

LEARNING AND APPLYING THE SHL 3482 (LITERATURE IN ELT) BY UTM'S TESL TRAINEES

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ABSTRACT: Teachers of English especially teacher trainees need to be equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills to teach literature in school. The subject of Literature in ELT was taught to UTM's teacher trainees before they go for teaching practice in order to provide them with adequate skills and knowledge of literature teaching. Thus, this study was carried out to investigate the content of Literature in ELT that have been taught to teacher trainees and to identify the benefits of the subject to teacher trainees. Besides that, this study was also conducted to identify the problems faced by teacher trainees in teaching literature during their teaching practice and to suggest the ways to overcome the problems. 31 third year students of Bachelor Science and Education (TESL) were selected as the respondents of this study. A set of questionnaire was designed to collect the data from the respondents. The overall findings of the study indicate that Literature in ELT do benefits the teacher trainees in preparing themselves to teach literature as most of the respondents rarely face problems in their literature lesson. In conclusion, some suggestions have been made in order to improve the subject of Literature in ELT and recommendations for future research have also been included in the final part of the report.

ABSTRAK: Guru Bahasa Inggeris terutamanya guru pelatih perlu melengkapkan diri dengan ilmu dan kemahiran yang mencukupi untuk mengajar sastera di sekolah. Subjek Sastera Dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris telah diajar kepada guru pelatih UTM sebelum mereka menjalani latihan mengajar bagi menyediakan diri mereka dengan ilmu dan kemahiran yang mencukupi dalam pengajaran sastera. Maka, kajian ini telah dijalankan untuk mengetahui kandungan subjek Sastera Dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris yang telah diajar kepadaguru pelatih dan untuk mengenalpasti kebaikan subjek ini kepada guru pelatih. Selain itu, kajian ini juga telah dijalankan untuk mengenalpasti masalah yang dihadapi oleh guru pelatih dalam pengajaran sastera sepanjang latihan mengajar dan untuk memberi cadangan bagi menyelesaikan masalah tersebut. 31 pelajar tahun tiga Sarjan Muda Sains serta Pendidikan (TESL) telah dipilih sebagai responden untuk kajian ini. Satu set soal selidik telah direka bagi tujuan mengumpul data daripada responden. Hasil kajian menunjukkan subjek Sastera Dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris memberi kebaikan kepada guru pelatih dalam menyiapkan diri mereka untuk mengajar sastera dimana kebanyakan responden tidak selalu menghadapi masalah dalam pengajaran sastera mereka. Kesimpulannya, beberapa cadangan telah dibuat untuk memperbaiki subjek Sastera Dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris dan usulan untuk kajian masa hadapan juga telah dimuatkan di bahagian akhir laporan ini.

Keyword: KBSM - Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah , ELT - English Language Teaching, TESL - Teaching English as Second Language , CDC - Curriculum Development Centre , ESL - English as Second Language

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

This introduction of literature in the syllabus creates some difficulties to the students as well as for the teachers. Students have a poor understanding of the literary text. Besides that, they are not familiar with the text as there are no sufficient inputs or exposure to literary text especially the English literature. As for

the teachers, they face problems in delivering their lesson because teachers do not know the best way to teach literature. Besides that, they are also not familiar with the literary text, makes them need more time to prepare for the lesson. Teaching literature in ESL contexts can be a daunting task. This is especially so in the context of teaching literature in the Malaysian English language classroom where young students who lack the mastery of the English language struggle to deal with their literary texts or materials. Such situations create problems for English language teachers in the teaching of the literature component in secondary schools. The literary component was introduced to improve students' competency in the English language.

The teachers or teacher trainees of English must be well equipped so that they will display a good image to the students. When the teachers are very prepared and show their interests in the teaching, then the students will slowly become motivated to learn the subject. According to DeBoer and Dallmann (1960), if the teacher shows sincere interest in their problems, gives encouragement and demonstrates genuine enthusiasms for books, they can create an atmosphere that is favourable to voluntary reading. Similarly, in the case of teaching literature, if the teacher shows their interest and motivation when teaching literature, their students can sense their keenness and then sooner or later, they will learn to like the subject.

