ABSTRACT

The origin of ELT in India can be traced back to the British Colonial rule, but the credit for introducing English as the medium of instruction (in 1835) goes to Lord Macaulay. Initially it was introduced as a subject at the school level, but only the elite class was allowed to benefit from it after which it passed through many stages to acquire the position that it holds today. Teaching of English as a Second Language went on unhindered till independence. But only great classics in prose and poetry were taught to introduce and sensitise the students towards English Literature which was considered to be the most accomplished one. The formula of Macaulay had provided for rejecting the vernacular as the medium of instruction.

Later, the report of UNESCO, accorded the right place to the Vernacular. But in a multilingual country like India this would pose innumerable problems. Finally, a number of commissions from 1949 to 1992 reached a consensus that:

1. For the completion of the first degree course a student should possess an adequate command of English. He should be able to express himself with reasonable correctness and felicity, understand lectures and respond. Hence it should be given due importance right from the school stage.
2. It should be the most useful library language; higher education and our most significant window on the world.

The framers of the constitution, however, faced opposition from the southern states which saw a danger of Hindi being declared as the official language. There were various demonstrations against this move and linguistic riots broke out in Madras in 1965. But the students who were misguided by ignorant nationalists realized that they were unwanted as far as jobs were concerned. Then there was an about turn in the situation and focus was directed towards the importance of English as the language of international contact and wider opportunities.

With the growth of ELT, exercises for drills and practice material began to be manufactured. When that became monotonous, prose pieces were used to teach language items.

But use of poetry for language teaching was still not in vogue. In the present work our main concern is to use poetry for language teaching at undergraduate level in India.

For this we need to know the components of ELT in our higher education system. Some of them are mentioned below:

2. Curriculum restructuring.
3. Teaching materials.
4. Trained faculty.
5. Sound and Maximally effective teaching methodology.

But lack of infrastructure at a mass level may hinder the growth of ELT in India.

This work has been divided into five Chapters including the Introduction (Chapter One).

Chapter Two entitled 'Stylo-Linguistics: A Theoretical Framework' gives an overview of stylo-linguistic theories and devices which a teacher of ELT should master.

This chapter deals with the scope of style in literacy artefacts. It gives a clear view of the different theories regarding 'style' and 'stylistics' and their apostles. These theories can be presented under three heads.

1. Dualism, takes style as the dress of thought and believes in the dichotomy of style (form) and content (meaning). Richard Ohmann in "Generative Grammar and the concept of Literary Sty," H. and C.F. Hockett in A Course in Modern Linguistics strongly support it. It is basically founded on the concept of Paraphrase i.e. same meaning in a different form.
2. Monism rejected the form-meaning dichotomy. Here devices such as metaphor, irony and ambiguity give multi-valued meaning and paraphrase loses its importance. It was the tenet of New Criticism and was supported by great critics like Cleanth Brooks, William Empson and W.K. Wimsatt.

3. Pluralism proposes to analyse style in terms of function. Some of the familiar functions are:

a) Referential (Newspaper reports)

b) Directive and Persuasive (advertising)

c) Social interaction or emotive (casual conversations)

I.A. Richards, Jakobson and Halliday have talked about these functions in detail.

While talking about 'Style' of language we musn't forget that style also depends on the sociological, cultural and political background of the author. This has been called the 'Context of Situation' by J.R. Firth and discussed in detail in Papers in Linguistics, 1934-51.

In Chapter Three titled 'Stylo-Linguistic Methodology of Teaching Poetry' different aspects of Methodology of teaching poetry which comprise both literary and linguistic tenets and tools have been dealt with. Some of these aspects are as follows:
1. Selection of the poem

2. Presentation of the poem in the actual classroom teaching situation.

3. Language competence of the student, and

4. Linguistic equipment and training of the teacher.

As part of teaching a methodology of analysis has also been presented. There are two broad categories under which poems can be analysed.

They are:

1. Pragmatic aesthetic categories

2. Linguistic categories

Pragmatic-aesthetic categories include:

a) Intuition or response

b) Extra-textual information

c) Intra-textual context of situation

d) Internal organisation of the poem

e) Form of the poem

The following sub-categories have been discussed under 'Linguistic Categories'.

a) Phonological

b) Lexical
Moreover, it is for the teacher to sensitise the students to understand the 'Foregrounded' items. It is, therefore important, that the teacher should be suitably trained so that he/she is able to respond intuitively to the language.

Chapter Four entitled, 'Stylo-Linguistic Analysis of Selected Poems' deals with the actual analysis of 6 poems, to demonstrate how they should be taught in the classroom making use of the techniques of Stylo-Linguistics. Poems have been very carefully selected, analysed, keeping the level of the students in mind, moving from the easier to the complex ones i.e. from 'The Solitary Reaper' to 'The Second Coming'. The teacher has to ensure that the students get involved in the poem so that heuristic learning is encouraged.

The following procedure has been followed:

The first step is the reading out of the poem by the teacher. This well take care of the pronunciation, and other phonological features like the stress, rhythm, intonation etc. The teacher will simultaneously discuss the title, coherence, theme, extra-textual information, form of the poem etc. The next step is to 'paraphrase' the poem which is a very useful strategy. But it is suggested that too much attention should not be attached to it. The third step is to analyse the
'Syntactic Pattern' i.e. to understand the poem line by line so that it finally emerges as a 'whole'. Then we look into the various linguistic and figurative devices and the foregrounded items. Here, it is necessary to explain the concept of deviance. Having done this, the students will give their own statement of observation by making their own guesses about the possible meaning of the poem. Lastly, questions may be asked related to literary as well as linguistic items and the understanding of the students may be judged.

Chapter Five entitled, 'Conclusion' gives a gist of the four preceding chapters and establishes that literary and linguistic criticism go hand in hand. Here it has been re-emphasised that in teaching poetry in India, the teacher should be well equipped with the knowledge of the descriptive linguistic analyses of the English language. At the undergraduate level the student is expected to develop a sensitivity towards language and understanding of English grammar.

But the fact is that most of the teachers and students are not well equipped with their tools. However, an attempt has been made to evolve a methodology of teaching poetry in a language class at undergraduate level in India.