specific intention by the

speaker, and directing the speech for that purpose. For example, if it is said: 'Be kind to someone who rejoices in my happiness and grieves in my sorrow,' it is explicit in indicating affection" (Al-Jurjani, 1986, p. 132). He also stated: "A text is what can only hold one meaning, or what cannot be interpreted otherwise" (Ibid). This means that a text indicates clarity and does not allow for multiple interpretations.

Among the Arab scholars who defined the concept of a text is Taha Abdul Rahman, who stated that it is "any structure composed of a number of well-formed sentences interconnected by various relationships" (Taha, 2000, p. 35). Additionally, Abdelmalek Mourtadh elaborated on the concept by asserting that "the form is not defined by its quantity, i.e., through a sentence or a group of sentences within the text. He views that a text should not be defined by the concept of a sentence, nor by the concept of a paragraph, which is a major unit of a group of sentences, as it is possible for a single sentence to constitute an independent text" (Mourtadh, n.d., p. 57). Hence, Abdelmalek Mourtadh diverges from Taha Abdul Rahman in his view of the text concept, as he does not require a specific number of sentences for its formation; a text may consist of a single sentence, provided it conveys a complete meaning.

When considering the compound term comprising the descriptor and its attribute, i.e., the literary text, the meaning of this term becomes clear through the literary attribute, which encompasses meanings of art, beauty, and literary creativity. From this perspective, a literary text is "a beautiful linguistic structure; its language deviates from the familiar, common, and usual, characterized by novelty and the ability to evoke admiration. It consists of concise literary pieces, whether in poetry or prose, drawn from the treasures of Arabic literature to achieve specific goals such as language learning and understanding semantic, lexical, and phonetic aspects, as well as the relationship of the text to language and both its internal and external structures, enhancing the literary taste of the reader or listener" (Ibrir, n.d., p. 129). Consequently, a literary text is "a web of complex relationships, concealing worlds and secrets worthy of discovery. The more these worlds and secrets captivate the interest of readers across different times and places, the more vitality and originality the text acquires" (Messaidi, n.d., p. 139).

Because a literary text possesses artistic and aesthetic aspects, it cultivates in the learner a taste for literature, enriched by the various linguistic and literary activities embedded within these texts, which draw the learners in.

As a result, literary texts have been integrated into various educational stages, such as the secondary stage, where literary texts form "the core around which the unit as a whole is built, through its topic, objectives, and intermediate and final competencies, along with its supporting references. This process follows the new approaches by utilizing linguistic, grammatical, morphological, rhetorical, and prosodic domains as means to serve both the structure and meaning of the text. All of this is achieved through the textual approach, which is the methodological principle upon which competency-based pedagogy

relies. The text is presented for linguistic and artistic purposes, such as refining and enriching the learner's language, and honing their artistic and aesthetic taste, employing these competencies in understanding, explanation, evaluation, analysis, deconstruction, composition, classification, critique, application, and creativity through logically ordered elements" (Directorate of Secondary Education, 2006, p. 7).

In general, the pedagogy of literary texts is founded on educational dimensions that the educational system strives to achieve. It focuses on aspects that ensure effective language acquisition and the development of creative prowess, enabling learners to possess a sophisticated and eloquent language.

Educational Dimensions of Literary Texts: Balancing Literary Creativity and Linguistic Performance Proficiency:

It is undeniable that the educational process fundamentally relies on achieving its primary goal, which is to instill knowledge in the learner's mind. One of the most significant objectives of teaching the Arabic language is to find the most effective methods for mastering language performance and expression. Specialists have recognized the learners' need for this and have proposed relying on the educational use of literary texts in a way that achieves linguistic performance proficiency while simultaneously endowing the learner with expressive skills characterized by literary creativity through refined taste and practice of language rules.

It is noteworthy that the literary texts selected at the secondary level are not confined to a specific era but are varied according to the historical sequence of literary periods. This approach to addressing literary texts enables the learner to consolidate their knowledge of the period they are studying in terms of its intellectual trends and prevailing literary phenomena. This method aligns with the competency-based approach, which emphasizes what is most beneficial for the learner (Hussain Shalouf et al., 2017/2018, p. 4). In this context, the learner discovers and becomes familiar with different literary styles and linguistic phenomena, each literary text from any period possessing its unique characteristics.

4.1 Steps for Teaching Literary Texts:

A set of steps has been established by specialists in the educational system to understand and elucidate the content of the proposed literary texts at the secondary level as follows:

- Introducing the Author: By providing a brief overview of the author's life and era.
- Presenting the Text's Subject: This involves reading the literary text expressively, ensuring clear pronunciation, proper performance, and conveying the meaning effectively.
- Enhancing Vocabulary: This stage relies on explaining key words lexically and then exploring their meanings within the context (Hussain Shalouf et al., 2017/2018, p. 5).

