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NEW STREAMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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KNOWING PSYCHOLOGY FOR TEACHING LITERATURE

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Introduction:-

How many teachers do ponder over the psychology of the pupils? I think those can be counted with fingers. In many colleges literature is not taught for literature's sake or to create a class of creative writers and poets by kindling dormant creativity and latent imaginative power of the students. The teaching of literature has become only examination- oriented. The teachers talk about syllabus, discuss question paper format, ask the students to solve the question papers and finish syllabus allotted to them within time to make themselves complacent.

Nowadays, the students are seeking admission for career-oriented courses. They don't like to travel in '*the realms of gold*'. They are learning English entirely for social and financial advantages. Their interest in literature is naught. Therefore the teacher of English has to shoulder the responsibility of attracting, persuading and convincing the students to take euphoria in English literature. While using innovative techniques in the teaching of English literature, the teacher should also use innovative techniques to infuse the interest for English literature in the students' minds. With devotion and zeal the teacher can instill the likings for literature in the minds of the students.

Teacher should have adequate knowledge of psychology then only he can teach properly. William James says 'teaching is an art derived from the science of psychology.' Recently, teaching is considered as a science, that is a systematic application of the rules of the science of human behavior. According to B.F. Skinner; 'Teacher is a specialist in human behavior, whose assignment is to bring extraordinarily complex changes in extraordinarily complex material.' (p 461, W.N.Dandekar, S.Makhija).

Psychology can Change the Attitude of teachers:-

After knowing psychology, the teacher becomes positive in his attitudes. He considers child as a social pillar. He starts showing concerns for his students. He begins to think about the environment of the pupils as a prominent factor affecting students' behavior and personality. He becomes sensitive about students' reactions inside as well as outside the classroom. He starts showing responsibility for the all-round development of the students. Thus, the knowledge of psychology influences the teacher in developing interest and changing his attitude towards the pupils.

PSYCHOLOGY BASED TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING LITERATURE:-

It is said that literature is nothing but a mirror held up to the society. This fact becomes advantageous for teaching literature since the mentality of the people is that they take interest in the events, incidents or situations which are concerned with them. They raise their ears and expand their eyes when they notice the milieu in which they reside and the situations they are experiencing or have already experienced.

Therefore, the teacher should relate the incidents and situations from a work of literature with those from a students' life. This can be the effective technique for teaching literature by entangling their attention.

The Jigsaw Classroom educational technique which is proposed by psychologists basically for overcoming prejudices among the students but this technique can be innovatively used for teaching literature. "In a "jigsaw classroom," students have to work together to reach a specific goal. Each student is given a "piece of the puzzle" or information that is necessary for solving the problem and reaching the goal (Aronson et al., 1978; Clark, 1994). Students then share their information with other members of the formed group. Interaction between diverse student is increased----- ." In a friendly atmosphere problem can be solved. Here problems or goals, for instance, can be based on stylistic analysis of a poem, etc.

Most of the students take delight and solace in movies and songs. I daresay no student of literature can be found without an adequate knowledge of either movies or songs in the present cultural set up. Novels, dramas are nothing but movies and poems are nothing but merely songs. The teacher of English must relate the novels or the drama and the poems he is teaching with the movies and songs in this or that way. For instance, the film 'Maqbul' is based on Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'. Vishal Bhardwaj's 'Omkaara' has the source in 'Othello'. R.K. Narayan's novel 'Guide' and Dev Anand's Movie 'Guide'; Chetan Bhagat's Novel - 'The Three Mistakes of my Life' and Abhishek Kapoor's 'Kai Po che'; Director Arjun Sajjanis movie 'Agni Varsha' and Girish Karnad's play 'The Fire and the Rain'; Jane Austen's Romantic novel 'Pride and Prejudice' and director Gurindar Chadha's movie- 'Bride and Prejudice' these literary works can be taught and studied comparatively. The other examples are 'The Mistress of spice', 'The Name sake', 'Two States' etc. We can give many examples of this type. Thus the teacher should either relate or compare the literary texts with the movies from any language that the students know.

