



Pakistani Fiction in English: Exploring Decolonial Epistemological Prospects and Challenges in English Classroom Practices in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on Pakistani Fiction in English as a useful tool for language learners to improve their language skills, understanding of culture, and intercultural competence. The discussion shows the vast cultural diversity and linguistic ingenuity evident in Pakistani anglophone texts, enabling learners to participate with authentic language use and get a deeper understanding of Pakistani society. This paper also examines the practical implications of introducing these texts into language classes, highlighting the need for context-based activities, critical thinking exercises, and discussions to promote language competency and cultural sensitivity. Overall, this study reveals that Pakistani anglophone texts offer a significant and underutilised resource for language learners mainly at the undergraduate levels, increasing linguistic competence, cultural appreciation, and cross-cultural communication skills. By combining these materials into the language curriculum, educators can give learners a more comprehensive and interesting language learning experience that represents the rich linguistic and cultural terrain of Pakistan. This paper also assesses the obstacles present in using Pakistani writings in English for language learning objectives. It concludes that the measure will go a long way in decolonising the English language curriculum in Pakistan while empowering learners not only linguistically but also strengthening their cultural identity. By embracing a decolonial perspective, educators may create a more inclusive, relevant, and empowering learning environment that prepares students to navigate a globalised world while honouring their local heritage.

Keywords: English language teaching, teaching literature for English language learning, teaching Pakistani anglophone fiction, decolonial epistemology, decolonisation of English language instruction, content-based instruction.

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Introduction

Literary texts are replete with profound meaning and cognitive complexities of an unmatched immensity. From language learning perspectives, literature has long been acknowledged as a valuable tool for language acquisition, providing numerous advantages as well as encouragement for students. For instance, literature exposes students to authentic language use, introducing them to a vast array of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and grammatical structures. Similarly, by interacting with carefully constructed phrases and conversations, learners can see how language is used creatively and effectively. Apart from that, a literary text is expected to initiate a deeper cognitive engagement that fosters critical thinking, an understanding of different cultures and ability to interpret, analyse, and evaluate the text. By engaging with complex narratives, students also improve their capacity to deduce meaning, establish associations, and formulate opinions.¹ Paul Hullah argues that “suitably selected, properly presented ‘literary’ texts can effectively re-engage and re-motivate jaded English L2 learners” (122). However, given the complexity of the literary text and the multiplicity of meanings and interpretations involved in reading a literary work, it is advisable, as Hullah contends, to determine the level of students’ engagement with it for language learning purposes:

Of course, confidently to engage with, explicate or discuss a literary text in English, a student will require a certain level of linguistic competence. But that basic ability in language is a prerequisite to literary study, rather than what I would primarily seek to teach via a literary text. A good curriculum will ensure that courses are in place so that students receive sufficient scaffolding—competence in reading, writing and expressing opinions clearly—before they arrive at textual study proper. (128)

Hullah goes on to explain the inherent intricacy of a literary text, stating that it creates multiple avenues to its deeper meanings, “suggestively inviting our participation to construct meaningful encodings of its deliberately non-didactic content and provocative language and images” (128). This factor makes a literary text a complicated starting point for language acquisition, for it carries double implications in the learning process. On the one hand, it is suggestive of layered meanings that necessitate a skilled approach for language use, and on the other hand, this layering provides students with the opportunity to make autonomous decisions about what they are learning:

Literature, like life, isn’t a solvable scientific equation; it’s an abstract work student can imagine into meaning, focusing on parts that communicate

¹ See Bobkina and Dominguez, “The Use of Literature and Literary Texts in the EFL Classroom; Between Consensus and Controversy”; Carter and McRae, *Language, Literature and the Learner: Creative Classroom Practice*; Maley, “Literature in Language Teaching.”

with them and, if necessary, ignoring bits they don't like or don't 'get'. This empowers them, puts them in control and leaves them no longer feeling guilty about having less than 'perfect' comprehension. L2 learners need that negative capability. They need to stop striving for perfection. Indeed, we all do. (Hullah 129)

