Literature in English: Evaluating its Suitability for Semester 1, PISMP (Bachelor of Education Programme) TESL

(Sastera dalam Bahasa Inggeris: Menilai Kesesuaian untuk Semester 1, PISMP (Ijazah Sarjana Muda Pendidikan) TESL)

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ABSTRACT

Literature seems to always be a course that most often befuddles rather than captivates student teachers of TESL at the Institutes of Teacher Education. Facing "literary inadequacy" due to lack of exposure to literary critical analysis at the upper secondary and preparatory levels aggravates the problem. Analysis of literary texts at these levels is merely highlighting the occurrences of basic literary devices in prescribed texts but the functions of why such devices are utilised by authors are not deeply explored by secondary school teachers. Hence, the suitability of offering a literature course at the beginning of an undergraduate programme was investigated, utilising the CIPP evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam (1971). 73 theory-based self-constructed items were administered to 120 respondents of three TESL cohorts via a cross-sectional survey research design. Reliability value for each construct using Cronbach Alpha was computed and the overall reliability value 0.959 was obtained, indicating that the research instrument was reliable to fulfil the purpose of the study. Findings and discussion underline the significance of offering the course in the first semester of TESL programme as well as the importance of learning literature in the 21st century.

Keywords: CIPP evaluation model, literary criticism in the 21st century, 21st century learning, literary competence.

ABSTRAK

Sastera seolah-olah sentiasa menjadi kursus yang sering mengelirukan pelajar guru TESL di Institut Pendidikan Guru. Menghadapi "lemah sastera" kerana kurangnya pendedahan kepada analisis kritikal sastera di peringkat menengah atas dan peringkat pengajian persediaan memburukkan lagi masalah. Analisis ke atas teks sastera pada tahap ini adalah semata-mata menonjolkan keberadaan unsure sastera dalam teks-teks yang dipelajari tetapi peranan mengapa unsure sastera tersebut digunakan oleh penulis tidak diterokai secara mendalam oleh guru-guru di sekolah menengah. Oleh itu, kesesuaian menawarkan kursus sastera pada awal program ijazah pertama telah disiasat, dengan menggunakan model penilaian CIPP yang dibangunkan oleh Stufflebeam (1971). Menggunakan reka bentuk penyelidikan kajian keratin rentas, 73 item yang dibina sendiri berdasarkan teori telah diedarkan kepada 120 responden daripada tiga kumpulan TESL. Nilai kebolehpercayaan bagi setiap konstruk dikira menggunakan Cronbach Alpha dan nilai kebolehpercayaan keseluruhan 0.959 telah diperolehi. Nilai ini menunjukkan bahawa instrument kajian boleh dipercayai untuk memenuhi tujuan kajian. Penemuan dan perbincangan menggariskan kepentingan menawarkan kursus sastera dalam semester pertama program TESL serta kepentingan pembelajaran sastera dalam abad ke-21.

Kata kunci: Model penilaian CIPP, kritikan sastera dalam abad ke-21, pembelajaran abad ke-21, kecekapan sastera.

INTRODUCTION

TESL Bachelor of Education Programme (PISMP TESL) of Institutes of Teacher Education (ITEs) in Malaysia offers an array of courses which include content and pedagogical knowledge such as linguistics, literature, ELT Methodology, phonetics and phonology, the teaching of the four language skills, ESL classroom management, ELT resources, assessment, curriculum studies, as well as action research. Besides these major courses, TESL major students are also required to take up Language Arts as their first elective package. Both major and elective courses equip student teachers to be future English language teachers that are able to teachthe English Language Standard Primary School Curriculum (KSSR) Modulewhich is currently imperative at primary schools in Malaysia.

Two major courses offered in the Semester One (1) of the PISMP TESL are TSL3013 Introduction to Linguistics and TSL3023 Literature in English while the Language Arts package offers LGA3013E Children's Literature. Children's Literature is a pedagogical course where student teachers are brought to venture into the interesting and magical world of children's literature via its pedagogical principles of teaching young learners, elements of children's literature, and exploring and exploiting stories, poetry and drama in the primary ESL classrooms. On the contrary, TSL3023 Literature in English exists at the other hemisphere. Focusing on the tradition of close reading of prescribed literary texts, student teachers are not only expected to be able to intelligently identify the appropriate theories of literary criticism to apply to the texts but also able to rationalise the selection by linking the textual evidences with the theoretical tenets.

