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THE ROLE OF PROVERBS AND TEXTBOOKS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This article illustrates the importance and benefits of proverbs and textbooks in the process of teaching and learning English language, especially the effect and benefits of proverbs and textbooks, in promoting students' grammar, vocabulary, and language skills from the point of view of researchers.

KEYWORDS

Textbooks, teaching English, learning language, teaching language, proverb.

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks are one of the most important and accessible educational media. They may play an effective role in the education system. Many researchers have considered the textbook as one of the efficient and effective educational media that provides learning and self-learning for learners. A textbook is considered the main learning tool that is designed to achieve a specific set of educational results and is made up of text with images.

Proverbs and sayings - this language material, which increases students' interest in foreign language, develops their linguistic intuition, lays the habit of thinking linguistic concepts. They help to improve the content of traditional textbooks, through discussion of moral issues, teaching pupils to illustrate his point and summarize it in a concise form.

One of the folk forms are proverbs and sayings are a special kind of poetry, which for centuries absorbed

the experience and wisdom of many generations. Using his speech proverbs and sayings, children can learn to clearly articulate their thoughts and feelings, learn to paint his speech, Develop the ability to creatively use the word, to describe things, giving them a bright and rich descriptions. [1]

A textbook is a book that contains comprehensive information about a course or a subject that a student needs, to get through the academic year. This has set of chapters, questions-answers, and exercises include in the curriculum to improve the learning standards of students.

Textbooks are not helpful for the students, but also helpful for new teachers with their teaching course. It acts as a guide for the syllabus material they have to cover in the entire academic year. Textbooks help teachers to design the lesson plan and enable a hassle free teaching and learning experience. [2]

OVERVIEW OF SOURCES

Many scientific studies devoted to importance, the evaluation, and the role of textbooks in teaching and learning English language. Among them, K. Graves (New York, 2000), H. B. Bahar & B. Zaman (2013), A. Cunningsworth (Oxford, 1995), T. Hutchison and E. Torres (Oxford university, 1994), R. O’Neil (1990), C. Sheldon (1988), J. McDonough & C. Shaw (Oxford,2003), Afrin Hossain Trisha (Dahka, 2016) and A. Cunningsworth (London, 1984) tried with their researches to illuminate the role and the importance of textbooks research and identified the effect, benefits, advantages and disadvantages of textbooks. However due to globalization of the world, textbooks are being updated in the field of education, therefore, it is necessary to provide more research in this field about the role and importance textbook in education, because textbooks have great influence in

development of students’ knowledge. Also, more researches have done about the role of proverbs in learning and teaching English language.

Mieder (2004) claims that the use of proverbs in the teaching of English as a foreign language is very important in fostering learners’ ability to communicate effectively. He also suggests that the proverbs which are appropriate be introduced as part of the teaching material are those used today by the native speakers of the target language. He also states that “textbooks on both the teaching of native and foreign languages usually include at least some lists of proverbs an accompanying exercises “(p. 147). In the same vein, Hanzén (2007: 1) concludes that proverbs play an important role in language teaching as a part of gaining cultural knowledge, metaphorical understanding and communicative competence. [3; p.3]

MATERIALS AND METHODS OF RESEARCH

The important of the textbook become even greater when new educational content is discussed in the classroom. The objective of learning educational content is to acquire knowledge. Therefore, this stage must be carefully and didactically designed. The content should be designed in a way that encourages students to learn and complement and broaden teacher’s instruction. Textbook authors should therefor follow the framework of desired knowledge and design it logically. They should highlight key points and present them in a logical sequence in the form of subheadings so that students can understand the basic topical content structure at a glance. [4]

The use of proverbs and its declining in the teaching of modern languages has long been discussed.

Durbin Rowland (1926) points at some arguments pro the use of proverbs in language teaching. Rowland says that proverbs “stick in the mind”, “build up vocabulary”, “illustrate admirably the phraseology and idiomatic expressions of the foreign tongue”, “contribute gradually to a surer feeling for the foreign tongue” and proverbs “consume very little time”.

It was also said that proverbs are not only melodic and witty, possessed with rhythm and imagery; proverbs also reflect “patterns of thought”. As proverbs are universal, there are analogous proverbs in different nations that have related cultural patterns. Proverbs are therefore useful in the students’ discussions of cultural ideas when they compare the proverbs’ equivalents in different languages.

