National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
School of Philosophy
Department of English Language and Literature

THE USE OF "LITERACY TEXTS" AND ACCOMPANYING TEACHING ACTIVITIES IN EFL COURSEBOOKS

John Lambrinakos

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Advisory Committee: Prof. Constantinos Evangelides (Supervisor), Prof. Anastasia Papakonstantinou, Prof. Bessie Dendrinos

Abstract
This study is an evaluation of the activities, which accompany the literacy texts found in fifty selected EFL coursebooks. These coursebooks are those most often used in Greece to teach students of secondary school age. The object of the study is to determine which activities are most effective in sensitizing students to an appreciation of the literary merit of a text and to determine what proportion of tasks that constitutes. The study shows what such tasks are more effective in exploiting texts. It also shows how less effective tasks can be improved in order to make full use of the benefits which literacy texts have to offer.

The study provides an overview of the history of the role of literature in EFL as well as a summary of the assumed benefits and drawbacks of literary texts, based on current linguistic theory. These are followed by a description of the research methods, the data accumulated, and an analysis of the findings.

Coursebooks texts that, according to certain criteria, could be considered "literary" were examined along with their accompanying exercises. The task types accompanying these texts, and the techniques, or methods with which these texts were treated in the EFL coursebooks were then analyzed and the observations recorded in a data base document. The final step was to categorize those tasks and techniques through which learners could become more aware of the literary merit of a particular passage, while simultaneously gaining access to the many benefits which derive from an acquaintance with literature.

In order to demonstrate which tasks are most effective and why, the study defines three levels of task "value": Optimum, Medium, and Low. These ratings are made according to criteria, which rank the tasks. The highest ranking, Optimum Value Task, is given to those tasks which sensitize the learner to the literariness of the text, improve his language, make him or her presumably a better human being and also teach him or her some of the target culture, thereby improving his or her communicative ability. Whether what is learned can be applied to future situations is also taken into consideration. Suck tasks use the text to maximum advantage. Each task is evaluated on the basis of the information in the database.

The hypothesis argued in this dissertation is that literary texts may have many benefits to offer the language reader, not only in the improvement of language skills, but also, through sensitizing him or her to literature in the extension of the student's knowledge and understanding of the world and, ultimately, himself or herself. In spite of these positive aspects, it is believed that literature is under-represented in EFL textbooks, and that even though literature-sensitizing tasks do exist, they do not occur often enough to allow the EFL student to reap the full benefit of what literature has to offer.