Specifically, TSL3023 Literature in English focuses on theories of literary criticism, and critical analysis of short stories, novels, plays and forms of poetry. The learning objectives articulate that student teachers should (1) demonstrate an understanding of theories of literary criticism; (2) analyse short stories, poems, plays and novels based on various theories of literary criticism; (3) discuss themes in selected Malaysian and other Asian plays and novels; (4) and analyse the differences that historical perspective, literary form and culture generate (IPGM, 2013). The texts prescribed are (1) five short stories from American, English, Australian, African and Asian cultures; (2) two postcolonial plays from Asian and Malaysian contexts; (3) two postcolonial novels from Malaysian and American contexts; (4) and forms of poetry such as lyrical, sonnets, ballads, epics, haiku and limericks. The various schools of post structural list literary theory learned are Feminism, Marxism, New Historicism, Psychoanalysis, Post colonialism, Post modernism and Queer theory.

Literature in the 21st Century

Twenty-first century is the age of globalization, multiculturalism, transnationalism, telecommunication and digital technology. The study of literature however remains relevant to students till this day, indeed more so than ever before. In an online article entitled Literature in the 21st Century (2014), Professor Tommy Koh, an Ambassador-At-Large at Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered the study of literature as one of his life best investments due to three reasons. Firstly, reading is a joyful, educational and liberating experience where one is transported from his circumstances into another world, another time and another civilization and this unlocks the door to the treasury of the world. Likewise, Sidhu (2003) denoted that when one gets excited through literature, this will motivate him to read on despite the linguistic difficulties. Ganakumaran (2003) posited that literature may assist in promoting the reading habit among students. Secondly, reading literature helps one to think, write and speak clearly where clarity of thought and expression is a virtue which should be cultivated. Thirdly, reading literature gives one a better understanding of human nature and the complexity of the human condition. It makes one less judgemental and more sympathetic.On the same note, his third reason is clearly articulated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (2013)as one of the system aspirations to be achieved i.e. "Unity" – an education system that gives children shared values and experiences by embracing diversity (E-9).

Literary Criticism in the 21st Century

On the notion of the significance of literary criticism in the 21st century, Yaqoob (2011) suggested that reader-based poststructuralist methods of analysistrain students to make efforts to bring change into their cognitive structures and see the world from multipleperspectives. Using these theories as teaching tools enables students to pose challenge to conventions, reject assumptions and establishedmeanings and work out alternate solutions. Accordingly teaching methodologies and pedagogies are supported and recommended include critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, experiential learning, task-based learning, cognitive learning and social cognitive learning. These pedagogies prepare students to see the world from multiple perspectives and critically evaluate conventional practices and

assumptions and work to bring social change. Students are enabled to develop insight and see how knowledge is constructed and social reality is interpreted and represented.

Literary Competence

Literary competence comes in varied definitions, hence broaden the scope of its interpretations. In general, literary competence can be defined as the ability to master the rules of literary communication which include attitudes and motivation, e. g. the readiness to read a text several times and to accept the contract of conceiving a text as fictional (Pieper, 2011). Witte, Janssen & Rijlaarsdam (2006) reported that the term literary competence finds its origin in literary studies. Culler (1975), and Schmidt (1982, as cited in Witte, Janssen & Rijlaarsdam 2006) used it by analogy with Chomsky's linguistic competence, in order to describe the literary system. Coenen (1992, as cited in Witte, Janssen & Rijlaarsdam, 2006) was the first who tried to systematically define literary competence – a reader who is literary competent is able to communicate with and about literature, at least able to construct coherence. This might regard coherence within a text to enhance comprehension and interpretation, describing similarity and variation between texts, relating text and world, and relating personal judgement about the literary work to that of other readers. The literary competent reader's attitude to literature is defined by a certain willingness to invest in reading and a certain open mind regarding to deviant perspectives and frames of reference. These characteristics of literary competence defined by Coenen (1992) were used as the working definition for this study.