Objective

The objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the content of Literature in ELT that has been taught to the teacher trainees.
2. To identify the benefits of learning Literature in ELT to the teacher trainees in preparing themselves to teach literature during their teaching practice.
3. To identify the problems faced by the teacher trainees in the teaching of literature during their teaching practice.
4. To suggest a way to overcome the problems faced by the teacher trainees in the teaching of literature during their teaching practice.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is to help teacher trainees to prepare themselves to teach Literature in school during their teaching practice. Besides that, this study was also conducted to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the subject of Literature in ELT. In addition to that, this study also proposed suggestions to improve the content of Literature in ELT.

This research is significant for all people who are involved in teaching of literature especially to teacher trainees to prepare themselves to become teachers. This research will be used by them in order to know whether their knowledge and the training provided in their courses are enough and relevant to their real classroom teaching context. While for the colleges and universities, it is hoped that this research can help them in preparing an outline of a more useful and relevant literature teaching course for future teachers.

METHODOLOGY

Sample of Study

The sample for the study is 31 third year students of Bachelor Science and Education (TESL) of Faculty of Education in UTM. They were selected as the sample of the study because they have done their teaching practice and have taken the subject of Literature in ELT. These respondents have the experience of teaching practice and learning Literature in ELT.

Research Instrument

The instrument used to collect the data is a questionnaire. There are various types of question such as ranking and open ended were used in the questionnaire.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire used to collect data in this study was divided into five parts. In the first part, the questionnaire required the respondent to give some information about them. These questions were asked as to sort out the respondent into several groups based on the information given. The second part contained questions about Literature in ELT. Meanwhile, in the third part, the questions were about respondents' experience in teaching literature. In part four, questions about the problems faced by the teacher trainees in literature teaching were asked. Last but not least, in the last part, open ended questions were asked in the questionnaire.