Such comparisons can be drawn out between the literary works from different languages to make the learning enjoyable and interesting. The students, knowing Marathi Language can learn G.B. Shaw's play 'Pygmalion' with interest and proper understanding, if they are shown Marathi Movie 'Tee Phulrani' by P.L. Deshpande.

Thus, for Indian learners showing Bollywood movies based on English novels and dramas and teaching them comparatively is very useful and interesting. Here, the teacher can ask his students to draw out the differences between the original literary work and the movie based on it.

By watching movies students get the knowledge of stage craft, stage-direction, characterization, narrative techniques, plots -simple, complex, sub, etc.

Many of Shakespeare's plays are available in the form of Videos. There are other masterpieces also which are in the form of videos. e.g. 'Oliver Twist', 'Robinson Crusoe' etc.

Many British poets have used allusions referring to Greek mythology which made the poems implicit and impenetrable for Indian students. For example Matthew Arnold's ode- 'Philomela', John Dryden's poem- 'Alexander's Feast', Tennyson's 'Ulysses', 'Tithonus', 'Oenone', P.B. Shelley's four-act, lyrical drama 'Prometheus Unbound', W.B. Yeats' poem 'Leda and the swan', etc. These poems contain Greek mythological figures.

The role of the teacher is to acquaint his pupils with these mythological figures so as to make the poem more explicit and understandable. The teacher should accustom the students to these mythological characters by showing them movies based on Greek mythology. Undoubtedly, there are myriads of movies portraying Greek mythological figures. For example - Agamemnon, Helen of Troy, king Paris, Priam, goddess Aphrodite, Bacchus, etc. Allusions should be



made explicit and understandable otherwise the students may not pay attention on what is being taught.

The following poetic lines -

*"I am Jatayu helpless,
After ten-headed Ravana's callousness".*

These lines are easy to comprehend but only for Indian students for they know Ramayana' but the same lines can be impenetrable for foreigners for they don't know Indian myth and such allusive expression can militate their learning causing abatement of interest in poetry.

Another way of innovation in teaching is that the teacher should teach a literary text or poem as possible as in accordance with seasonal changes. In other words, a poem about 'rain' should be taught in rainy season, if possible, a poem about patriotic fervor, for example- war poetry, should be taught during the days near to 15th August or Republic Day. Doing such thing creates psychological base and makes the learner ready to learn rapidly with congeniality of temperament or disposition. Certainly the love poetry of Donne can appeal more during the days near to Valentine's Day. Donne's poem- 'Valediction:Forbidding Mourning' can be taught some days before the valedictory function of last year students. In short, there should be a Thematic Correlation between what we teach and what is taking place outside . But this technique is not possible every time.

The American psychologist Jerome S. Bruner discusses about concept of Meaningful Learning in which he speaks about the symbolic mode of representation while expounding the ideas with words. Explanation of symbolism can augment the interest of the students because any poem or literary work can be made comprehensible and interesting after having a talk about the symbols used in it. William Blake's poems are highly symbolical and teaching it without discussing the symbols means a meaningless talk or piffling. Blake's poem 'The Tyger' would remain only a compilation of rhetorical questions if symbols in it are not discussed or explained.

The teacher should not deal only with the surface -level meaning of a poem but he must ruminate over the deeper-level meaning also. For instance- Robert Frost's poems 'The Road not Take' , 'Mending Wall' etc bear a deeper - level meaning. In fact, symbols are the shadows of our psyche. When our emotions are not expressed well in words that time we have to use implicit or explicit symbols to convey our emotions in best possible way.

Non-directive Teaching:-

Carl Rogers, a renowned psychologist and one of the exponents of humanistic approach, was the major theorist of Non-directive method of teaching in which teacher's role is of a facilitator and a guide that help the students learn independently. The teacher's goal is to help the students understand their own needs and values thereby they can choose the things to learn on their own with their own methods and techniques. This method takes place in four steps. 1) Students release their feelings. 2) Develop insight in the given situation. 3) Follow with action. 4) Integration that leads to a new orientation. The teacher should respect the responses of the learners. He should not discourage them.