Statement of the Problem

Many students who struggle with literature often ask why do they need to study literature and how is it important for them to learn such course in this high-tech 21st century. Indeed, literature seems to always be a course that most often befuddles rather than captivates student teachers of TESL major at Institutes of Teacher Education. Facing "literary inadequacy" due to lack of exposure to literary critical analysis at the upper secondary (Ghazali et al. 2009; Aziz & Nasharudin 2010) and preparatory levels aggravates the problem. Respondents of this study are student teachers of TESL major who learnt small L (as opposed to big L) at their secondary and preparatory levels. At secondary level, literature is merely taught as comprehension texts (Yunus & Suliman 2014), little emphasis on higher

order thinking skills (Sidhu et, al. 2010) and teachers are still very much conducting activities which are more of the lower levels of the Bloom's Taxanomy such as the knowledge and understanding levels (Suliman & Yunus 2014). Analysis of literary texts isusually done by highlighting theoccurrences of basic literary devices in prescribed texts such as metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, symbolism etc. The purposes of the use of literary devicesare not deeply explored by secondary school teachers. Surface level analysis as such is however, enough to ensure that students are able to answer the literature component in the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM).

On this note, TESL major students in Semester One are considered "raw and immature" to a course which demands them to employ appropriate theories of critical criticism toprescribed literary texts. Moreover, the content of TSL3023 Literature in English is usually offered as a few major courses at most universities in Malaysia such as The Elements of English Literature, Literature and Language, Literature of Malaysia and Singapore in English, Women's Literature, Literature and Popular Culture (Department of English, Faculty of Arts and Social Science, University of Malaya, n.d.). To make matters worse, the content should be completed within 45 face-to-face contact hours. Many lecturers also deem that this course is suitable for TESL major but should be offered at later semesters of theprogramme.

Considering the abovementioned predicament, this study sought to evaluate the suitability of offering TSL3023 Literature in English in Semester One for TESL Major undergraduate programme at an Institute of Teacher Education in Malaysia. This purpose was evaluated through the perspective of student teachers via context, input, process and product evaluations of the CIPP evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam (1971). More specifically, the environment that the course took place, the student teachers' perceptions in terms of course content, teaching methods, materials and assessment dimensions of the course and student teachers' perceptions of their own competencies were aimed to be examined. By means of this study, the researcher's ultimate aim is to suggest relevant adaptations that may contribute to the improvement of the TESL programme structure and curriculum.

Hence, this study aimed to answer one primary question: to what extent does TSL3023 Literature in English suitable to be offered in Semester One for TESL major student teachers? This major research question is further guided by sub-questions which were built based on the Context-Input-Process-Product (CIPP) evaluation model. The sub-questions are as follows:

Context
1. Are the infrastructure and info structure in the campus suitable to assist student teachers learning?

Input
2. Do the lecturers possess suitable qualities to teach this course?
3. Is this course suitable to be offered in Semester One?
4. Are all the prescribed texts suitable to be taught within 45 contact hours?
5. Is the course content suitable to improve student teachers' literary and personal development?

Process
6. Are the teaching methods used in this course suitable?
7. Are the extra materials used during lessons suitable?
8. Are the existing assessments suitable?

Product
9. How do the student teachers perform in the final exam?
10. Do student teachers possess the attributes of literary competence after completing this course?

STUFFLEBEAM'S CONTEXT-INPUT-PROCESS-PRODUCT MODEL (1971)

This model is one of the educational evaluation models which is commonly employed in evaluation studies today. Stufflebeam's CIPP model is consistent with system theory and, to some degree, with complexity theory: it is flexible enough to incorporate the studies that support ongoing programme improvement as well as summative studies of a completed programme's outcomes (Fryer & Hemmer, 2012). The researcher decided to apply this model in this study based on its theoretical basis against the course's complexity as well as researcher's evaluation needs.

Frye and Hemmer (2012) viewed that Stufflebeam intended CIPP evaluation Model to focus on programme improvement instead of proving something about the programme. The CIPP approach consists of four complementary sets of evaluation studies (context-input-process-product) that allow evaluators to consider important but easily overlooked programme dimensions. Taken together, CIPP components accommodate the ever-changing nature of most educational programmes as well as educators' interest for programme-improvement data (Frye & Hemmer 2012). By alternately focusing on programme Context, Inputs, Process, and Products (CIPP), the CIPP model addresses all phases of an education programme: planning, implementation, and a summative or final retrospective assessment if desired. The first three elements of the CIPP model are useful for improvement-focused (formative) evaluation studies, while the Product approach, the fourth element, is very appropriate for summative (final) studies. The usefulness of the CIPP model across a variety of educational and non-educational evaluation settings has been thoroughly documented (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield 2007).