But as the experience shows the incorporation of proverbs in the foreign language classroom is rare. When proverbs are included, they are often used as timefillers and not integrated into a context. The proverbs that are used are often randomly picked from dictionaries, which often include archaic proverbs and new proverbs might therefore be missed. The suitability of proverbs in teaching is due to their form; they are pithy and easy to learn, they often rhyme and contain repetition figures like alliteration and assonance. [5]

As a secondary source the textbook cannot replace the objective real it, however, the latter can be presented in several ways (original text, sketches, diagram and so forth). Furthermore, it should be clearly and unambiguously. In addition to the inclusion of facts, generalizations are also important. Students can understand them only through verbal explanation and clarification, which the author should include in the textbooks in order to allow students different ways of generalizing. Another aspect relevant to didactic adequacy of the textbook, is considering both

students’ developmental stage and the balance between facts and generalizations. Teacher play an important role in this aspect, as they should be well acquainted with the textbook content and match their teaching style with that content by not merely listing textbook facts and thus increasing students’ awareness (Poljak,1983).

Practice (exercises) and reviewing the educational content are additional components of the teaching learning process. The textbook should include additional work and exercises, which helps students practice tasks they should master. In order to ensure the sustainability of knowledge, textbook should be designed in a way that allows students to revise their knowledge. Author can indicate the importance of certain parts of the text by using various types of font and print. Additionally receiving can be indicated by forming generalization summaries, graphics, and so forth (Poljak, 1983).

Student should have the possibility to self-determine the level of acquired knowledge within each lesson. Textbook authors can enable student self-assessment by providing self-assessment exercises. Student can evaluate their knowledge by answering questions and doing exercises that indicate whether they have acquired the operational level of knowledge or whether they have learnt the content merely to produce knowledge (Poljak, 1983).

Textbooks provide a short idea to the student on the content; it serves the basis of language input and creates a balance among the four skills. Before learning any new things (language), we need a proper structure, syllabus or guideline that can show us a proper direction [6: 13].

The research done by Can (2011), when the subjects were asked in what situations and for what purposes

they were using or would use English proverbs, they could mention a wide range of situations and purposes as given below:

- For communicating with native speakers better
- For creating humour
- For expressing oneself better and for being understood better
- For supporting the arguments
- For showing that you have a good command of the language and that you have learnt it well
- For beautifying and embellishing the language
- For exemplifying
- For describing an event better
- In oral presentations
- For comprehending native speakers
- For writing effective compositions
- For expressing many things with few words
- For warning someone politely
- For summarizing
- In daily and informal communication with close friends
- For giving advice

The comments above illustrate how proverbs can be incorporated in foreign language classrooms to help the development of students' language knowledge. Most importantly, their knowledge of proverbs can enable them to have access to native speakers' culture so that the learners can enjoy language learning and teaching in a more meaningful way.

The teacher in the class should provide clear guidelines for identifying key points in the proverbs; design and deliver effective lessons that show how to use the proverb, and give students opportunities to practice and master the proverbs. Teachers should teach proverbs in classes in countries such as Georgia and Turkey, where students have limited exposure to English outside the classroom even though they have

access to English-speaking channels on TV, internet and other means of mass media.

Although students may hear proverbs on television and in movies, they do not have the opportunity to clarify meaning because they don't receive feedback and successful acquisition won't happen. For these reasons, the teachers' mission should be to provide instruction confidently about proverbs for their students. [7;p.24-25]

Bahar Zaman (2013) added that, "textbooks perform a very significant role in language teaching and acquisition as well" [8]. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) argue that the textbooks have a very important and positive role to play in teaching and learning [9].

Cunningsworth (1995), for example, identifies a textbook as a resource in presenting the materials and a source for learners to practice and do the activities [10]. Byrd (2001) argues that ELT textbooks include two kinds of information which are: the topic content (e.g., family, school etc.) and the linguistic content (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, skills) and they help learners to learn the linguistic content through topic content. [11]

The scientific researcher has selected some factors which show that textbooks are really important in second language learning.

Important of textbooks for improving language skills:

According to Hossain (2009). The skills of English language are the pillars or central part of that language. There are four skills in English language and these four skills are interrelated with each other, it is very rare to see people practice one skill separately. Usually people practice two or more skills together. [12]

Textbooks improve listening skill:



It is the most challengeable textbook to develop and practice some supplementary activities done by the teachers can also in developing listening skill. For example, some exercises such as true/false, fill in the blank, answer in one word these can be done by some audio materials provided by textbook as a supplementary material to develop students' listening skill (the essentials of language teaching n.d).