- Discovering Text Data: The teacher poses a series of questions that help learners uncover the text's aesthetic, metaphorical, and linguistic elements (Abu Bakr Al-Sadiq, Saadallah et al., 2017/2018, p. 4).

- Discussing Text Data: "In this stage, the learner is placed in a position to use their acquired knowledge to critically assess the content of the text, whether it pertains to meanings and ideas, various expression styles, or the language's aesthetics. The critique should be creative, identifying the phenomenon and then evaluating its intellectual and artistic dimensions in light of the learner's prior knowledge. The critique should not be descriptive or model-like but should allow learners to explore and suggest numerous alternatives and meanings embedded in the text's structures and metaphors, reflecting the text's openness to countless connotations and meanings" (Hussain Shalouf et al., 2017/2018, p. 6).

- Determining the Text Structure: This stage focuses on identifying the text's type and characteristics and training learners to produce texts that embody the studied type's features.

- Examining Coherence and Cohesion: This involves examining various coherence tools, such as linking and reference devices that connect sentence and phrase elements, as well as cohesion tools evident in how ideas are presented and their relationship to the subject and each other. This includes the relationship between the introduction and the topic, the connection between the beginning and the end of a paragraph, the method of transitioning from one idea to another, idea repetition, and smooth transitions.

- Summarizing the Text: In this stage, the text is summarized, highlighting its artistic and aesthetic dimensions (Abu Bakr Al-Sadiq, Saadallah et al., 2017/2018, p. 5).

Following these aforementioned steps leads to training learners in language practice and enabling them to produce texts in various styles.

2.4 Foundations of Understanding and Analyzing Texts:

The process of teaching literary texts at the secondary level is based on the understanding of the text as a multifaceted linguistic phenomenon, both in form and content. This perspective necessitates treating the text through a textual approach, viewing it as linguistic units with communicative functions governed by principles such as coherence and cohesion (Directorate of Secondary Education, 2006, p. 8). To achieve the goal of teaching literary texts, it is essential to rely on foundations and principles that contribute to developing the learner's linguistic and aesthetic abilities as well as understanding the text. These foundations and principles include grammar, rhetoric, and prosody, activated by the teacher based on the text's content.

2.4.1 Grammar and Morphology:

At this stage, the Arabic teacher focuses on teaching Arabic grammar rules in an applied manner, avoiding theoretical approaches to ensure the effectiveness of usage and enabling the learner to perform the language correctly across various communicative levels.

The importance of teaching Arabic grammar can be summarized in its role in developing various competencies in learners, including (Directorate of Secondary Education, 2006, p. 8):

- Linguistic Competency: Through which the learner can produce and interpret linguistic expressions with diverse and complex structures in a wide range of communicative situations.

- Cognitive Competency: Represented in the organized knowledge that the learner acquires by deriving knowledge from linguistic expressions and grammatical structures, storing, and recalling it at the appropriate time to interpret linguistic constructs.

- Perceptive Competency: Enabling the learner to understand the true functions of grammar to derive knowledge from it, which can be used in text production and interpretation.

- Productive Competency: Allowing the learner to produce intellectual and artistic works while respecting the rules of proper expression, including grammar and morphology.

Grammar and morphology must be viewed from a functional perspective, achieved only through practice and application of the rules. The learner needs to engage in practical exercises, moving away from theory, to acquire linguistic competencies that lead to correct pronunciation, cognitive competencies for understanding and comprehending expressive forms, perceptive competencies for understanding grammatical functions, and productive competencies for employing artistic and aesthetic skills when forming linguistic units within the framework of proper language.

2.4.2 Rhetoric:

Through presenting literary texts at various educational stages, the learner acquires creative abilities that enhance their prior knowledge. The teacher must further consolidate rhetorical knowledge in a practical manner, enabling the learner to appreciate the literary text artistically.

2.4.3 Prosody:

This stage differs from the previous ones by relying on teaching the theoretical fundamentals of prosody. After mastering and memorizing the poetic meters, the phase of application and practice on various presented literary texts begins. Methods can be

used to help the learner understand different rhythms and rhymes, appreciate them, master prosodic writing, analyze poetic lines, and identify their meters and feet.

5. Conclusion:

In summary, the teaching of the Arabic language remains a pursuit in which specialists continuously seek the most effective methods for achieving proficient language learning. This goal is attainable only through practice, training, and active language use, which leads to linguistic competence. Additionally, selecting texts that foster this process must involve elements of literary creativity, creating harmony between the correct performance of the language and the appreciation of its aesthetic qualities.

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