Regarding the use of western literary texts written in English for language acquisition in postcolonial nations like Pakistan, debates pertaining to linguistic colonialism further complicate the situation. As a result, a school of thought led by colonial continuum critics recognises a difficult historical relationship between the English language and colonialism. They see a complicated process of linguistic imperialism at work when English was forced to be adopted as a language of government, education, law, and trade, impacting colonised peoples' customs and identities. In the process indigenous languages were marginalised, resulting in socioeconomic inequities. Because the creation of knowledge and transmission were predominantly undertaken in English, the English language also played an important role in the propagation of the colonial ideology and the perpetuation of colonial hierarchies. Suzanne Majhanovich's paper "English as a Tool of Neo-Colonialism and Globalisation in Asian Contexts" examines the use of the English language in Asian nations and its relationship to neo-colonialism and globalisation. Majhanovich contends that imperialism's impacts may still be evident in the development and domination of English in these contexts because it maintains power disparities and strengthens Western cultural and socioeconomic supremacy. She analyses how English affects educational institutions, social mobility, and economic prospects, emphasising how it frequently turns into a need for success and in so doing pushes out regional languages and cultures.

To the proponents of English as a global language, however, English has become a worldwide language, mainly because of its effectiveness in communication and capacity for adaptation to changing circumstances. They contend that English has favourably influenced cultural interchange and mutual understanding across many civilisations by presenting chances for people from various backgrounds to interact, work together, and access information. They contend that it is unjust to exclusively blame colonialism for the supremacy of the English language, as this oversimplifies the complex factors that contributed to its widespread use across the world. Martin A. Kayman examines the condition of English as an international language and its function in conveying culture in his paper "The State of English as a Global Language: Communicating Culture." According to Kayman, English has taken over as the major language for international communication, impacting how different cultures interact

and how cultural information is passed down. The author also emphasises how English serves as a means of intercultural communication, enabling contacts and intellectual exchanges among those with various language and cultural origins (1).

In Pakistan, English is a complex symbol of colonialism. Its prevalence and status can be tracked back to British colonial rule, when English became the language of administration, education, and social prestige. Even after attaining independence, English remained one of Pakistan's official languages, a linguistic inheritance, which even in the present day, echoes the coloniser-colonised dominance dynamic. Yet, English's continued presence in Pakistan is also a result of its global status; as English has become the *lingua franca* for international communication, proficiency in English is viewed as an instrument for advancement and global interaction, opening doors to education, employment, and cultural exchange that local languages may not provide. Thus, the imperial roots and global ramifications of English language use are deeply interconnected, that touch on issues of class, education, economic mobility, nationalism, and global connectivity.

Given the above context, the present study debates the relationship between English language, literature, and epistemology. As epistemology is primarily concerned with understanding the nature of knowledge, its genesis, extent, and validity, it readily incorporates language and literature into a complex apparatus of interaction, power, and domination. The English language, as a system of signs and symbols, for instance, shapes our perception and understanding of the world. Likewise, literature is a creative and artistic form of knowledge representation, offering insight into diverse cultures, histories, philosophies, and perspectives. Literary devices like metaphor, allegory, and symbolism challenge our existing knowledge and beliefs, prompting us to question and reconsider our understanding of the world. Thus, English language, literature, and epistemology are deeply interconnected, shaping and informing each other in our quest to understand, interpret, and create knowledge.²

This study further implicates epistemology in a complex dynamic of struggle to deconstruct western knowledge as represented in English literary texts. At the same time, it highlights the importance of Pakistani anglophone fiction as a valuable resource for undergraduate English language learners in Pakistan. It claims that the genre of Pakistani English fiction offers a combination

² See Banfield, "Where Epistemology, Style, and Grammar Meet Literary History: The Development of Represented Speech and Thought", for a thorough analysis of the development of represented speech and thinking, and the complex relationships between language, style, consciousness, and literary history.