Communication skill:

According to Mcdonough and shaw (2010), textbooks help student to learn the approaches of English language that they can use for communication. In that case, student will avoid memorizing the structures and will learn the actual use of language for real life communication. [13]

Student can be introduced with new words and how same word can be differently used in different sentences with help of textbook according to Lawry (2014). He also added that, textbooks provide some imaginary or unfamiliar words (such as- prince, princess, pirates etc.) which help student to think and discuss about them can promote speaking in target language. [14]

Textbook improve writing skill:

According to Stosky (1983) and Krashen (1984), reading textbooks also promotes writing because students who are “Prolific” readers can also represent their good writing ability. In addition to this, Warren (2002), stated that, textbook can help a lot in creative writing, essay writing, constructive analysis writing etc. because learners can get idea about their writing topic from textbook, moreover they can bring literature in writing with the help of textbook. Since reading and writing have connection between them so “writing can effect reading and reading can effect writing”

(relationship between reading and writing n.d.). Since it has been stated above that, reading textbooks help students in developing their vocabulary and grammatical structures, so when students get ready for produce anything (writing), their knowledge of rich vocabulary and grammatical structure will help them a lot to produce a good structure in writing.

However, textbooks also promote writing in taking notes from teacher's talk or lectures according Hossain (2009). Sometimes teachers do not give that much information about a particular chapter because they want the students to give involve with the course book by reading and this promote taking notes from the chapter (how to take notes from textbook, n.d.).[15]

Textbooks promote grammar:

For learning any language, grammar is considered as “a major competent”. It makes the student able to “create their own utterances” and to use language appropriately. Grammar works as a basic foundation for any language learning.[16]

If the students can engage themselves into reading textbooks after that they can be able to relate grammatical structure with the sentences which is written in the textbook, that students do not have to memorize the structure. However, to engage student in reading textbook, Davis (1995) stated that textbook should be selected according to their attractiveness and it should have “relevant to the pupils' lives rather than for literary merit”. This will encourage them to read more books. [17]

Textbooks promote vocabulary:

According to Hossain (2009), textbooks help students to learn some strategies so that they can deal with the new and unfamiliar words easily. According to Cunningsworth (1995:35), communication in English

language is impossible without knowledge of good number of vocabulary. So, in that case, only textbooks can help students to develop their vocabulary skill. Similarly, Eccleshare (2013) added that, if students read books for their pleasure, they will acquire a good number of vocabulary, they will be able to absorb simple or sometimes complex sentence structure as will without giving any conscious effort. [18]

BENEFITS OF USING PROVERBS:

The benefits of teaching proverbs in schools, institutions for adults, language courses and other educational environments is crucial to understanding a foreign language. Moreover, we argue that in spite of the fact that proverbs are anonymous products, they are part of the culture of the community and they should be kept alive in the collective memory of the nation. In addition, it is a widely accepted belief that while learning a foreign language, students learn “national spirit” and “beliefs” of the foreign culture. Thus, proverbs provide a wonderful, insightful view into the “soul of the nation”; and we find it vital for learners of English as a foreign language to learn proverbs as well. We argue that including proverbs in the curriculum helps students improve their language skills. English language instructors will benefit from proverbs to overcome language barriers and create a trusting relationship with students during 40 classes. Students get a cross-cultural literacy and fluency in foreign language through the learning of proverbs. (Holis Go’zpinar; p.39-40)

Benefits of Using textbooks:

1. Textbooks serve as a guide to the prescribed curriculum and syllabus. They ensure that topics covered are similar across different school and state.

2. It transmits knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to the teacher and student.
3. It provides guidelines for teaching and learning. So, the teacher knows what is expected when teaching particular topics. They also know the best approach to help student assimilate better.
4. Textbooks save time and energy when searching for information since it is a source of the material. They are an easily accessible reference point. It is readily available source of information.
5. Using textbooks makes teaching various subjects systematic as it is arranged according to themes. For this reason, it is easier for students to follow the lesson and understand them better.
6. They play major role for weak students to achieve good grades, as they are able to read on their own in more details.
7. It is reliable point of reference. Because they are properly researched and therefore credible, while most information on the internet are added randomly.
8. Provide students with several examples, activities and experiments related to the topics so they can understand better.
9. Textbooks are illustrated so students are able to picture and visualize concepts.
10. They are the footpath and lighthouse as they provide detailed information and also provide references in case students or teachers require further information. [19]

CONCLUSION

Textbooks play an important role in language teaching and learning in public school, colleges, language school around the world. Proverbs also play an important role in teaching and learning English language. They have the same influence on students and teachers. Textbooks provide the basic framework within much

of classroom activities occur and also give every child the best possible opportunities for learning. It solves many problems of students and teachers in the process of teaching and learning. Teachers can not know how to teach the teaching materials without textbooks. Textbooks are the focus of attention of educational professionals because of their great importance in determining the content and educational policy. Textbooks are beneficial and useful for both students and teachers. They should be made accessible and available to teacher and students. Textbooks make easier the teaching and learning process and students can learn better and more extensively.

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