

## TEACHING REGIONAL LITERATURE

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The evolution of language and speech in the post-modern period is a relevant tool to increase the potential for benefits and elements of regional literature to students. This is a response to the cultural erosion brought by foreign influences and pragmatic society. Regional literature is a mirror of a nation's socio-cultural conditions that must be preserved and analyzed.

In the Philippines where K to 12 curriculum is implemented, integrating local literature in teaching English also advocates the instilling of cultural heritage among learners. In a study conducted by Florentino (2014), results showed that selecting local literature and integrating literary pieces with the objectives and theme of the lessons garner positive impacts among the learners.

Regional literature brings the diverse and multicultural characteristics of Filipino society. The regional flavors and niche embedded among various literary pieces are good manifestations of how rich the Philippine's culture is. Some of the notable literary pieces that can be inculcated in literacy curriculums are "Five Brothers, One Mother" by Exie Abola (Manila), \_\_\_\_\_

Moreover, regional literature has a relevant role in characterizing and shaping the personality of learners through education and daily habits such as listening to guides, verses, and fairy tales. Studies reveal that literature plays a huge role in the development of learners, namely in cognitive development, language development, personality development, and social development. Students' vocabulary and knowledge increase after listening or reading to regional literature.

On the other hand, the education sector can lobby for more public fund aimed at sustaining regional writers and regional arts organizations. Emerging cultural organizations across the Philippines must be given attention and platform to produce their works and pieces. Such literary and cultural works foster the national treasures and sustain the lifelong creation of artistic crafts. Moreover, the Department of Education can also strengthen the sector through decolonizing the curriculum and providing spaces for regional and national writers to participate in the curriculum writing process. This will ensure that the lessons and competencies are aimed at building nationalistic young learners.

A study also shows that most learners believe that literature from the regions has many advantages when it comes to guiding the younger generation. Regional literary pieces have themes and subthemes that revolve around inherent Filipino traits and cultural values. Such can be eye-opening for learners and brings for an awareness that the world is beyond their classroom. A person who studies literature is not afraid to ask questions and build insights and intuition. A person who studies regional literature is a vehicle of local wisdom and invaluable treasure.

It should be noted that the good character of learners in a nation reflects its learning system and quality of education. Therefore, the system of education in the Philippines must aggressively open many learning opportunities for teachers to create an atmosphere of noble cultures, especially the literature of regions. The importance of regional literature as one of the foundations of learners' character is uncontestable and an asset. Thus, one manifestation of the country's commitment to develop student values can be achieved in regional literacy education in schools.

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