THE ROLE OF UNDERSTANDING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE TO LITERARY APPRECIATION

by:

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Figurative language serves as a link between two ideas which are seemingly different from one another. Mostly they are used in poetry but is not secluded to such. Figurative language can be observed in stories and even speeches. Figurative languages and symbolism elicit emotions, help in forming mental images upon the reader and draw them into the selection even closer. (Turner, 2017). Figurative language and the use of symbolism draw meaning and better appreciation to a reading selection.

Nothing adds meaning and depth to a story than symbolism. It acts as a connector between theme and story. Themes only can sound preachy, and stories alone can sound superficial. Symbolism weaves the two together (Hall, 2015).

It is a known fact that stories need to be interesting and fascinating at the same time. If they are not like so, then reading selections will all be boring and lifeless. Hall (2015) added that symbolism used in figurative language conveys complex ideas with the use of few words. It can achieve the same results as several sentences of explicit imagery can provide.

Barry (2010) in his lecture told that symbolism is the author’s way of illustrating a situation, either in the story or in the world and understanding the symbols allows the readers to appreciate and identify the text. Rahn (2012) expressed that without symbolism, something essential is missing from language and art. A symbol stands in place of something else. Even letters and words themselves are symbols, because our brain turns those codes into thoughts and ideas. Rahn further explained that symbols are
everywhere in our lives. Street signage, advertising logos and religious iconography all provide visual info that surpassed the physical world.

In literature, there are numerous ways of using figurative language and symbols be it culturally, sociologically or psychologically based. Great symbolism in literature requires enormous intelligence and creativity on the part of the author. Literary symbols allow tellers of tales to impart information without repeating a long explanation or description of something.

   Indeed, the figurative language used in literature create a huge impact on how the story unfolds in every page. It adds excitement to the flow of the story and drama to the lines delivered by the characters. Once the readers comprehend and connect these to their previous knowledge and experiences that is the time literary appreciation is achieved.

However, not all readers can digest symbols used by the author. It takes a wide array of understanding to interpret figurative language and background information for a reader to relate the meaning to a symbol used. Hence, this implies the role of the English Language Teachers and the responsibility of the learners in the learning process. The former deemed to educate themselves of the rich literary works and the latter to exercise reading per se.

References:


