



**MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

**Aboulkacem Saadallah University (Algiers2)**

**Faculty of Foreign Languages Department**

**of English**

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**USING A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE APPROACH TO  
TEACHING LITERATURE IN EFL CLASSROOMS  
THE CASE OF THIRD-YEAR STUDENTS AT ZIAN ACHOR  
UNIVERSITY, DJELFA**

**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Doctorate-ES Sciences in English (Linguistics & Didactics)**

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**September 2023**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgment is made whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers

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A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, overlapping loop and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

## DEDICATION

To my sisters, without whom I wouldn't survive

To my babies Manel and Sabrine

To my besties Lina Draa and Guerrahi Sara for always being there for me

To my dear friend Fatima for her love and encouragement

To my dear friend and sister Zahra for her support

*To Mr. Chaalani Abdelkader for being an inspiration and a true role model*

*To Mr. Maamar Missoum for his kindness and motivating dedication and hard  
work*

*To Mom and Dad*

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to contribute to the development of literature pedagogy and course design in EFL classrooms and, hopefully, reverse the observed trend of underachievement in EFL literature. It suggests a culturally responsive-interdisciplinary approach to teaching literature, merging techniques and classroom practices from five different approaches and theories (culturally responsive teaching, the cognitive approach, reader-response theory, the sociocultural approach, and discourse analysis). The approach stands on the philosophy of cultural responsiveness, which teaches *to and through culture*, incorporating students' cultural frames of reference into course design. The research follows a quasi-experimental-one-group-pretest-posttest design, using both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools (teachers' interviews, students' questionnaires, archival data, observation, and experimental tests) and analysis methods (thematic content analysis, typological analysis, descriptive diagnostics analytics, and statistical analysis). The research participants are 30 third-year students at the University of Zian Achor who are tested before and after a 14-weeks intervention. The findings indicate a significant difference between students' pre and post-test scores and a positive effect on various areas of learning literature, including cultural awareness, comprehension, interaction, cooperation, and tolerance. However, they signal a less apparent effect on language skills and emphasize the challenge of incorporating social-emotional learning in the classroom. The research calls for further investigations on the subject particularly on the links between cognition, literature, and emotions.

**Keywords:** Literature, Culture, EFL, Cognition, Identity, Interdisciplinary approach, Cultural Responsiveness.

## **List of Abbreviations**

**AL:** Active Learning

**CRP:** Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

**CRT:** Culturally Responsive Teaching

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**ESL:** English as a Second Language

**LBA:** Language Based Approaches

**LTM:** Long-Term Memory

**PLB:** Project-based Learning

**RAS:** Reticular Activating System

**RRT:** Reader Response Theory

**SEL:** Social Emotional Learning

**SM:** Sensory Memory

**STM:** Short-Term Memory

**ZPD:** The Zone of Proximal Development

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## **General Introduction**

Literature has held a central and powerful place in language teaching since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, even though the relationship between them has witnessed tensions at times, especially with the emergence of the audiolingual and direct methods of language teaching. The centrality of literature in language teaching stems from its capacity to effectively introduce language learners to the target culture (Carter and Long, 1991; Hall, 2005; Kramsch and Kramsch, 2000; Maley, 1990). Literature is argued to be texts of culture; it gives access to a set of beliefs, assumptions, perspectives, norms, social behavior, and views of the world of particular individuals belonging to a particular society or speech community. For the inseparability of language and cultural issues, foreign language educators depend on literary texts to engage learners in meaningful contact with ‘the other’. Literature reveals much about its users and the societies they interact in and can enhance learners’ awareness of their own individual and cultural identities, beliefs, and values. We believe culture is a conversation, and literature is its favored vehicle. Cultural awareness, Hall (2005) and Samovar et al. (1991) say, can be promoted particularly effectively through language and literature pedagogies; therefore, the two disciplines (language and literature teaching) need to maintain strong and systematic links.

In a multicultural, pluralistic world, where changes in technology, social, economic, and political systems have created an age in which we regularly and easily interact with people from different cultures, and where issues of identity, race, ethnicity, and religion are apparent more than ever, cultural awareness and intercultural competence are key skills. Our teaching needs to enable learners to define both ‘the self’

and ‘the other’ to prepare them to be contributive members of this multicultural world, where linguistic and literate competencies are seen as crucial for full participation in a given society (Garrett-Rucks, 2016). Awareness of one’s own cultural frames of reference and cultural understanding of others is said to assist the ethical development of the individual, becoming “worthier – or perhaps more critical – citizens” (Hall, 2015, p.39). Literature, for researchers like Edmonson (2004), Moody (1971), and Slatoff (1970) makes us better human beings, broadening our notions of what it means to be human.

Literature should continue to hold a central place in EFL teaching in general and higher education in particular to enhance the connection between storytelling, language, and cultural understanding. Our cultural background and experiences determine how we see the world and how we interact with it, which shapes our learning (Ladson Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000; and Hammond, 2015). This research philosophy is grounded in the reciprocity of influence between culture, storytelling, language, identity, cognition, and learning. Below we explain how we perceive the relationship between these aspects.

On the one hand, our learning is affected by cognition which is shaped by culture (Bruner, 1996; Quartz and Sejnowski, 2002; and Resnick, 1991). On the other hand, narrative and storytelling is a principle, basic brain activity that precedes language and learning, making it one of the most effective ways to develop cognitive abilities and learning (Nekolajeva, 2014; Richardson and Steen, 2002; Zunshine, 2006). Moreover, learning is shaped by identity, the formation, development, and negotiation of which is based on culture, language, social experience, cognition, and learning (Brumfit, 1995;

Bruner, 2001; Gee, 2015, and Hall, 1996). More specifically, identity is influenced by the process of reading. Bean and Moni (2003, p.639) note that readers become aware of how “they are being constructed in the text and how those constructions compare with their attempts to form their identity.”