METHOD

Research Design

Describing the current status of the course was the aim of this evaluation study. Hence, the cross-sectional survey research design was chosen among the other types of descriptive research methods as the most suitable one. In cross-sectional studies, the purpose of the research is descriptive and generally in the form of a survey. There is usually no hypothesis, but the aim is to describe a subgroup within the population with respect to a set of factors. In addition, a cross-sectional study allows a researcher to find the prevalence of the outcome of interest, for subgroups within the population at a given time-point (Levin 2006).

Participants

Participants were 120 PISMP TESL major students from three cohorts of 2011, 2012 and 2013 intakes – 6 PISMP (Cohort 2011; N = 37; 30.8%), 4 PISMP (Cohort 2012; N = 45; 37.5%), and 2 PISMP (Cohort 2013; N = 38; 31.7%). 77.5% (N = 93) of the participants were female while its counterpart made up 22.5% (N = 27). Ethnicity, and the main language of communication were not considered in this study. Participants were the population of the TESL major student teachers who had taken up TSL 3023.

Instrumentation

A theory-based self-constructed questionnaire of 73 items in nine constructs (Table 1) was utilised in this study. The composition of the items are as follows: (i) 73 items (positively worded) rated on a six-point Likert Scale with 1 signifies "Extremely Disagree" and 6 indicates "Extremely Agree"; (ii) the range of possible scores for all the items is between 73 and 438 with a high score indicative of highly agreeing with

the items; and (iii) the items are essentially statements representing the four evaluation dimensions in the Stufflebeam's CIPP evaluation Model (1971) – Context Evaluation contains 8 items, Input Evaluation 32 items, Process Evaluation 18 items and Product Evaluation 15 items.

The medium of communication of the questionnaire was English language due to the fact that all the participants were TESL student teachers. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data collected via the questionnaire.

Procedure

A pilot study was not executed prior to the actual data collection because the Language Department decided that all students that had taken up the course should participate. Actual data collection was done from 10th until 17th July 2013 and administered during class hour to ensure high return rate (100% return rate). Missing data were imputed with the mean of the respective item and detected via frequency analysis. Offending outliers were detected via stem-and-leaf plot and no discernible pattern could be traced, hence all respondents were retained in the analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

The researcher used descriptive statistics to describe the identified features of the data in the study. The percentages, means and standard deviations for all the items were presented based on the composite score range calculated. The six-point liker scale was collapsed into three parts of composite scores (summated scales) according to each construct - low, medium and high. Such calculation was done because the items for each construct have relatively high internal consistency (Table 1) i.e. above .7 for a social science research. Pallant (2011) accepted the internal consistency of .6 for a newly-built instrument. Joint

Committee on Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing of the AERA, APA, and NCME (1999) defined composite score as a score that is derived by combining one or more scores according to a specified formula. This is typically accomplished by averaging or summing the contributing scores which are often weighted according to their relative importance. Hence, the descriptive statistics are presented according to the sub-research questions (Table 2). For the purpose of this paper, only the analyses of Input-Process-Product evaluations are presented to adhere to the seminar theme.

Internal Consistency and Validity

Table 1 below shows the Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct. All values are above .7 except for Context evaluation (.672) and the overall value is .959, indicating that the research instrument is reliable to fulfil the purpose of the study. As for the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was examined by two experts; one in the TESL field and another in the evaluation field, prior to the administration onto the population.

TABLE 1. Alpha Coefficient Reliability for each construct

Domain	Construct	No. of Item	Alpha Value
Context	1. The teaching and learning environment in the campus	8	.672
	2. The qualities of lecturers	10	.934
Input (α = .943)	3. The suitability of offering the course in Semester One	5	.891
	4. The texts prescribed	4	.765
	5. Contents contribute to personal development	13	.946
Process (α = .895)	6. Teaching methods	6	.813
	7. Materials for the course	7	.863
	8. Assessment	5	.834
Product	9. Literary Competence	15	.949
	Total Construct	73	.959

Table 2 reports the levels of agreeableness of the respondents for the suitability of offering TSL3023Literature in English in Semester One. The highest percentage(s) for each sub-research questions are highlighted and will further discuss inFindings and Discussion.