Exposure to a Variety of Literary Texts

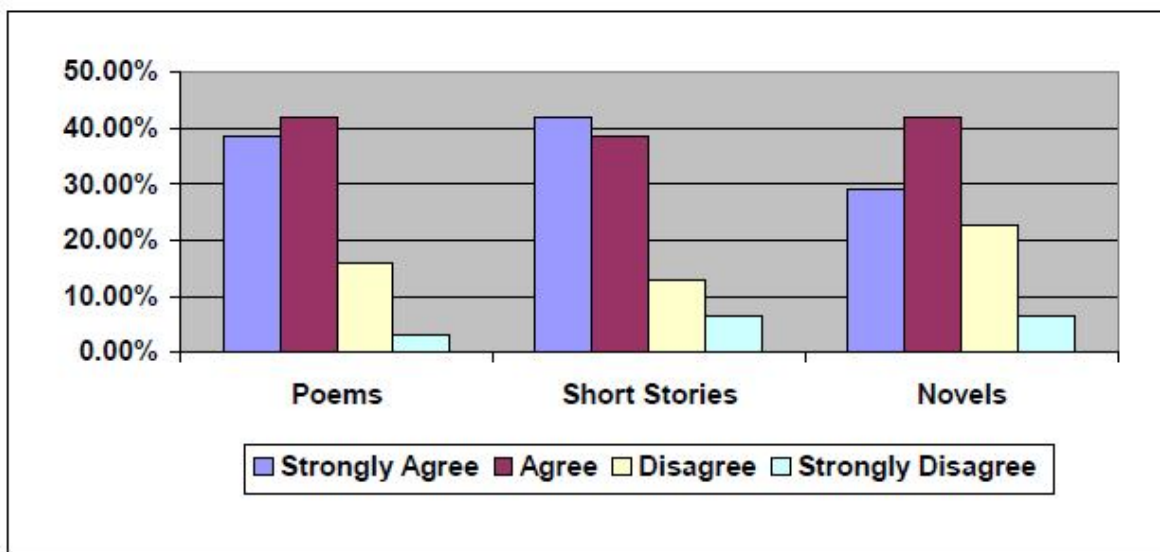


Figure 1 Percentages of Respondents' Exposure to a Variety of Literary Texts

The findings above show that respondents were exposed to a variety of literary texts during Literature in ELT. In KBSM, literary texts used are poems, short stories and novels. Based on Figure 1 above, it is shown that Literature in ELT exposed its' learners with all types of literary texts which is in line with the KBSM syllabus. Exposure to a variety of literary texts used in KBSM would help the teacher trainees to familiarize with the texts and its contents. Thus, this will benefit the teacher trainees in the teaching of literature. Teachers with inadequate literary background, according to Rosli Talif (1995) would encounter difficulty in trying to teach literature in the ESL classroom.