We imagine that the interaction of these elements is circular and continuous, where each aspect shapes and is shaped by the other, and where it is indiscernible as to which element's influence takes precedence over the other. This research examines these aspects, incorporating techniques from cognitive sciences, cultural responsiveness, reader-response theory, and the sociocultural approach through the prism of discourse analysis. Culturally responsive teaching serves as the pivot of the other approaches, and discourse analysis is the mediator between them. This study offers an interdisciplinary approach to teaching literature that teaches *to and through culture*. It merges principles from five approaches and theories to account for the complexity of literature classrooms, where storytelling interweaves with language, culture, identity, emotions, and experiences. Through this approach, the researchers hopes to lead learners toward meaningful learning by incorporating their cultural frames of reference into course design and classroom instruction. The framework adopted seeks to develop students' brain powers, promote their identities, and develop their resilience and tolerance.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The research is based on four main observations. The first concerns the general research of teaching literature, where the long-lasting tension between linguistics and literature slowed down the development of specific and comprehensive approaches to teaching literature in EFL classrooms. Second, despite the reforms made in the Algerian

educational system, little change could be noticed in the areas of curriculum and course design in higher education. EFL literature seems to lack the necessary pedagogical frameworks that address content coverage, assessment, and instructional decisions. Novice teachers may not have any guidelines, philosophy, or method to follow.

Moreover, there is a noticeable separation between the various modules assigned to EFL learners in objectives and content. In classrooms, where the teaching of literature, civilization, linguistics, etc. should intersect to reach common goals of promoting cultural competence, strategic learning, and language proficiency, teachers and students alike struggle to identify the links between the various modules, inhibiting meaningful learning and cognitive development which is conditioned by building connections between new and existing knowledge (Hudson, 2007; An, 2013).

Third, despite the numerous studies about the importance of teaching literature in EFL classrooms, little research addresses the practical use of teaching approaches in real classrooms especially in the Arab world. Most of the research body in the field is theoretical and lacks empirical or scientific evidence to prove the effectiveness of the suggested methods. Examining the related research, a pattern in Algerian post-graduate studies was noticed. Researchers conduct experiments utilizing a singular pedagogical approach to the teaching of literature, without heed to the particularities and characteristics of Algerian EFL classrooms at large and those of their own classrooms in particular. This is often done without the development of a fitting framework within the context. Furthermore, there is a tendency to overlook the novelty effect, with the majority of these experiments being of a duration of two to three weeks, which may not be regarded as adequate time to make conclusive determinations about the effectiveness

of any approach to teaching intricate classes, such as EFL Literature. Finally, there seems to be an aversion from and apprehension towards the pursuit of literary and civilization studies in Algerian universities, which might be attributed to the absence of adequate teaching approaches to the subjects, or to our incapacity to effectively articulate the value of these studies to our students.

This research proposes an approach that perceives literature from a discourse analysis perspective, which we believe helps clear some of the major ambiguities surrounding the notion of literature. Treating literature as discourse, which is the production of knowledge through language as it is practiced in specific cultural, social, cognitive, and historical contexts, has the potential to facilitate the integration of literary modules with other related fields such as linguistics and civilization. It posits an approach that targets the link between literature, language, culture, identity, and cognition, providing a framework, with clear feasible objectives, a clear course outline, and a comprehensive list of techniques, activities, and tasks that might guide novice teachers. The framework is flexible and can be adjusted according to the needs of each classroom.

## **Motivation**

The study is driven by both academic and personal motives. On the one hand, it is informed by my experience with literature both as a student and a teacher, where I seek to find solutions for the problems and challenges which I have faced. As a student, I was challenged by the absence of a comprehensive course outline and clear objectives for the lessons and readings we were assigned. In addition, the focus was mainly on theme analysis which somehow limited our perspective. As a novice teacher, I was

assigned the module of didactics, the basic course outline of which follows the timeline of the development of language teaching methods and approaches, wherein the teacher explains each method, and then evaluates its effectiveness in real EFL classrooms, highlighting the shortcomings of each. Examining that course outline, I had one question in mind, “what if a student asks me, ‘So what method are you using to teach us?’” That fear and anxiety necessitated the search for alternatives to those single methods, which historically proved to fail in encompassing all the aspects of language learning. This fear grew bigger when I started teaching literature and discourse analysis two years later. I realized that the complexity of these classes, especially that of literature, needs an interdisciplinary approach.

On the other hand, the study is mainly motivated by my love and appreciation of the art of storytelling and the understanding of its effect on the development of identity and learning. Growing up in a family that highly regards education, and to whom reading and bedtime stories are sacred, I have developed a sense of responsibility towards reading and the pursuit of knowledge at a very young age. Through my mother’s voice, I have heard the most amazing stories about the prophets, been introduced to the world of fairytales and folktales, and been exposed to world literature. Bedtime stories were held sacrosanct in my household. Not only did my mom tell us stories in Arabic, but she also read to us in French, pausing after each paragraph to translate the content and ask us questions about the story. This consequently nurtured our curiosity, love, and passion for literature.

The stories I heard have shaped my sense of self, and my learning journey, and still affect my instructional decisions. I might not remember some significant event in

my childhood yet, somehow, I can recall every story I heard, and even more distinctively how each story made me feel. My reading habits have greatly influenced my studies, language proficiency, and attitudes toward the world. Our mother, perhaps without knowing, has widened our worldview, and helped us grow into tolerant and resilient human beings.

Through literature classes, with the various stories and narratives, I hope to touch our students' hearts in a similar way, promoting their identities, enriching their cultural awareness, and empowering their learning experiences. I aim to find ways to help my students reach their full potential while enjoying the process of learning and appreciating literature.

### **Significance of the Study**

The research is relevant to various parties. First, it provides a draft for curriculum and course designers. It is an initiative to create a more comprehensive syllabus that accounts for the complexities of literature classrooms, covering content, instructional tools, and assessment methods. The research lays a foundation and suggests a philosophy for future literature classes if ever we decide to take a step toward improving curriculum design. Second, teachers in general, and novice ones specifically, can use the proposed framework as a guide in their teaching.

Moreover, this study highlights and explains techniques from various scientific and educational fields (cognitive sciences, cultural responsiveness, sociocultural approaches, discourse analysis, and reader response theory), explaining how we could implement each in the classroom. The techniques used are modeled throughout the experiment, enabling teachers to examine and evaluate each and choose what fits their

classes. In addition, the results of the experiment give insight into the effect of each technique, task, and activity to facilitate the teachers' choice. In addition, it provides different study guides of various books from the pilot study and experiment and detailed lesson plans and objectives; it offers handouts that could assist teachers with no experience in these instructional areas.