TABLE 2. Levels of agreeableness of the respondents for the suitability of offer in TSL3023 *Literaturein English in Semester 1, PISPM TESL Major*

Research Question	% based on Composite Score Range			Mean	S.D
	Low	Medium	High		
CONTEXT					
1. Are the infrastructure and infostructure in the campus suitable to assist student teachers learning?	2.4	73.5	24.1	31.29	5.86
INPUT					
2. Do the lecturers possess suitable qualities to teach this course?	0	6.6	93.4	55.05	5.99
3. Is this course suitable to be offered in Semester 1?	0	23.3	76.7	24.92	3.86
4. Are all the prescribed texts suitable to be taught within 45 contact hours (15 weeks)?	0	37.5	62.5	18.95	3.28
5. Is the course content suitable to improve student teachers' literary and personal development?	0	7.6	92.4	68.92	7.72
PROCESS					
6. Are the teaching methods used in this course suitable?	0	7.5	92.5	32.04	3.28
7. Are the extra materials used during lessons suitable?	0	7.5	92.5	37.36	4.22
8. Are the existing assessments suitable?	0	8.3	91.7	26.73	2.99
PRODUCT					
9. How do the student teachers perform in the final exam? *(only the percentage result based on frequency)*	8.3	51.7	40.0		
10. Do student teachers possess the attributes of literary competence after taking this course?	0	6.7	93.3	78.87	8.37

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses the findings based on all the sub-research questions against the CIPP evaluation dimensions as shown in Table 2.

Highlights of Analysis of Context Evaluation

This is the lowest perceived domain compared to input, process and product domains. The infrastructure and infostructure in the campus are perceived moderately suitable to assist teaching and learning. The item *internet access* obtains the lowest mean (mean = 3.41, S.D. = 1.36). Other items which are perceived moderately by participants include *photocopying facilities, printing facilities, LCD in classrooms*, and *library with suitable learning materials for the course*. The highest perceived items are*conducive classroom* (mean = 4.22, S.D. = 1.02) and conducive lecture hall (mean = 4.23, S.D. = 1.13)

Highlights of Analysis of Input Evaluation

All the constructs in this domainare perceived highly (> 60%) by student teachers. Nearly 95% (93.4%) of the respondents perceived that the lecturers who teach this course posses suitable qualities and more than 90% agreed that the course content is suitable to improve their literary and personal development.Two items in the "qualities of lecturers" however are perceived low i.e. *good ICT knowledge* (mean = 5.08, S.D. = .885) and *always available for face-to-face discussions* (mean = 5.47, S.D. = .849). This shows that lecturers for this course are requested to equip themselves with better ICT knowledge and more available for students to meet outside of class for face-to-face discussions. Student teachers prefer lecturers to utilize ICT in teaching is expected for they are the *Millenniums* youths. They also prefer their lecturers to continue guiding them outside of class hour due to what has been mentioned earlier; they are still "raw and immature" to a course

which demands them to employ appropriate theories of critical criticism to literary texts. A recent means to fulfil both needs is by using Google Classroom, a new tool in Google Apps for Education which was introduced by Google and publicly released in August 2014 (Google for education: Introducing classroom 2014). Google Classroom provides a platform where lecturers"can make announcements, ask questions and comment with students in real time and this improving communication inside and outside of class".

As for the "suitability to offer this course in Semester One", nearly 80% (76.7%) agreed with this construct with the highest perceived item *profession as an English teacher* (mean = 5.38, S.D. = .676), giving the idea that they need to learn this course as it is needed by the profession. Pertaining to the construct "the text prescribed", respondents' agreeableness is split into two i.e. high (62.5%) and medium (37.5%). *Novels* (mean = 4.40, S.D. = 1.212) and *plays* (mean = 4.46, S.D. = 1.222) are less popularly perceived compared to other genres. This two genres use longer texts to be read compared to short stories and poems. The reasons why respondents did not prefer these genres warrant further investigation.

For the construct "contents contribute to personal development", more than 90% (92.4%) agreed. This course is deemed as suitable to improve respondents' literary and personal development but group *work activities during class* is not perceived to *develop their leadership skills* (mean = 4.97, S.D. = .916).

Highlights of Analysis of Process Evaluation

All the constructs in this component are perceived higher (> 90%) than the Input Evalution constructs. These results show that respondents perceived that the teaching methods, the extra materials used and the existing assessments are suitable for this course.

Respondents appreciate *lecturer's guidance while completing tasks/assignment* (mean = 5.65, S.D. = .575), but they do not prefer *lecturing style method* (mean = 5.03, S.D. = .839). Reading materials preferred are *lecture notes* (mean = 5.50, S.D. = .698) and *materials downloaded from the Internet* (mean = 5.43, S.D. = .718). These findings are concurrent with the findings from the "input evaluation" where respondents requested their lecturers to equip themselves with ICT knowledge and always available for face-to-face discussions outside of class.