of English language usage that draws on Pakistani culture and history, enhancing the learners' overall English language abilities. It also allows learners to explore different forms of English, from vernacular to formal and poetic, fostering linguistic flexibility. Pakistani anglophone fiction also incorporates terms and phrases from languages such as Urdu and Punjabi, exposing students to multiple languages within the context of English literature and nurturing a respect for linguistic diversity. Moreover, Pakistani anglophone fiction provides a window into Pakistan's rich literary heritage, familiarising students with various narrative structures, techniques, and literary tools. This exposure fosters admiration for literature as an art form, critical thinking, and critical evaluation of texts. Furthermore, incorporating Pakistani anglophone literature into English language learning benefits not only language proficiency but also a more inclusive and decolonised educational setting as learners acquaint themselves with a diverse tapestry of experiences and viewpoints by moving beyond the Western literary canon and focusing on non-Western voices, allowing them to build an expansive worldview. Counterbalancing, this paper also highlights a number of obstacles that could impede the transition from western English texts to Pakistani English texts for language learning purposes.

For the theoretical exposition of the issue, this study draws on content-based instruction (CBI) in conjunction with Walter D. Mignolo's concept of decolonising epistemology. CBI "generally refers to the learning of language through the study of a content area, for example, history, geography, or science. In other words, the subject matter is the focus of classroom instruction; the acquisition of language is seen as a natural consequence or by-product of subject matter learning" (Rodgers 373). Jingjing Qin argues, "in instructional settings with large numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students and a growing emphasis on performance-based evidence and accountability, CBI has expanded and taken on new configurations to meet these emergent situations" (350). CBI is used as the framework that enables the integration of language acquisition with subject matter material, "designed both to increase language proficiency and to facilitate academic performance" (Kasper 310). When applied to the use of literary texts in the English classroom, CBI entails employing literary texts as the main emphasis for language acquisition. In that case, it emphasises the investigation of literary topics, analysis of literary devices, and critical thinking abilities while also fostering language competency and integrated language skills, as opposed to simply using literature as a means of language practice.

On the other hand, from a decolonial perspective, Mignolo urges a

departure from Western-centric epistemologies in favour of the acceptance and validation of various modes of knowing: “The articulation of knowledge and coloniality of power, in the last stage of the modern/colonial world system, seems to be inviting us to remove epistemology and knowledge from global designs incarnated in the great thinkers of the West as well as in the canonical disciplines” (“Coloniality at Large: Knowledge at the Late Stage of the Modern/Colonial World System” 8). In “I Am Where I Think: Epistemology and the Colonial Difference”, Mignolo examines the connections between epistemology and colonialism. He explores how colonialism has impacted Western epistemology and makes the case for the acceptance of non-Western epistemologies, underlining the Western epistemology’s reliance on the presumption of objectivity that has been abused to marginalise and stifle alternate epistemes. Understandably, Mignolo’s study emphasises the necessity to question knowledge conceptions that are West-centric and embrace the presence of multiple narratives in order to decolonise epistemology. He urges a reconsideration of how knowledge is created and stresses the value of engaging with various epistemologies in order to build a more inclusive and just cognitive environment on a global scale.³

Considered in the context of content-based instruction, Mignolo’s concepts urge a re-evaluation of the subject matter and resources employed in language teaching. He promotes the inclusion of content from non-Western cultural backgrounds, highlighting the value of interacting with different narratives, histories, and knowledge systems. By incorporating Mignolo’s ideas, content-based instruction can embrace a decolonial and inclusive stance. It can foster critical thinking, challenge dominant narratives, and empower students by broadening their comprehension of the world.