Last but not least, it is significant for students since it seeks to teach to and through their cultural backgrounds, strengths, and existing abilities. We understand that our students are not equal, do not start learning on equal footing, and might need different types of assistance. In order to counteract the underachievement trend observed in literature classes in Algerian universities (archival data), we have integrated a multitude of activities derived from diverse disciplines to accommodate a wide range of learning styles, capacities, and attitudes. Teaching through culture, we assume, never fails to establish meaningful learning; incorporating students' cultural perspectives and frames of reference into classroom instruction can help them gain ownership of their learning, enhancing their independence and preparing them for future learning.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The present research endeavors to improve the pedagogy of literature in EFL classrooms in higher education. It aims at reversing the prevailing trend of underperformance in literature courses and upholding the significance of literature in language classrooms. To reach this aim our research sets the following objectives:

- 1) Highlight, explicitly, the link between culture, literature, and cognition;
- 2) Promote students' cultural identities and learning by incorporating their cultural frames of reference in classroom practices and course design;

- 3) Empower students' information processing through the integration of brain-based research in course design and instruction;
- 4) Improve learners' ability to read and interpret literary texts;
- 5) Build a 'cult of learning,' whereby students are prepared for future learning;
- 6) Build a community of learning to support current and future learning;
- 7) Foster students' tolerance, critical thinking, and resilience;
- 8) Restore the value of literature in Algerian EFL classrooms;
- 9) Advocate action research, where teachers research, investigate, and try techniques and procedures from various sciences to solve their classroom problems and improve their teaching;
- 10) Bridge the gap between linguistics, didactics, and literature.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The research uses a quasi-experimental method to answer the following main questions:

1. How does using the *culturally responsive- interdisciplinary approach* affect teaching literature in EFL classrooms in Higher Education?
2. How does using *the culturally responsive-interdisciplinary approach* affect third-year students' performances in literature tests at Zian Achor university?

We further set these sub-questions:

- a) How does incorporating students' cultural frames of reference influence students' learning of literary analysis?
- b) Which techniques are more effective?
- c) What is the effect of each technique?

- d) Which activities are more engaging to the students?
- e) Does the approach work equally with various literary works and genres?

To answer these questions, we formulated the following hypotheses:

1. **Null Hypothesis (H0):** Using *the culturally responsive-interdisciplinary approach* has no effect on teaching literature and students' performances in literature tests.
2. **Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** Using *the culturally responsive-interdisciplinary approach* improves teaching literature and enhances students' performances in literature tests.

## **Delimitations**

Our research tests the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary approach we designed for teaching literature to third-year EFL students at Zian Achor University. However, factors like students' gender, age, and economic status are not part of the discussion. As will be clarified in upcoming chapters, although the approach seeks to promote students' identities, we do not address a specific type of identity like gender identity, social identity, religious identity, or ethnic identity. Instead, we focus on the common attributes of these identities which are relevant to any type of learning such as cultural frames of reference, personal experience, and background knowledge.

## **Structure of the Thesis**

The thesis comprises five chapters. The first two chapters provide the theoretical background of the study. Chapter 1 is devoted to the examination of the concept of literature, its definitions, value, place, and role in language teaching, and the most common approaches to teaching literary texts. It also highlights the principles we borrow from cognitive sciences, the sociocultural, reader-response theory, and

discourse analysis. Finally, it ends with a discussion about literature content and assessment in higher education, proposing and underlining the views of coverage and testing adopted in the research. The second chapter deals with culture; it frames the history of the concept in various fields, such as anthropology and sociology, identifying its levels, components, and features. It explains the link between culture, language learning, and cognition, and then moves to introducing culturally responsive pedagogy-the centerpiece of our interdisciplinary approach. The chapter ends with bridging the gap between culture, literature, language, and cognition stating the rationale behind choosing literature classes and demonstrating the basic tenets of our approach.

The third chapter is dedicated to research methodology. It presents a detailed description of the research paradigm, type, and data collection and analysis tools. It addresses research reliability and validity and finally explains the experiment framework, lesson plans, techniques, activities, and procedures. The fourth chapter presents the analysis of data elicited from the various research tools. The fifth chapter provided the reader with the discussion of the results in relation to the research questions and the relevant literature, followed by the implications, limitations and further research suggestions. The research conclusion revisits the main parts and aspects of this research.

# Chapter 01

## Literature: Teaching, Theory, and Practice

## **Introduction**

This chapter covers some fundamental areas concerning teaching literature. It provides various views about the definition, value, and use of literature, highlights the place and significance of literature in language classrooms, and gives an account of the most common and widely used approaches to teaching literature, both as a separate discipline and as a part of EFL classrooms. Since our research advocates the use of an interdisciplinary approach to teaching literature, it constantly emphasizes the tools, practices, strategies, and techniques that we borrow from these approaches. The present chapter then sheds light on the content and assessment in literature courses in higher education, pinpointing the struggles, and proposing some solutions.

### **1.1. What is Literature: Scoping Literature**

There is no real consensus on one comprehensive definition or an overarching interpretation of literature. Nevertheless, in order to proceed with literature classes, it is imperative that we frame the concept and its implications to enable the design of a coherent, relevant syllabus. The term literature comes from the Latin word *literatura*, which signifies a written form, yet it means not only what is written but “what is voiced, what is expressed, what is invented, in whatever form” (Marcus and Sollors, 2009). At its most neutral, literature signifies any textual manifestations of writing; it is used to designate creative fictional bodies of writing (drama, poetry, prose). Davids (1983) says that literature is a creative writing of artistic value, which suggests that it is characterized by a special use of language that is different from everyday “regular speech”. Eagleton (2004) points out that literature transforms and intensifies ordinary language, and

deviates systematically from everyday speech. It does not constitute a type of language in itself, but there are some linguistic features that distinguish it. These features can be found in other types of discourse as well; however, in many literary texts “they combine to form a highly unified and consistent effect, which strongly reinforces the message of the text.” (Brumfit and Carter, 1986, p. 8)

Lazar (1993) identifies various linguistic features that constitute a literary text, including metaphor, simile, assonance, alliteration, repetition, unusual syntactic patterns, double or multiple meanings of a word, poeticisms, and the mixing of styles and registers. Even with such classifications, the concept of literature remains elusive, being simultaneously accessible (simple) and arcane (esoteric).