All types of assessment for this course such as project work, reflective writing, class presentation and final semester examination are deemed suitable but the lowest mean is the final semester examination. Respondents perceived lowly for *final semester examination reflects the content* (mean = 5.27, S.D. = .857) and *final semester examination helps me learn better* (mean = 5.20, S.D. = .875). This result shows that respondents were in favour of assessment for learning (formative) when taking this course. This is supported by the highest perceived item *project work helps me better understand how to apply the theory* (mean = 5.47, S.D. = .673). The findings from both domains i.e. "good ICT knowledge", "lecturer's guidance while completing assignments/tasks", "face-to-face discussion", "materials downloaded from the Internet" and "project work to apply theory" triangulate the types of pedagogical preference of the 21st century learners.

Highlights of Analysis of Product Evaluation

Nearly 95% (93.35%) of the respondents agreed that they possess the attributes of literary competence after taking this course. Highly perceived items include *able to recognize values and attitudes of characters in a literary text* (mean = 5.40, S.D. = .614), *able to recognise the themes of a text* (mean = 5.40, S.D. = .640) and *able to develop sensitivity towards others through literature* (mean = 5.38, S.D. = .676). Lowly perceived items include *able to develop linguistic ability through literature* (mean = 5.09, S.D. = .767), *able to make critical judgement* (mean = 5.17, S.D. = .792) and *able to understand both implicit and explicit meanings of words/ phrases in a text* (mean = 5.21, S.D. = .732). These results subtly convey that after taking up this course, some literary competence in the respondents have been improved such as the ability to recognise values and attitutes in characters, and ability to have empathy towards others. This course however, less successful to improve students' critical judgement and linguistic ability. The finding is clearly portrayed in their performance in the final examination whereby 51.7% (N = 62) scored B while only 40% (N = 48) scored A. Nobody however, failed this course.

Overall major findings

The main research question for this study is: to what extent does TSL3023 *Literature in English* suitable to be offered in Semester One for TESL major student teachers? Results show that respondents perceived highly all the constructs of the CIPP model, indicating that this course is suitable to be taught in Semester One of the PISMP TESL major. Respondents perceived this course as important for their teaching profession, lecturers are required to use ICT in class, guidance and

face-to-face discussion are appreciated, practised more assessment for learning, and short stories and poems are more preferable than novels and plays. Respondents also perceived that they have gained some aspects of literary competence after taking up this couse but need to further improve their linguistic ability and critical judgement.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Literary study and literary criticism are still relevant in the 21st century education. As such, this course is suitable to be offered in the TESL undergraduate programme of ITEs as it is important for student teachers' teaching profession although literature for primary education inclines towards appreciating the Language Arts. Literature lecturers of the 21st century need to equip themselves with the current digital technology in order to fulfil the needs of the 21st century learners. Current pedagogical tools for 21st century learners such as flipped classroom, BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), and the most recent, Google classroom warrant further exploration by lecturers in order to be relevant to the way young generation of 21st century constructing knowledge as well as interpreting and making meaning to literature. Gore and Begum (2012) suggested that language teachers have to constantly update their knowledge, look for new methodology, and learn to use technology for pedagogical purposes. Besides the high-tech teaching tools, the poststructuralist literary theory may also be an effective pedagogigal tool to teach literature in the 21st century (Yaqoob 2011). These literary theories have great potential for making learners critical readers andcreative explorers which is the fundamental aim of 21st century pedagogies such as critical pedagogy, cognitive learning, social cognitive learning etc.

Assessment is vital in an education process. Being in the 21st century, the type of assessment should favour ably incline towards assessment for learning, as opposed to merely *of* learning. Assessment for learning places its first priority in its design and practice to servethe purpose of promoting students' learning. It thus differs from assessment designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability, or of ranking, or of certifying competence (Black 2004, as cited in Florenz & Sammons 2013). Lecturers who use assessment for learning are better prepared to meet the diverse students' needs through differentiation and adaptation of teaching to raise students' achievement levels as well as to achieve greater equity of student outcomes (OECD/ CERI International Conference, n.d.).

Above all, the main significance of studying literature in the 21st century is about educating young generation to appreciate what it means to be human, and what is important for us as a person as we relate to the world around us. Through the prescribed multicultural short stories, novels, plays and poems, students explore different contexts which deal with what it means to live and to live well together. This notion is extremely pertinent in the digital high-tech borderless world of the 21st century.

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