When considering the use of Pakistani anglophone fiction, the research discusses how the inclusion of Pakistani anglophone writing might aid in the process of decolonising epistemology by indigenising local English language learning methods. Second, it establishes how Pakistani English writings can substitute western literature for English language instruction. It claims that this technique will result in benefits such as a better grasp of the cultural and social context in which learners utilise the language. This can assist learners to better appreciate the intricacies and complexities of the language as well as the references to culture and idiomatic phrases typical in Pakistani society. Similarly, it can help learners stay motivated and committed to achieving their language

³ Likewise, Mignolo in “Colonial and Postcolonial Discourse: Cultural Critique or Academic Colonialism?”, critically analyses colonial and postcolonial discourse studies, raising significant issues regarding the character and function of this discipline, particularly whether or not it serves as an authentic critique of culture or unintentionally supports intellectual colonialism.

learning goals through offering an impression of connection and relevance to the language learning process.

Pakistani Anglophone Fiction: Prospects for English Language Instruction

Engaging with Pakistani English writings in language learning classrooms can lead to the development of the following modes of teaching that can foster a nexus between English Language teaching and decolonisation.

Developing Language Competence: Engaging with Familiar Contexts in Literature

Both Content-Based Instruction (CBI) and the familiar context of language acquisition underscore the significance of meaningful and pertinent practice of languages. When language learning takes place in a familiar context, the instructional material can be customised to the participants' interests, requirements, and perspectives. This personalised approach helps to create a comfortable and engaging atmosphere for learning in which students can make connections between the language they are studying and their prior knowledge and experiences. Concerning this, Hussien Alakrash and colleagues' study, "Developing English Language Skills and Confidence Using Local Culture-Based Materials in EFL Curriculum", explains how incorporating local culture into EFL lessons gives students real and useful linguistic input. Their study emphasises that by allowing students to relate to the topic more readily and employing resources that represent their own cultural environment can boost enthusiasm and participation.

CBI helps with cognitive anchoring which allows learners to connect new language learning events to prior information and experiences. When learners meet a new vocabulary or grammar in a context they are acquainted with, the familiar surroundings provide hints and associations, stimulating their past knowledge, making new language features easier to understand and remember. This relationship between past knowledge and familiar context improves students' understanding and use of words, sentences, and grammatical structures. Above all, it makes it easier to use language skills in real-world circumstances; learners can improve the ability to apply their language skills in practical settings when they encounter language in environments that resemble actual communicative situations. This transferability improves language proficiency and enables learners to speak and participate effectively in a variety of social and professional arenas. Educators can create a rich and meaningful classroom setting that supports

effective language acquisition and application by incorporating familiar contexts into language learning sessions. All of the above goals can be achieved efficiently by including Pakistani English fiction in language learning programmes, thereby lessening reliance on western epistemology, and building a parallel knowledge system that reaffirms the local cultural identity.

The familiar context of Pakistani anglophone texts can be a good resource for learning a new language, especially for those who are from Pakistan or are interested in Pakistani culture and literature. Alongside this, it adds cultural relevance and context unique to Pakistan and its people, which is the most essential prerequisite of developing decolonial cultural epistemology. Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner Than Skin*, for instance, helps readers in understanding contemporary ecological factors in northern Pakistan. Khan's fiction artistically involves readers in comprehending the creative, ecological, and political aspects of Pakistan.⁴

Likewise, *The Wandering Falcon* by Jamil Ahmad vividly depicts the local customs of the distant tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The work illustrates the diversity of the region's customs, cultures, and ethnic groups by painting a cultural mosaic via the lives of different ethnic groups, including Pashtuns and Balochis, emphasising their distinctive traditions, rites, and ways of life. One of the prominent themes explored is the nomadic way of life that prevails in the region, accentuating the nomads' sense of belonging and attachment to their homelands and the difficulties they confront in maintaining their cultural practices in a world that is becoming increasingly modern. In addition, the work explores the strict communal codes that regulate social relationships and interactions. The characters' lives and decision-making processes are profoundly influenced by their adherence to these codes—namely the traditional gender roles and expectations within tribal communities. It particularly sheds light on women's constrained freedom, their restricted access to schooling and independence, and the difficulties they confront in a society that is dominated by men.