Damrosch (2009) explains that literature definitions have often oscillated under three main paradigms, as classics, as masterpieces, and windows on the world. These paradigms, however, are not inclusive of all aspects, types, and characteristics of literature. For instance, the term classic has been used to refer to ancient influential works usually of ancient Greek and Latin origins; later the term came to include any work of world literature of enduring excellence that is historically memorable. The world masterpiece, Damrosch (2009) explains:

can be recognized almost as soon as it is published to glowing reviews and begins to circulate in translation. Far from needing to live in a cultural capital such as imperial Rome, the writer of a masterpiece can come from a small country (such as the duchy of Saxe-Weimar in a not yet unified Germany) and quite modest origins, as Cervantes and Shakespeare did: Johann Wolfgang Goethe himself was granted the aspirational "von" by his duke only at age thirty-three. (p.4)

These two paradigms facilitate the instructor's selection of materials for their literature courses, as they may exclusively concentrate on works that are considered timeless classics and masterpieces as per multiple encyclopedic sources. By the mid-1990s, the

classical and masterpiece approaches had been supplemented by the idea of literature as windows onto the world. Henceforth, literature includes works regardless of whether they are classics or masterpieces. They are included because of what they represent of culture, social norms, values, perspectives, etc; Western literature is no longer the only prevalent, the idea of world literature has surfaced.

As the idea of windows to the world developed, definitions of literature changed and varied a great deal; they became broad in orientation and scope. Murdoch (1978) says, “literature could be said to be a sort of disciplined technique for arousing certain emotions”; in the same vein, Eagleton (1983, p. 9) says, “one can think of literature less as some inherent quality or set of qualities displayed by certain kinds of writing all the way from Beowulf to Virginia Woolf, than as a number of ways in which people relate themselves to writing.” Literature is described as a lasting expression of thoughts, emotions, and ideas through language, pertaining to one's perception of life and the world. It springs from our love of storytelling, of arranging words in an aesthetically pleasing manner and conveying certain facets of our human experience through the written word (Moody, 1972). Literature, then, can be thought of as an artistic, imaginative representation of the world (experience, culture, social norms, etc.). In this paradigm, literature serves as an interpretation of life- a potent and beautiful rendition of reality. It inspires the various stages of existence in some form of beauty, housing human life.

Other researchers define literature in terms of purpose, Paley (1974 as cited in Lazar, 1993, p.2) claims that literature makes justice in the world and is often on the side of the underdog. Hogan (2011) says that literature is what provides us with

‘unavailable insights’ into the way emotions are produced, experienced, and enacted in human social life. Literature is viewed as a product of historical and social circumstances, a representative and revealing artifact (Lazar,1993). It is, writes Chan (1984), a record of our collective human experience. It introduces us to other human beings and invites us to share their lives, their thoughts and convictions, feelings, sufferings, and joys. When requested to formulate their own definitions of literature, our students frequently proffer declarations akin to those in the third paradigm given their resonance with their personal experiences.

Examining the works on literature, however, we observed that the term is often taken for granted. Books on teaching literature rarely start with definitions of the concept; readers often need to deduce them from the various approaches to teaching literature. Each approach perceives literature differently, and understanding the nuances of each helps delimit the scope of literature. In addition, identifying the inherent values of literature leads to a more lucid and comprehensive understanding of the underlying significance and definitions of literature.

## **1.2. Why Read and Study Literature? The Value of Literature**

Some of us struggle to determine the purpose of our teaching, let alone articulate it to our students; many of us fail to identify and formulate the rationale for engaging with literary works. Bruns (2011) stresses the necessity to both identify and communicate the value of literature to our students. He posits that the task is a complex undertaking, as it requires not only persuasive abilities but also a well-conceived framework. She adds that:

While the study of literature seems to undergo regular reforms attempting to correct the blind spots of previous generations, including the inclusion in recent decades of

minority and underrepresented literatures, these developments have done little to address the question of literature's value. (p 2.3)

Our literature classes may not succeed in passing the value of literature to our students because our curriculum design lacks clear objectives. In addition, it is unlikely that literature teachers will be able to explain to their students why reading and studying literature are important if they lack a sufficient understanding of the significance of literary reading. It needs a thorough examination of the manifold academic, social, cultural, and psychological contributions of literature. Bruns (2011) claims that the burden of public reading habits lies on the shoulders of teachers and educators. As an attempt to simplify this task, we can examine what literary works represent and offer to readers in general and to EFL students in particular.

In the 1820s, when literature became a course of study at the University of London, its purpose was to moralize, civilize, and humanize (Showlter 2003, p.22), while in the USA, it was considered a source of moral and spiritual values relating to the cultural and ancestral identity of a particular community. According to Bruner (1986), stories embody the narrative models and procedures for interpreting and organizing experiences of a specific culture. Following the work of Greimas and Courtes (1976), Bruner (1986) argues that literature with its imaginative use of the narrative form situates the readers in a 'dual landscape' of both action and consciousness that enables them to explore human possibilities. He explains that stories locate readers in what he calls 'a particular pattern' or 'grammar' of events, situations, and goals revealing the subjective worlds of characters who are involved in such events. Therefore, stories provide "maps of possible roles and possible worlds in which action,

thought, and self-determination are permissible or desirable” (p. 66). From this view, we can conclude that the value of literature stems from its capacity to enable readers to challenge the limits of their personal experiences with the various ones drawn in literary texts, thereby facilitating their personal growth and development.

Bruns (2011) summarizing prior research on the significance of literature instruction in education, delineates these two broad categories, encompassing the various perspectives presented earlier.

### **1.2.1. Literary Reading as Instructive**

One of the most common ways to justify literary reading is by listing the number of skills it could improve such as critical thinking, reading, writing, and problem-solving. Yet, since this is relevant to any type of reading, a much more favorable claim among teachers and researchers is that literature helps us understand the world, make sense of our experiences, grow as human beings, and develop tolerance towards each other. A much stronger and scientific claim is that literature helps in our cognitive, social, and psychological development (Zunshine, 2006). Zunshine (2006, pp. 11-12) asserts that reading fiction engages and exercises two broad mental faculties that are essential for social functioning. “First is our ability to explain people's behavior in terms of their thoughts, feelings, or beliefs – to recognize the mind behind the action - and second is our ability to keep track of the source of what we are told even through several levels of "embedment" (as in, "She said that he said that you thought).”