Introduction to Literary Elements

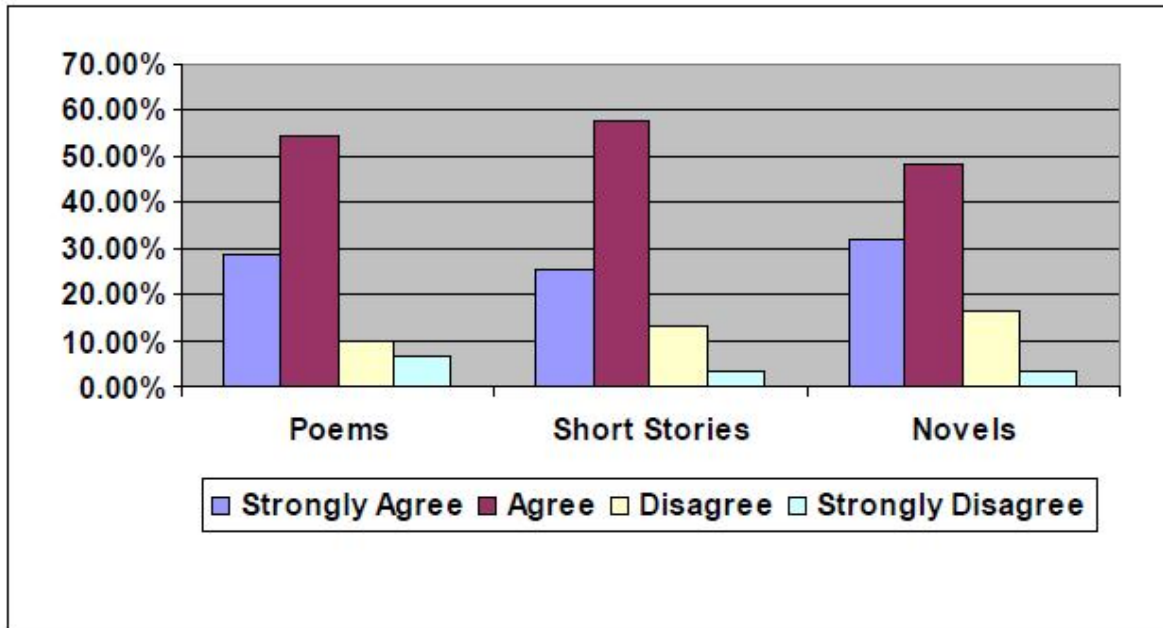


Figure 2 Percentages of Respondents' Awareness of Literary Elements

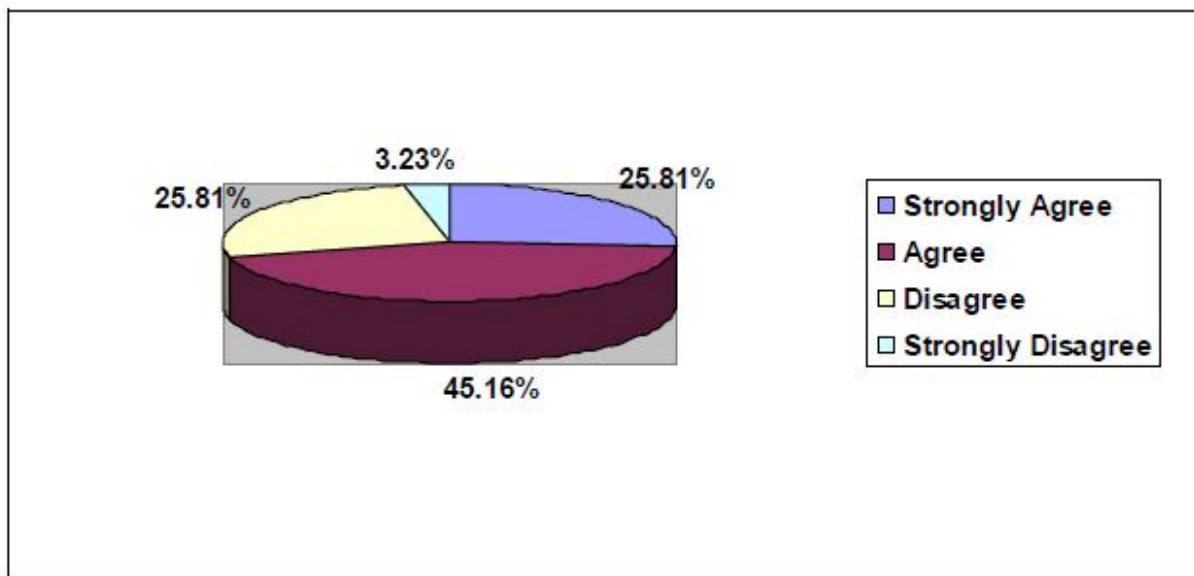


Figure 3 Percentages of Respondents' Understanding of Literary Elements

Based on the findings above, Figure 2 and Figure 3 show that Literature in ELT promotes teacher trainees awareness and understanding of the literary elements. Literary elements were one of the important aspects in literature. Teacher trainees need to understand the meaning and the function of literary elements in literature as it is necessary for them to teach the students about literary elements when he or she teach literature. Most of the respondents agreed that they were introduced and taught about the literary elements during literature in ELT. Literature in ELT is a subject that helps teacher trainees to understand the meaning and function of literary elements. Thus, it will help teacher trainees in teaching literature during teaching practice and equipping them with sufficient knowledge before they go for their teaching practice.

There were still a small number of respondents who did not agree that Literature in ELT makes them aware and understand the literary elements. This may be due to their lack of awareness and understanding of the literary elements that have been taught to them.

How to Improve the Subject

High number of respondents suggested varying the class activities as they thought that Literature in ELT should cover more aspects of literature teaching. Besides that, there were also suggestions to increase the learning hours. This was suggested as respondents thought that there were so many aspects to cover and the time allocated for Literature in ELT was not enough. Ample time need to be given as the theories learned in a lesson can be transferred in real classroom. Suggestions to have more reading materials were proposed by the respondents as it is maybe because they thought the literary materials exposed and introduced to them were not sufficient. Last but not least, a lesson which is more focused on KBSM was proposed. This is because, it is beneficial for the teacher trainees to have adequate exposure to the KBSM syllabus before they go for teaching practice.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the content of SHL 3482 (Literature in ELT) and its application by UTM's TESL trainees. Primary data were collected by distributing questionnaires to 31 third year students of Bachelor Science and Education (TESL). Returning to the research questions at the beginning of this study, the purpose of this study was to investigate the content of Literature in ELT that has been taught to the teacher trainees and to identify the benefits of learning Literature in ELT to the teacher trainees in preparing themselves to teach literature. Besides that, this study was carried out to identify the problems faced by the teacher trainees in the teaching of literature and to suggest ways to overcome the problems faced by the teacher trainees.

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