Furthermore, the novel's emphasis on the region's storytelling culture cannot be overstated, as tales, legends, and folklore are handed down through the generations. These tales frequently contain moral teachings and serve to preserve the tribes' memory as a whole. Through its intricate examination of characters and their adventures, the text provides an intimate and nuanced depiction of tribal traditions in Pakistan and Afghanistan. It offers a deeper comprehension

⁴ See Tolle, "Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner Than Skin*", for a more detailed appreciation of Khan's fascinating storytelling skill in weaving issues of identity exploration and character development, within the larger sociopolitical fabric of the violation of fundamental rights and the effects of globalisation on local communities.

of the cultural, social, and religious factors that shape the lives of the people in these communities.⁵ In so doing, it provides conducive grounds for integrating a decolonial approach in language teaching.

In accordance with Mignolo's concept of decolonial epistemology, Pakistani anglophone fiction provides a major step towards decolonising Western epistemology. By emphasising Pakistani voices and events, this literature challenges the dominant position of Western epistemologies and decentres Western knowledge as the only authoritative framework. As such, *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* explores the rich cultural and historical context of the subcontinent, casting light on the multifaceted aspects of postcolonial societies. By investigating the local context and challenging Eurocentric perspectives, this literature challenges the imposed structures of knowledge and broadens the comprehension of cultural diversity. Similarly, it is consistent with Mignolo's call for epistemic pluralism and border thinking. It incorporates numerous epistemologies, cultural and linguistic influences, and embraces hybridity. These narratives introduce readers to different ways of knowing, fostering a more inclusive and diverse worldview. Pakistani anglophone fiction thus offers an opportunity for the reclamation and commemoration of indigenous knowledge and traditions. By highlighting local traditional practices, belief systems, and narrative traditions, this literature actively decolonises the dominant Western knowledge systems by challenging the erasure and marginalisation of indigenous epistemologies under colonialism.

Reading Comprehension and Pakistani Anglophone Fiction: Prospects for Language Proficiency and Decolonisation

Examining the connection between reading comprehension and Pakistani English fiction reveals promising opportunities for efforts to decolonise and improvement of the language. Clearly, literary texts may improve reading by providing a diverse variety of narrative, stylistic, and thematic issues that can act as an incentive for people of all ages, ethnicities, and genders. Pakistani English writings provide learners with exposure to authentic language that they are likely to encounter in real-life situations. This can help learners develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in a more meaningful and natural way. The ensuing discussion illustrates some of the ways that reading Pakistani English writings can aid in language acquisition.

First and foremost, literary texts commonly have a higher level of

⁵ For more see Afzal, "Ecocriticism: Crossing Boundaries Between Human and Non-Human Spheres in Jamil Ahmad's *The Wandering Falcon*"; Safdar, "Gender and Environment: Predicament of Tribal Women of Pakistan in Jamil Ahmad's *The Wandering Falcon*"; Sadaf, "Human Dignity, the 'War on Terror' and Post-9/11 Pakistani Fiction."

linguistic complexity than other types of writing. They use a wide range of vocabulary, figurative language, and sophisticated sentence patterns. Reading literary texts exposes readers to a wide range of linguistic aspects, which helps them develop their vocabulary, improve their grammar and syntactic structure, and improve their general language ability. Hussain M. Naqvi's *Home Boy* and *The Selected Works of Abdullah the Cossack*, for example, feature an uncommon level of language complexity that will benefit advanced learners in mastering complicated structures as well as figurative language phrases. As is commonly acknowledged, literary texts frequently create gaps in the narrative, requiring readers to draw assumptions and develop judgments. Readers must read between the lines, analyse character motivations and decipher implicit meanings. This encourages readers to explore more deeply into the text to unearth layers of meaning, refining their skills in drawing inferences and interpreting information. In this light, Mohammed Hanif's *Red Birds* is a great example. It effectively leads readers between storylines and ideologies that are subtly balanced between anti-colonial and anti-nationalist views.