Application of the aforesaid Technique in different way. The teacher may show the students some masterpieces in English literature just telling them the greatness of the books and without asking them to read. The students who are really interested in reading literature will ask for the shown books at least will ask the teacher to teach or discuss those literary

works. Before doing this thing the teacher should maintain a rapport with students then only student will feel free to talk with the teacher. Thus this approach is learner-centered.

"Non-directive teaching has profound implications which even those who accept this point of view cannot at present fully fathom. Its importance goes beyond the classroom and extends to every area where human beings communicate and try to live with one another." (Samuel Tenenbaum).

The concept Attainment Technique:-

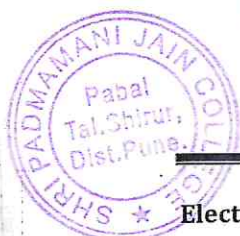
This model of teaching is based on the research of Jerome Bruner (1977), an American Psychologist. Concept attainment is an inductive process that helps the learner develop a concept. In it the students try to figure out the attributes or characteristics of a group or category that has been provided by the teacher either on blackboard or card sheets. The students compare and contrast the attributes of the concepts with examples that do not contain attributes. After observing these examples students form their own tentative idea and make out the similarities and common factors in the given examples. Thus the concept is formed or attained by the learners. The examples should be given in two columns by labeling the title 'YES' and 'NO'. 'YES' column should contain the examples of the concept to be developed.

This technique can be used to teach types of rhymes-internal, Para, masculine, feminine etc. then imagery- concrete images and abstract images. We can teach imagery by making six columns containing examples. In each column, the examples given should have common attributes. These columns can be compared with one another. For example, imagery- auditory, tactile, thermal, olfactory, gustatory, and kinesthetic. After that write some more examples miscellaneous and ask the students to put those examples in appropriate columns. We can teach various figures of speech by this technique.

Example to illustrate the process of concept attainment:-

- First, the teacher selects the concept to be developed for example, Simile and Metaphor.
- He starts by making a list of both positive 'YES' and negative 'NO' examples. The examples can be written on blackboard or shown with the help of computer.
- Positive examples contain attributes of the concept to be taught. E.g. 1) I wandered lonely as a cloud. 2) My love is like a red rose. 3) He roars like a lion. 4) And ice, mast-high came floating by, / as green as emerald. Etc.
- Negative examples- 1) A sea of people listened to the leader. 2) the bad news was a dagger to his heart. 3) Times winged-chariotis hurrying near. 4) sea of grief. Etc.
- Ask the students to observe the examples under the YES column and ask them about the common attributes in them.
- Then give some more miscellaneous examples and ask the students to put the positive examples under the YES column. Thus, the students with inductive, analytical and logical thinking will attain the concept to be taught.

It is said that human mind can receive 90% of matters if they appeal to our visual sensory perceptions. Therefore, teaching aids can play a vital role in teaching-learning process. These aids make teaching-learning process easier and interesting. These aids contain audio, video, and Audio-visual devices. Audio-visual aids stimulate the prominent senses of sight and hearing. That's why the study material is comprehended easily. Therefore, the teacher should use audio-visual aids like T.V., LCD projector etc. for inviting newness in his teaching. The teacher can also record the prominent dialogues from a play or he can record a poem with proper stress, intonation



and proper expression and make his students listen the recorded cassettes or CDs or DVDs in the class or at their homes. For example- Portia's Speech on Mercy from Shakespeare's- 'The Merchant of Venice' can be recorded emotively by the teacher.

The Teacher can also ask the students to make the teaching aids like charts, models, sculpture, objects, etc. in his guidance or he can make them on his own.