According to this view, literature helps us build intellectual capacities because we read to find the truth and frame perspective and knowledge about the world. This knowledge is our guide to understanding new materials, developing new skills, and even

reading new books. The idea of literature being our gate to finding the truth is supported by William Roche (2004) and Edmonson (2004) who believe that literature is our window and gateway to the absolute, as it contributes notably to the formation of cognitive processes, mental models, beliefs, and ideologies. This idea holds great significance in our study, as elaborated in the forthcoming sections.

## **1.2. 2. Literary Reading as a Source of Pleasure**

Although pleasure alone seems an insufficient explanation for literary reading, once we try to explain what is the source of this pleasure, we can get a better understanding of this view. Researchers like Lamarque and Olsen (2004), Perloff (2004), and Wellek and Warren (1965) emphasize that reading for pleasure is as important of a reason for literature as reading for instruction and cognitive development. They argue that the ultimate value of literature is that it gives joy and pleasure to the reader. For Donoghue (1998), literary reading brings the readers pleasure because it involves the exercise of their imagination leading them towards an empathetic understanding of alternate lives and experiences. The source of the pleasure can come from the use of one's imagination itself, from the movement towards knowing the other, or from both. He argues that it is the connection between the exercise of imagination and the spiritual and moral realms, not the pleasure itself, that is the good of literary reading, which should provoke readers to imagine what it would mean to have a life different from their own. This enables the reader to connect with other human beings and denotes reading relation "to sympathy, fellowship, the spirituality and morality of being human" (p.75).

The view of Donoghue can be brought in line with what Lewis (1961) wrote:

The nearest I have yet got to an answer is that we seek an enlargement of our being. We want to be more than ourselves. Each of us by nature sees the whole world from one point of view with a perspective and a selectiveness peculiar to himself ... we want to see with other eyes, to imagine with other imaginations, to feel with other hearts, as well as with our own. (p.137)

This view of pleasure is also discussed in cognitive literary sciences which examine the link between literature and emotions. Although it might seem irrelevant to educational fields, we find that understanding how literature evokes certain emotions in the human brain relying on cognitive and neuroscientific findings, will help us improve our literature classes. With the help of this scientific knowledge, we can combine the didactic and the emotional, the instructive and the pleasurable. Being informed of such findings, we can move towards a more interdisciplinary approach to teaching literature, which may improve our classroom instruction, selection of activities and projects, and choice of literary works.

Staloff (1970) provides an interesting view on the usefulness of literature. Reading literature, for him, is an experience often characterized by a sense of “disruption” or even “threat”, and this quality is part of what motivates reading (p. 143). He provides a range of terms used for why we read literature such as it stretches, widens, heightens, deepens, broadens, extends, expands, or enriches one's consciousness, understanding, awareness, or experience. Slatoff explains that we read to challenge our limited experience and consciousness. Edmunson (2004) builds on this view and uses similar terms saying that we read to assert ourselves, to sharpen our analytical faculties, to debunk myths, to know the other, for diversion, and truth (p. 56).

The book ‘Reading Across Culture’ by Rogers (1997) summarizes the experiences of various researchers and teachers with teaching literature to children and adults (McGinley and colleagues, Enciso, Beach, Rogers, Hines, Willis, Desai, McLean,

Cai, and Soter). These researchers investigated various areas of teaching literature including learners' resistance to engagement with multicultural literature, negotiating the meaning of difference through literature, and reader-response theory. The book delivers significant insights into the effect of using narrative stories and literary works on young learners. For instance, narrative reading provides children with opportunities to "envision possible selves and celebrate particular role models to adopt and imaginatively explore a variety of new roles, responsibilities, and identities derived from both real and fictional story characters" (p.61). Enciso (1997 as cited in Rogers, 1997) explains that it helps learners build contact with the past, savor it, learn from it, and reflect upon it. She adds that her students used literature mostly to reflect on some resolved or unresolved problematic emotions like fear, anger, and anxiety.

Through the imaginary lives of the characters, students are presented with a vehicle to understand social relationships, affirm them, and negotiate them, hence finding a place within their communities. These researchers further affirmed that children use stories to rethink the meaning of their important friendships and understand their social problems; here literature functions more in social ways. Rogers (1997) claims that using a variety of instructional activities, where children reflect upon their own lives and experiences in response to their reading, encourages them to use stories as means of personal and social exploration and reflection; as an 'imaginative vehicle', as Willinsky (1991 as cited in Rogers, 1997, p.62) suggests, for "questioning, shaping, responding, and participating in the world."

As for our own experience with teaching literature and academic reading and writing, we have observed that students are more engaged when asked to link the events,

characters, and themes of certain stories to their life experiences, personal values, and beliefs. For example, when reading ‘Fahrenheit 451’, students found opportunities to examine, closely, the effect of technology and social media on their own lives. Projecting the world and lives in the book on their own, they could notice how ideologies, power, and values are being transformed through social media to shape their reality and emotions. When reading ‘Animal Farm’, for instance, the most inviting questions were: Have you ever experienced any form of oppression? Based on your own experience at the university what do the following concepts (themes in the book) mean to you? The concepts were freedom, equality, ignorance, knowledge, censorship, and equity. Students were able to communicate their thoughts about these themes in significantly better and clearer structures and forms. After the final evaluation of both books, some students claimed that examining their social experiences at home, school, or work made them realize that they have been exposed to various forms of oppression- intellectual, emotional, and social. Again, when reading ‘Pygmalion’ by Bernard Shaw, we were surprised by the number of personal stories the students shared about facing social discrimination, judgment, and identity crises. This further confirmed that the value of literature in our language classrooms encompasses didactic, linguistic, social, and cultural areas of learning.

### **1.3. Literature in Language Classrooms: Use and Development**

Those who advocate the use of literature in foreign or second language classrooms point to its potential to both needs of language learning, form and meaning (Hall, 2005). However, researchers like Donato and Brooks (2004), Mantero (2002), and Zyzik and Polio (2008) claim that with all the research done to investigate this, we

still know little about literature use in language contexts. Some researchers like Bernhardt (2011) perceive that literature's main use is the delivery of the language being taught, claiming that literary texts provide authentic material to learn the grammar, the syntax, and most importantly the pragmatics of a specific language.