Novels in general have complicated characters and sophisticated plotlines. Readers must grasp the motivations, emotions, and actions of the characters, as well as the interplay of numerous events in the plot. Analysing characters and stories improve comprehension abilities such as detecting cause-and-effect links, predicting outcomes, and recognising character development. For example, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid is about the difficulties and identity crisis encountered by a Pakistani protagonist living in the months following the attacks of 9/11, offering a stimulating commentary of social assimilation, bias, and the conflict of cultures. In a similar vein, *Home Fire* by Kamila Shamsie explores issues of loyalty, extremism, and individual versus collective responsibility through the experiences of a British-Pakistani family. By showing various viewpoints that question readers' preconceptions, Pakistani writing forces us to examine and query deeply entrenched norms of society, resulting in an invaluable tool for encouraging compassion, critical thinking, and intercultural discourse. In this way, the study of Pakistani anglophone fiction inevitably helps to decolonise knowledge as suggested by the following factors.

Text Selection

Selecting appropriate literary texts is pivotal to facilitating language learning in a decolonial manner. For instance, when choosing texts by Pakistani writers for language instruction, teachers have a variety of options to accommodate various

levels of language proficiency and learning objectives. Short stories and excerpts from Pakistani anglophone novels introduce students to the themes, settings, and characters in Pakistani literature. Likewise, the historical, political, and social contexts of Pakistan are illuminated, alongside fiction, by nonfiction works, such as autobiographies, memoirs, and essays. Additionally, integrating translated works from Urdu literature into the Pakistani anglophone canon, introduces students to the rich literary tradition of Pakistan, including works by renowned authors such as Saadat Hasan Manto. These diverse forms of text selection allow language students to gain an in-depth knowledge of Pakistani history, society, culture, and language, while also cultivating creativity, compassion, and cultural competency.⁶

Pre-Reading Activities

Pre-reading exercises are an excellent way to engage students' prior understanding of a specific topic while also increasing their expectation for improvement of the same through classroom activities. As a result, students may be assigned to read about the author, learn about the relevant historical and cultural background material, and analyse the text's themes and issues⁷.

Understandably, these activities give students valuable opportunities to investigate the societal, historical, and social circumstances that have shaped Pakistani literature while simultaneously improving their language skills. Initially, pre-reading activities acquaint students with the cultural differences and topics found in Pakistani English fiction. This could entail researching Pakistan's past, contemporary society as a whole and the different ways of life. By obtaining knowledge about the cultural underpinnings of any piece of literature, students develop an increased awareness of the context of the narratives. This process improves language skills by broadening learners' vocabularies, enhancing their comprehension of idiomatic phrases, and strengthening their appreciation of the texts' ingrained references to culture. Secondly, pre-reading exercises which emphasise decolonial perspectives encourage students to critically analyse the power relations and colonial effects in the texts. This could involve investigating the postcolonial, sense of the self, and cultural hybridity—themes which are abundant in Pakistani anglophone literature. Learners can engage in conversations or reflective writing tasks to examine how the texts challenge hegemonic accounts, undermine colonial structures of power, and provide expression to disadvantaged positions. By proactively interrogating and dismantling colonial biases, students

⁶ See Lima, "Selecting Literary Texts for Language Learning."

⁷ See Ibrakhimovna, "Benefits of Implementation of Pre-, While and Post Reading Activities in Language Learning."

develop a decolonial awareness of oneself, grasping the significance of various voices and the effect of literature and language on our worldview.

Reflective Writing

Reflective writing, in relation to the Pakistani anglophone fiction read in a language learning class, is a potent instrument for promoting both language learning and decolonial goals. Learners are able to recognise and question the traces of colonial influence in language structures, narrative methods, and the portrayal of their cultural identities through this process. In addition, reflective writing promotes self-reflection and introspection by encouraging students to examine their personal presumptions, biases, and prejudices. This contemplative process facilitates the development of a more compassionate as well as culturally responsive worldview, thereby fostering inclusiveness and comprehension. The reflective writing approach to *Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie will enable us to understand the post-World War II landscape of the intertwining political perspectives from Japan, India, Pakistan, and the United States, on the tense geopolitical canvas of nuclear controversies, the war on terrorism and global immigration. Shamsie's rich linguistic palette, which combines English with Urdu and Japanese, represents not just the diverse cultural realities of the characters, but also challenges the power of English as a colonial language, nurturing language acquisition and advancing decolonial goals.

