

## **Enhancing language acquisition through literature**

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Teaching an additional (second or foreign) language has always been associated with the question of what constitutes effective instruction for the acquisition of that language in a classroom context. Research studies and theoretical perspectives have generally been inconclusive, even competing, in answering the question of how instruction can promote language learning.

In an effort to contribute to the discussion of effective second or foreign language instruction, this presentation aims at offering a stimulus for reflection and dialogue on the role of literature in the second or foreign language classroom. The potential of adding literature to language instruction is discussed on the basis of both theoretical and empirical rationale. The use of literature for literacy development has been supported by a host of educators and researchers and literature-based language learning programs have gained momentum in diverse classroom settings. The familiar contexts created by literary texts can also be used to enhance learning in the second/foreign language classroom. However, for students to profit from the use of literature, their personal response to text should be stimulated and their own linguistic, cognitive and cultural capital should be used as a catalyst for further learning. Therefore, the issue of how to involve learners with literature in the language learning classroom is duly addressed in this paper, in an effort to create a tentative, reference framework of guidelines for teachers to adapt and try out in their own teaching contexts.