For example - While teaching Katharine Mansfield's famous short story 'The Doll's House', the teacher can ask his students to make or construct a model of the doll's house by reading a minute description of the house given by the author herself. This thing definitely makes the learning delectable. Another example is in case of John Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn". In this ode we have a mesmerizing delineation of four pictures which are painted/carved on the Urn. The teacher can make a model of Urn and get it carved or painted from a skillful artist (Painter or sculptor) and put it in the classroom while teaching to captivate the learner's attention or at least he can draw a picture of the urn displaying the four pictures.(1) Musicians playing pipes and timbrels (2) Lovers sitting under tree (3) Procession led by the priest for sacrifice of a heifer (4) deserted village on it.

The most important and advantageous tool for teaching is the **Internet**. With the help of Internet students and teachers can collect any information pertaining to literature. With the help of **Facebook, Blogs, E-mail** one can have a direct contact or communication with the living authors or poets.

While teaching, Thomas Hardy's poem 'The Darkling Thrush', the teacher must take the help of internet. In this poem Hardy depicts thrush and his song. Since Indian students do not know thrush and how it sings, they will not study the poem with interest. Therefore the teacher should take the labor of downloading the color images of thrush bird from the internet. He will also get a video of thrush bird's singing from the **You Tube**.

In S.T. Coleridge's ballad 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' we have a reference of **albatross** bird. The information and images of albatross are also available on the internet.

Thus showing the video or images of new things, persons, animals, birds etc. help augment the interests of the learners. While teaching Wordsworth's sonnet 'Lines composed upon Westminster Bridge', first the teacher should have seen the Westminster bridge at least in picture and then he can teach the poem effectively. In this sonnet Wordsworth depicts an extollable scene of Westminster bridge at the time of dawn. After watching the image of the bridge students may decide whether it is really laudable or not.

Thus internet has become a must-worth-watch source for teaching literature. Before teaching the **war poetry** of Rupert Brook, Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, etc. the teacher should show the videos of trench life and war in action thereby he can make the students aware of the predicament and the plight of the soldiers. They will come to know the misery, sufferings and sordid life of trenches. In this way the teacher can make the warpoetry heart-rending.

Expository Teaching:- Another exponent of the theory of meaningful verbal learning is a psychologist **David Ausubel**. He speaks about expository teaching in which new information to be learnt is linked with the existing knowledge the students have. It is the integration of new ideas into the previously existing ideas. Ausubel calls it ease of assimilation and meaningful reception. When students learn a mass of facts without understanding any intra-relationships or linkages, it is called non-meaningful or rote learning.

Advance Organizer Model of Teaching:-

David Ausubel recommends this model for teaching based on his ideas about meaningful verbal learning. He describes this model as '*an introductory material presented ahead of the learning task and at a higher level of abstraction and inclusiveness than the learning task itself*'. The most effective advance organizers are those that use concepts, terms and propositions that are already familiar to the learner.

Other psychological models for teaching are as under.

- 1) Inductive Thinking Model by *Hilda Taba* to develop inductive mental process of pupils.
- 2) Memory Model by *Jerry Lucas* and *Harry Lorayne* to develop capacity to memorize.
- 3) Cognitive Growth Model by *Jean Piaget* to develop intellect and logical reasoning.
- 4) Synectics by *William Gordon* for creativity and creative problem solving.
- 5) Stress Reduction Model by *Rimm* and *Masters Wolpe* to reduce stress and tensions.

Application psychoanalytical theory can enhance the interest of the learners. Most of the students do not care for the craftsmanship of author or poet. They only think about theme and characters used in the literary works. There are so many poems, the themes of which are not appealing and interesting. Such poems affect the learners interest and understanding. In this case the application of stylistics play vital role by making the poems interesting. The teacher can also use psychoanalytical approach for teaching poems. Take for example, the poem 'Meeting at Night' by Robert Browning is very short, lacking a thematic appeal, having economy of words, leaves no impact on the ordinary readers. Apparently, the poem consists of two stanzas of six lines in each. The first stanza contains the depiction of natural surroundings and the second stanza suggests obliquely the meeting of the protagonist of the poem. But when we apply stylistics to this poem the same poem becomes interesting.