Language Proficiency, Literary Text and Readers' Response

English language skills can be significantly impacted by readers' reactions to literary works. Literary writings frequently contain complicated ideas and make use of figurative vocabulary, necessitating the use of deduction and contextual clues by readers to determine the meaning. Through this process, their ability to comprehend, understand, and analyse textual content is refined. Furthermore, by crafting clear and structured critical responses to literary texts, readers hone their writing skills. They strengthen their critical thinking skills as well as their ability to convey their views clearly and with the proper language and vocabulary. Reading literary texts stimulates readers to consider many points of view and participate in debates, further developing their capacity for listening and speaking.

In general, reader responses to literary works offer a rich language learning experience, encouraging competency in English across a range of fields and a greater knowledge and respect of the language. In his paper, "Encouraging Reader-Response to Literature in ESL Situations", Roger Elliot discusses the significance of stimulating reader reaction in ESL classrooms; in order to

help ESL students improve their language proficiency and establish a deeper connection to writing, the paper emphasises the importance of involving them in active and intimate interactions with literary materials. Elliot stresses the importance of building a welcoming and accepting learning atmosphere that invites learners to express their feelings, ideas, and thoughts about the texts they are reading. Teachers can improve their students' linguistic proficiency, critical thinking skills, and all-around enthusiasm for literature by incorporating reader-response activities like group discussions, diary writing, and creative answers. Elliot underscores how reader response can be used in ESL instruction to help students grow personally and linguistically while also encouraging a lifelong love of reading and literary discovery.

In similar fashion, reading Pakistani anglophone fiction can offer a unique and valuable perspective in developing readers' response to language, and it can complement Western literary texts in several ways. For instance, by exploring the themes, settings, and characters specific to Pakistani literature, readers develop a more comprehensive and inclusive appreciation of language and culture. By reading works by Pakistani authors, readers gain insights into different storytelling traditions, narrative structures, literary techniques and figures of speech. This exposure encourages readers to critically engage with different literary styles and narratives, fostering a more diverse and inclusive literary landscape.

Therefore, reading Pakistani anglophone fiction provides readers with a broader and more inclusive perspective on language and culture. It enriches the readers' understanding of English as a global language, promotes cultural diversity, challenges dominant narratives, fosters empathy, and encourages appreciation for global literature. By engaging with a range of voices and narratives, readers develop a more nuanced and comprehensive response to language and literature. Enhancing critical thinking skills is, likewise, dependent on the riches of the debates in a given text. From decolonial perspectives, the readers' response to Pakistani writings can foster diverse perspectives, engagement with different viewpoints, alternative narratives that challenge the readers' assumptions as well as promote the ability to question dominant narratives.

Reflective writing as discussed above can promote written expression, the development of vocabulary, and critical thinking by encouraging readers to share their thoughts, feelings, and unique individual connections to a text. In the same way, readers can share their understanding and thoughts in discussions with others, which improves their capacity for listening and speaking skills, and the use of expressive speech. Additionally, language fluency, originality, and efficiently

written communication are all fostered by creative writing exercises like creating short stories or via focus on alternate endings that are inspired by the fiction being taught. Dramatic readings of particular scenarios can likewise enhance oral communication abilities generally, including pronunciation and intonation. A comparative analysis of various works of Pakistani English literature develops critical thinking, analytical abilities, and the capacity to articulate and substantiate arguments.⁸

All these activities have significant ramifications for decolonial epistemology. Learners challenge prevailing Western-centric viewpoints and dismantle the impact of colonialism in the production of knowledge through connecting with other narratives and cultural settings. They actively participate in the creation of knowledge in a decolonial environment through reflective thinking, group debates, and study of marginalised voices. These exercises make it easier to analyse power relationships in any text and in the larger sociopolitical settings, unearthing hidden biases and discrimination. Furthermore, these activities encourage a reflective and inclusive approach to knowledge generation, cultivating critical thinking and fostering a more varied and inclusive epistemic setting.