Others like Carter and Long (1991) and Delanoy (2005) emphasize the paramount importance of culture, accentuating that the primary reason for incorporating literature in a language classroom is to represent it given that literature is deemed as the most effective approach to gaining insight into the culture of another speech community. Culture, however, has been and still is an issue in the use of literature in education because of its promise as a pedagogical resource and the challenges arising from the complexity of the concept.

Since the 1990s, researchers have noted that literary texts can be used positively in L2 classrooms (Gilroy and Parkinson, 1997; Hall, 2005; Kramsch and Kramsch, 2000; Maley, 1990; Schultz, 2002; and Simpson, 1997). Historically, it started with literary stylistics, which achieved success in teaching the English language to foreign learners in an engaging and motivating way. Once the motivational advantages of using real language examples rather than invented ones were realized, it was obvious that literary texts offered a rich source for sampling. Linguists such as Brumfit (1983), Brumfit and Carter (1986), Carter (1982), Carter and Long (1991), and Widdowson (1975) advocate the use of a systematic analysis of literary texts in the service of language teaching. They believe that literature is an 'ally of language' (Brumfit and Carter, 1986) that presents language in discourse. Leavis (1989 as cited in Hall, 2005, p.12) says literature is the "supreme creative act of language." A literary text is a

manifestation of creativity, knowledge of the world, and ‘the other’ in the form of the target language, in the cultural context of its speech community. Balakian (1977) adds that literature depicts people, places, situations, and scenarios that stimulate the language learner.

Parkinson and Thomas (2000, pp. 9-11) argue that literature can provide or be the following, a “linguistic model” (since it is an excellent form of writing and a source of linguistic diversity), an extension of linguistic competence, a mental training, authentic linguistic material, basis for interaction, and a source for cultural enrichment, which all can be linked to the language classroom. Moody (1971) notes that the study of literature is fundamentally and primarily a study of language in use. Povey (1972) asserts that it helps increase the various language skills, by extending the linguistic knowledge of learners (vocabulary, syntax, grammar, collocation, etc.). Researchers like Bassnett and Gundy (1993) further emphasize the strong link between literature and language skills development saying that literature illustrates the sublime use of language. Allen (1978) adds that literature is the ‘what’ and language is the ‘how.’

Kramersch & Kramersch (2000) explain that the teaching of foreign literature has always intersected with the social and political history of the nation-state in America, and it is “indissociable” from the aspects of language study, such as reading, writing, and culture (p.453). Their article documented the changing role that literature played in language classrooms between 1916 and 1999. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, literature has been taught in the language classroom for various reasons:

- **The 1910s: Aesthetic Education of the Few**

During 1916, say Kramsch and Kramsch (2000), literature was “the uncontested source discipline of teaching modern languages” namely French and German (p.454). By 1918, a text-based reading approach was implemented in language classrooms to oppose both the dominant direct method and the grammar-translation method. This approach emphasized the educational benefits of literature, recognizing the difficulties of using literary texts, particularly classics, in second and foreign-language classrooms. The books used in these classes were not meant for pupils but for mature adult readers. There was a lack of adaptability to the literary texts used; therefore, it was the responsibility of the teacher to scan the books and choose only those appropriate to the level of the students. To choose teachers needed to ask some important questions about the texts available to them; Sachs (1918) says:

Turning now to our accessible material, what have we available? Is it illuminating in the best sense of the word? Does it embrace with any degree of completeness various angles from which the foreign people may be regarded? What side is wanting to complete the picture, and does the absence of it distort the picture as a whole? Do the texts that are available emphasize unduly national self-consciousness? How can we counteract the effect of a work that leans excessively to sentimentality? Can we furnish as a desirable antidote one that breathes distinctly the note of virility? (p 143)

These questions, implicitly, shaped the role and value of literature in language classrooms at that time. Literature was seen as a vehicle to understand nations and history, used for moral and aesthetic education, and was based on content rather than the linguistic form, acknowledging that linguistic knowledge was key in a successful reading of literature. Literature, during this phase, was preserved for the few elites who could uncover the moral potential of literary texts.

- **The 1920s: The Literacy of the Many**

After the First World War, there was a slight regression in the evolution of language and literature teaching in the United States and around the world. Because of political reasons, German and French lost their position in the US educational system affecting SLA and FLA research. Literature soon adapted to social and political changes; translation of literary works gained more popularity, and literature moved from being elitist to being dedicated to the large masses of the poorly educated. By 1929, the supremacy of literature in language studies was replaced by a strong emphasis on literacy in language education. The role of literature during this period was to make the study of the national languages (German, French, and Spanish particularly) more attractive and accessible.

- **The 1930s-1940s: for Moral Uplift**

On the one hand, influenced by social and education sciences, there had been a major focus on reading as a separate skill rather than an inseparable part of teaching literature. Literature became a secondary, supplementary material in reading classes. On the other hand, WWII offered a great opportunity for translators to shine and improve. Abridged, simplified classics and translations were used in reading and language classrooms. The teaching of literature witnessed a shift towards the ideational content of literary texts and their social and historical contexts. Classics were abandoned for recent works chosen for their social message, human interest, or character-building value. Krakowski (1940) notes that some American scholars advocated teaching German literature to incorporate their enduring cultural values and enrich American culture and way of life; at the same time, used their literature to circulate the ideology

of Americanization and democracy (McGee, 1942). Literature at this point was used to rearm nations with the necessary moral values and ideologies to preserve powerful positions in the political sphere.

- **The 1950s: For Ideational Content**

With the evolution of linguistics and language teaching methods, literature gained back its position in language education but was associated only with advanced levels of language proficiency. Literature became an ideational content that requires an advanced set of linguistic skills. The ability to read and comprehend a literary text was seen as an extension of the ability to speak the language of the text. However, this phase witnessed a decreasing demand and need for literary texts since the Audio-lingual method was in full swing. Scholars sought to underline the educational value of literature and its link to culture and intercultural communication to maintain its status. The idea of ‘world literature’ was still fighting its way toward the educational systems fighting the ‘unhumanistic’ ways of the audiolingual paradigm, where learning is decontextualized from its social, cultural, and human circumstances.