For example - This poem contains 55 content words out of which four are colour images- 'grey sea', 'black land', 'yellow half-moon', 'blue Spurt', and seven words indicating size, number, length.

E.g.:- long, half, little, large, three, less, two.

The poem is suffused with symbolical phrases denoting sexual act just to avoid voluptuosity. These phrases or expressions are 'fiery ringlets', 'Pushing prow', "quenching speed", "spurt of match", 'voice less loud'.

According to Sigmund Freud words used by a man can reveal his latent desires or what he bears in his subconscious mind. The aforesaid expressions imply that the speaker in the poem is eager to have physical union. Freud also has stated that the objects which we see in our dreams are symbolic. In this poem there is a reference to a boat in the phrase 'Pushing prow', which according to Freud, is a symbol for female sex organ. Thus the speaker in the poem is yearning to have union with his wife and the last line 'hearts beating each to each' implies union discarding the sense of copulation. The use of the word 'heart' instead of "Body" implies the sacred union of husband and wife.

Sylvia Plath's poem 'Mirror' can be taught interestingly with the discussion of lexical sets used in the poem which help sustain the metaphor of 'lake' used for the mirror. The lexical set contains *bend, drawn, terrible fish* which correlate with the lake. This thing underlines the craftsmanship, poetic flair and artistic deft of the poet which helps the students to learning creative writing.

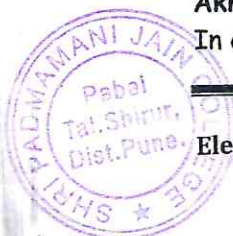
Use of Computer Assisted learning and Computer Aided Teaching is essential. Teaching with Power Point Presentation means avoidance of prolixity and monotony. Power point presentation makes the lecture more perspicuous and enjoyable by expounding complicated ideas.

For example - I.A. Richards' - *Six senses of imagination, structure of Elizabethan stage*, Empson's *Seven Kinds of Ambiguity, four kinds of meaning*, etc topics can be taught with the help of PowerPoint or Animation.

Furthermore, while teaching poems for Indian Students, the teacher can profusely use Bollywood songs to expound the meaning and figures of speech since songs are close to the hearts of the most of the students.

For Example: - While explaining Simile the teacher can put forth or sing a famous song by Javed Akhtar - "Ek ladki ko dekha to aisa laga /Jaise Khilta Gulab /Jaise Shayar Khwab."

In case of Metaphor he can sing.



Yogesh- 'Kahi door jab din dhal jaaye /Saanz ki dulhan badan churaye /Mere Khavalo Ke aangan mein /Koi sapnoke deep jalaaye'

Transferred epithet and synecdoche can be explained with the song from 'Dabbang' and penned by Sameer "Tore naina bade dagabaaz re"

Similarly, for proper appreciation of English literature, English history; English Culture; and English geography should be taught. Students must know the historical background of the text he is studying.

Before teaching Victorian literature students must be given an adequate knowledge of its background consisting of industrial revolution, the rise of democracy, the oxford movement, Darwin's theory of evolution.

French Revolution, Wordsworth's visit to the France, etc. should be taught before teaching the Romantic poetry. While teaching Congreve's play 'Way of the World', the teacher should speak about the Restoration comedy of manners, Restoration profligacy, cuckoldry etc. Moreover, organizing guest's lectures can be beneficial. It is the mentality of human beings that they need variety. Same food, same clothing everyday leads to monotony and boredom. That's why students need variety of lecturers. In addition excursions, outings or small educational tours can also do well in teaching literature.

To sum up, the teacher should use various psychology-based methods and techniques intermittently to appeal to the heterogeneous classes, to maintain excitement and momentum. The teacher should try to give direct experiences to the students with the help of educational tours. Spoon-feeding should be shunned and new ways and means should be devised by the teacher.

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