

Report of the Refresher Course in Language and Literature-Batch B

08.09.2021-21.09.2021

The UGC- Human Resource Development Centre Bharathidasan University under the able guidance of Dr. Senthilnathan, Director, had organized a Refresher Course for the collegiate teachers of the English Department in India, from 08.09.21 to 21.09.21. Due to the huge demand, the course was conducted in two independent batches. The Batch II, of which Dr. D. Laura Dameris Chellajothi, Associate Professor, Department of English, was the Coordinator, had 41 participants from different states of India. Among them, two participants were from Kerala, one from Madhya Pradesh, one from West Bengal and others from various districts of Tamil Nadu. HRDC used Google Meet as a virtual platform in organizing the course. The link <http://meet.google.com/upa-fyrv-hot> was used for all the sessions except the inauguration and valedictory function. The refresher course was designed in such a way to refresh the new modes of research and learning that will add value to the teaching fraternity.

The maiden session was handled by Dr. Catherin Edward from Holy Cross College. Her topic 'Biosemiotics: A Prelude to Medical Humanities' was an eye-opener about the mushrooming growth of literary studies. The course coordinator Dr. Laura Dameris Chellajothi handled a session on *Introduction to Language and Literature* that contextualized the teaching of literature from the vantage point of language and literature in a historical, cultural and political land mapping.

Dr. Padma Arasu, retired professor from Stella Maris College, Chennai covered two topics in the span of three hours. 'The National in Indian Theatre' session traced the trajectory of Indian Theatre history. 'Gender and Theatre in India' was an interesting session that analysed the gender politics that is a silent subtext in a male dominated theatre space. She gathered the attention of the audience by sharing her experience of working in the theatre and also by showing video clips to explain her topic. Dr. K.T. Tamilmani from Nehru Memorial College handled his session in a most interactive manner. His topic *New Directions in English Studies* included the upcoming trends and approaches in the field of literary research.

Dr. Ajay S. Sekher from SS University, Kalady shared his highly thought provoking knowledge on ‘Sangam Literary Legacies of South India and its Contemporary Relevance’, which in turn kindled the interest among participants to know about the richness and antiquity of our own Sangam literature. ‘Australian Aboriginal Lifestyle’ and the story ‘Stolen Generations’ was well demonstrated by Dr. Srilatha from Vijayawada. Similarly, Canadian Landscape was well introduced by Dr. Hariharan from the University of Kerala.

Three Resource persons from Pondicherry Central University shared their field of expertise with the teaching community. Dr. T. Marx’s talk on food and hair politics was a fresh insight to the field of cultural studies. He also covered ‘Migrant Literature and Issues’ in the time allotted to him. Spatial Criticism was well explained by Dr. Kalpana Rao. Her crisp introduction to the various theorists of spatial studies helped participants to formulate a new research domain. Dr. Sujatha Vijayaraghavan on the penultimate day talked about ‘Oratures and their Academic Space’. She shared her experience of collecting tribal dialects and problems in documenting those dialects were a real inspiration for academic research.

In a good post lunch session, Dr. Mary Magdalene Abraham from Fathima College, Madurai talked about ‘Feminisms and Post Feminisms’. By quoting many real life incidents, she gave a very clear picture of theoretical underpinnings of prevalent Feminist theories. In addition Dr. Priya from the Centre for French, Bharathidasan University chose ‘Ecriture Feminine’ as her topic and gave a very elaborate description on French feminisms.

This refresher course not only concentrated on literature but also on language studies and therefore three resource persons specially focused on ELT. Dr. Mary Jayanthi from Holy Cross College talked about ‘Pedagogy to Andragogy in the English Classroom’ helped to understand the method of handling young adults in the English classes. Dr. V. Vinod Kumar from Bharathidasan University introduced the ways of developing intercultural competence in a Language classroom. Dr. Xavier Pradeep Singh’s lecture on ‘Web Tools for Making Interactive Presentation’ was a timely session for the English teachers. He introduced a new web tool ‘Nearpod’ for creating a more lively English classroom in the new digital age.

Dr. Ranjini Selvarani from Government Arts and Science, Coimbatore covered in entirety the field of Magical Realism. She illustrated the concept of Magical Realism with examples

from Latin American Fiction. Dr. Manimekalai from Government Arts and Science, Thiruvadanai gave a clear picture of Bakhtinian's terms.

Dr. D.E. Bennet from National College discussed in depth about the 'Critical Race Theory'. In addition he also covered the new emerging field of 'Disability Studies'. Dr. Maria Preethi Srinivisan from Queen's Mary College touched upon the need to 'Contextualize Autobiographies' in the academic domain. Dr. S. Prabhakar from MS University briefed on Geographical Imagination and Regionality in Indian English Literature. This is yet another new topic as far as research is concerned.

Dr. A. Joseph Dorairaj from Gandhigram Rural Institute began his session by the need to know theory in literature studies. He then lucidly elaborated on the school of deconstruction. His next session on 'Myth and Hermeneutics' was a well structured lecture and he gave a lot of reference books to refer for further research. Dr. Merin Simi Raj from IIT, Madras threw light on the dimensions of memory studies research. Her discussion on research possibilities including Artificial Intelligence made the participants think about the shift towards digital humanities.

Apart from academic resource persons, Batch II had a special speaker of honour, Ms. Mini Krishnan, editor of Oxford University Press and a regular contributor to *The Hindu* to fill the gaps between publishing a book and reaching those books in the classroom. Her lecture was a real enlightening session to include regional literatures of India in the academic arena. She also shared about the scope of translation in the near years.

Dr. Shobana from Bishop Heber College and Dr. K. Suganthi from Holy Cross College helped in assessing the participant's seminar. Their comments and feedback helped in improving the teaching ability of the participants.

The 14 day refresher course was a grand academic success because of the able administration and efficient leadership of Dr. Senthilnathan, Director, HRDC and the freedom he gave to the coordinator helped her in selecting distinguished 24 resource persons from Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu. All the 24 RPs shared their scholastic expertise to strengthen the academic foundation of the participants. Participants strictly adhered to the time which helped in the smooth run of the course. Overall, the refresher course helped in

conceptualizing the spirit of English Studies that is new and upcoming in addition to strengthening the existing framework of academic potential.