Obstacles in Integrating Pakistani Literature for Language Learning

The integration of Pakistani literature for language learning and decolonising epistemology is hindered by several factors that require careful consideration before the pedagogical shift in educational settings. Firstly, there is a lack of research on the linguistics possibilities of Pakistani anglophone writings. Therefore, the strengths of these works from the standpoint of communicative language context needs to be systematically explored and theorised. Presently, the emphasis is on the thematic and ideological patterns, imagery, symbols, and characters; the effectiveness, on the other hand, of linguistic features of the texts like sentence structure, vocabulary construction, morphological issues, semantic relationships, pragmatical concerns, have yet to be determined in classroom across Pakistan. This leads us to question the feasibility of bringing Pakistani anglophone fiction to our English language teaching system in Pakistan.

Secondly, the relatively limited availability of published Pakistani anglophone texts designed specifically for language instruction is one of the most significant obstacles. Although there is a growing corpus of literature in this genre, it may not be as extensive or accessible as Western literary works. This scarcity can make

⁸ See Collie and Slater, *Literature in the Language Classroom: A Resource Book of Ideas and Activities*.

it difficult to locate appropriate instructional materials for a language learning purpose. Likewise, in order to introduce Pakistani anglophone writing in ELT classrooms, teachers must be well-versed in this genre and acquainted with its nuances. It is possible that the majority of teachers of Pakistani anglophone fiction may not have received adequate training or exposure to these texts. To surmount this obstacle, professional development programmes that enhance teachers' knowledge and comprehension of Pakistani anglophone literature need to be implemented. As previously discussed, by incorporating Pakistani anglophone fiction in their instruction, well-trained instructors can create an atmosphere for learning that simultaneously encourages English language proficiency and decolonial perspectives.

In conjunction, heed should be paid to the fact that Pakistani anglophone writing frequently addresses culturally particular themes and contexts. Teachers must approach these texts with cultural sensitivity and provide context and relevant material to help students understand cultural issues like cultural disparities, cross-ethnic issues, and minority concerns about equitable treatment while promoting classroom inclusivity.

On another note, to enhance language acquisition through Pakistani English fiction as well as to promote the decolonisation of epistemology, English translations of literary works in Urdu are essential. Integrating English translations of Urdu literature expands the language skills of learners and fosters a deeper appreciation for the nation's literary heritage. Urdu literature has a significant cultural importance and is representative of Pakistan's diverse literary heritage. By providing English translations to works in Urdu, language learners have the opportunity to interact with a wider variety of narratives, writing styles, and linguistic subtleties. This integration promotes an inclusive approach to language development and fosters an expansive awareness of Pakistani culture, nurturing a sense of belonging and reverence for a variety of linguistic and literary styles.

The lack of substantial translations, on the other hand, could contribute to an increased reliance on Western texts that are more widely available in their original versions. As a result, indigenous cultures are frequently dismissed or marginalised because their narratives and points of view are disregarded or given minimal consideration. The absence of translation jeopardises the preservation and transmission of indigenous knowledges by rendering them inaccessible to a wider audience.

Conclusion

The complex tapestry of narratives in Pakistani anglophone fiction reflects the region's experiences, cultures, and histories. By incorporating these literary works into language instruction, students are introduced to different viewpoints and worldviews, leading them to critically interact with the complex issues of postcolonial societies and question dominant narratives. In addition, the linguistic variety and stylistic inventions found in Pakistani English fiction assist in the improvement of language skills. Students are acquainted with a variety of language registers, idiomatic phrases, and cultural differences, allowing them to develop their communicative abilities and more effectively navigate multicultural contexts. Thus, the use of Pakistani English fiction not only enhances language acquisition but also enables the establishment of a decolonial epistemology which opposes dominant knowledge systems and promotes a more inclusive and culturally diverse worldview.

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