- **The 1960s-1970’s: For Humanistic Inspiration**

This period was characterized by a major focus on teaching culture in language classrooms. Scholars have shifted their attention toward the potential contributions of literature to the betterment of humanity. Literature was seen as a window to other worlds, cultures, and human experiences. It could offer students opportunities to know and understand their relationships with ‘the self’ and ‘the other’ within their culture, with other individuals in a different culture, and with the world itself. In addition to aesthetic pleasure and fun, it was a portal to infinite possibilities of human experience.

During this era, Showalter (2003) notes, teaching literature at the university and the English departments became a political act for radical and minority groups like African Americans who called for including women and black writers in curriculums. The purpose of literature, then, was to form personal identities and aid in political struggles. Kramsch and Kramsch (2000) note that with the progress made in linguistics and SLA research, and the multicultural turn in education, literature, again, was driven out of the picture of teaching modern languages. This led researchers like Steiner (1972), Hester (1972), Henkle (1971), Lewis (1976), and Kramsch (1976) to consider the pedagogy of literature as a separate domain. This was a huge step forward in literary theory, criticism, and teaching literature. The 1970s marked an era where literature became a branch of philosophical inquiry about signification, representation, aporia, and ideology (Showalter, 2016).

- **The 1980s-1990s: For Authentic Experience of the Target Culture**

Research from psycholinguistics and discourse analysis informed the fields of teaching foreign literature and languages. Literary texts were associated with ‘culture’ and used under the umbrella of ‘authentic material’ in language classrooms to teach culture, critical thinking, vocabulary, and reading strategies. This was coupled with attention to students’ distinct abilities, competencies, interests, and background knowledge. These aspects were considered necessary for text processing and understanding (Kramsch 1985; Harper, 1988). However simple this idea may seem, teaching literature at this phase was far more complex. Teaching literary texts was two-sided. It had to account for language learners’ responses and interpretations according to the various elements mentioned above, and for the foreign cultural elements that

cannot be inferred from students' personal experiences, but are rather found in "the world of the true authentic native writer/reader" (Kramsch & Kramsch 2000, p. 558). Teachers had to teach both the interpretations of the non-native and the native.

Investigating the historical implications of the interplay between literature and language pedagogy, we could discern additional classifications and categorizations pertaining to the function of literary works in language classrooms. In 1989, a report entitled 'English for ages 5 to 16', which came to be known as 'The COX Report' submitted to the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office, provided five reasons for teaching English, including teaching literature (DEW NO,1989). These reasons came to represent five distinct models, covering the focus of language classrooms, the roles of teachers and schools in language teaching, and some internal and external factors that influence the process of language learning. Although the report was criticized for providing these proposals without much evidence from the field of teaching, we can see that it accords with the research mentioned earlier.

- **A Personal Growth Model:** Focusing on the child, the model stresses the relationship between language and learning in the individual child, and the role of literature in developing children's imaginative and aesthetic lives.

- **A 'Cross-Curricular' Model:** focusing on the school; the model indicates that all teachers are responsible for assisting children with the language demands of different subjects on the school curriculum.

- **An 'Adult Needs' Model:** It focuses on communication outside the school; it puts on the teachers of English the responsibility of preparing children for the language demands of adult life, including the workplace in a fast-changing.

●**A ‘Cultural Heritage’ Model:** This model underlines the responsibility of schools in leading children to an appreciation of literary works that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language.

●**A Cultural Analysis Model:** The last one stresses the role of English in the development of children’s critical understanding of the world and cultural environment in which they live. It seeks to raise their awareness about the value of print and other media, and their role in meaning creation.

We can synthesize four primary arguments for the integration of literature into language classrooms., 1) the linguistic argument (develops language skills, enriches vocabulary, etc.), 2) the psycholinguistic argument (develops language and text processing skills, expands cognitive abilities, improves critical thinking, etc.), 3) cultural argument (enriches cultural knowledge, enable contact with the other, develops tolerance, promotes intercultural communication, etc.), and 4) personal affective argument (pleasure, reflection on personal experience, and relationships, growth, motivation, etc.). Literature, culture, and language are naturally intertwined, so incorporating literature in language classrooms could be an opportunity to understand and encourage an even more open and multicultural society (Eagleton, 2000).

Paradoxically, in reality, literature is preserved for higher-level learners only, and replaced by the so-called ‘authentic material’ (Cook, 2000). Cook explains that in L2 classrooms, language materials are more popular than literary materials. Teachers often used bits of language lifted from their original context, or student language generated by the communicative activity itself, which led to the decline of using literature both as a means and an end of language teaching. Despite the fact that research provides us with

a good number of theories that both justify and facilitate the use of literature in language classrooms, in the Algerian context, for instance, literature is preserved in higher education only and is taught as a separate module that is neither linked to language skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking) nor the study of civilization. The complexity of literature and its relation to language learning calls for a careful examination of the various approaches and methods to teaching literature throughout history.

#### **1.4. Approaches and Methods to Teaching Literature**

Research classifies the approaches to teaching literature both as a separate domain and within language classrooms differently. Some link the teaching to the major literary criticism theories, others consider the outcome of teaching literature and accordingly describe the approaches as models for learning specific skills from literary texts (language model, sociocultural model, etc.), while most recognize two opposite directions of teaching literature, learner-centered and teacher-centered. The following part describes the most dominant approaches to teaching literature with a focus on language classrooms. Note that most of these approaches are originally literary theories and approaches to literary text analysis which emphasizes the underdevelopment of research in literature pedagogy.

##### **1.4.1. New Criticism**

With the establishment of literature as an independent academic discipline, there emerged a need to study and teach literature “scientifically”, giving rise to numerous literary theories and critical methodologies to study literary works. One of the earliest theories to put a strong emphasis on teaching literature is American New Criticism. Anglo-American New Criticism is one of the most influential movements in 20<sup>th</sup>-

century literary theory. It emphasizes close reading of a literary work to discover how it functions as a self-contained, self-referential aesthetic object. The premise of this theory is that the meaning of a text and its structure are intimately connected and should not be analyzed separately. Literary critics and teachers should concentrate primarily on the text, its linguistic structures, and the ambiguities of meaning resulting from them, and secondarily on the text's extraliterary relationships (Pokrivčák, 2017).

New criticism is a method or form of reading the text through language and organic unity-the understanding of 'the text itself' and nothing else. It seeks to analyze the individual literary work in isolation – freeing it from other works and all other elements of context such as culture, history, and social norms. It is concerned solely with the 'text in itself', with its language and organization (how a text 'speaks itself'). New critics believed that the purpose of studying literature should exclude personal registrations, which are accounts of the effect of the text on the reader/critic, and be solemnly focused on the form of the text itself attributing specific objectivity to the literary work in hand (Tate, 1940).

Being focused on the text form only can be relevant to the language classroom since it can help students acquire various aspects of language use (grammar, syntax, rhetoric, etc.). Still, this approach overlooks the strong link between the text, the writer, the reader, and the world. Decontextualizing literary texts with a mere focus on the structure may help students develop linguistic competence, yet it strips the experience from its cultural, social, and even cognitive background, which are vital in language classrooms, specifically the EFL classroom where culture is at its heart.

### 1.4.2. Stylistics

Stylistics is born out of the interaction between linguistics and literature. Functionalist linguists claim that it is necessary to acknowledge the link between the field of poetics and linguistics. Carter and Simpson (1995, p.2) summarize the development of stylistics according to the advancements in linguistic theories. In the 1960s, stylistics was “dominated by attempts to define *style* and to isolate the particular properties of authorial, period, or *group styles*.” The definitions were provided not only by linguists but by literary critics, anthropologists, and psychologists as well. The focus of the investigations at that time was mainly syntax and phonology with a considerable interest in the “psychological properties of style, particularly in readers’ responses to style and in style as a psycholinguistic and cognitive phenomenon.”

In the 1970s, with the development of generative phonology and transformational grammar, there emerged an interest to explore the differences between the poet’s grammar and underlying grammatical norms. Stylistics defined style in terms of the writer’s choices of particular transformational options. Stylistics was influenced by any major development in the field of linguistics. For instance, with the emergence and growth of functionalism, stylistics came to consider the idea that “forms are socially constituted and contextually determined, and their meaning cannot be constructed in isolation from such a social semiotics” (Carter and Simpson, 1995, p.2).

Linguistic or literary stylistics came to mean the study of the linguistic devices and forms (word choice, syntactic forms, rhetoric, etc.) that produce a literary style. It helps relate language use in literary texts to its artistic function. Crystal and Davy (1973, p.10) state that:

the aim of stylistics is to analyze language habits with the main purpose of identifying, from the general mass of linguistic features common to English as used on every conceivable occasion, those features which are restricted to certain kinds of social context; to explain, where possible, why such features have been used, as opposed to other alternatives; and to classify these features into categories based upon a view of their function in the social context.

Stylistics is one of the most prominent approaches to teaching literature in English as second and foreign language classrooms because, Watson and Zyngier (2007) say, of its capacity for teaching the language in an engaging and motivating way. They add that “the metalinguistic reflection and discussion promoted by stylistic approaches in the second language classroom are held to contribute to deeper processing, understanding, memorability and development of the additional language in use.” (p.4) In this approach, learners are required to analyze texts aesthetically and interpret them using their linguistic knowledge. Language plays a vital role in deciphering the meaning of literary texts; hence, it is better that learners are equipped with the necessary linguistic skills. Van (2009) explains that the relevance of this approach to teaching literature stems from its ability to help students appreciate the aesthetic value of literary texts, saying that his students are engaged with the literature when they can explore the beauty of literary language.

Despite the promising nature of stylistics, its implementation in EFL contexts, where learners have limited access to linguistic resources of the target language, raises a few issues. First, the approach necessitates that both teachers and learners possess an advanced set of linguistic skills to decipher the meaning of literary texts. Second, as Van (2009) emphasizes, stylistics requires an investment in teachers' training. Third, “much stylistic research involves the analysis of literary texts, not how real readers, let alone non-native readers, understand these texts” Hall (2007, p. 5). Finally, there is no

empirical evidence to prove the benefits of using stylistics in EFL classrooms since most research published on this issue is conducted in first-language contexts in English-speaking countries and then generalized to include second and foreign-language contexts.

### **1.4.3. Structuralism**

Influenced by structuralism in linguistics, structuralism in literature studies was popular during the 1950s. Like new criticism, this theory focuses mainly on the structure of the text. The Structuralist approach in literature claims that literary discourse has no truth function in itself. Therefore, the total emphasis is put on the objectivity of examining the literary texts denying the role of both the writer's intentions and readers' personal responses. The approach deprives the text of its contextual background and aesthetic value and requires learners to approach it scientifically, using their knowledge of structures and themes to place the work into a meaningful hierarchical system. Culler (1982, p.20) says structuralism focuses on the different processes and structures that are "involved in the production of meaning."

Structuralism challenges some of the most fundamental beliefs about literature and its value by rejecting the humanistic side of literature, cutting all possible links between the person of the writer and his text. Indeed, structuralists such as Ronald Barthes (1967), writer of 'The Death of the Author', argues against linking text interpretation to the author's personal experience, social background, and any sort of biographical information that may shape his intended meaning. Selden, Widdowson, and Brooker, (2005, p.62) explain that the structuralists oppose the idea that the "human subject is the source and origin of literary meaning", claiming that writers only have the

power to mix already existing writings, to reassemble or redeploy them; writers cannot use writing to ‘express’ themselves, but only to draw upon that immense dictionary of language and culture which is “always already written.”

Carter and Long (1991) criticize this approach saying that it treats the literary text as a scientific object, studying the mechanical formal relationship, like the components of a narrative, while ignoring the analysis of how a “ literary text renders an author’s experience of life and allows us access to human meanings” (p.183). This approach might be the least relevant approach to EFL classrooms despite its popularity simply because it requires an advanced set of skills in linguistics, semiotics, syntax, etc. that our EFL students and some of our teachers may lack. Moreover, Structuralism opposes all the previous views on the value of literature reducing it to its linguistic forms, and disposing it of its cultural, social, and humanistic aspects. This certainly opposes our adopted view of literature as discourse; a vehicle to circulate power, culture, social norms, and ideologies. It disregards the interaction between the author, the text, the reader, and the context, which is vital in both literary analysis and language teaching due to its capacity to demonstrate semantic, pragmatic, and socio-cultural meanings.

#### **1.4.4. Reader Response Theory**

Although traditional approaches held sway in many classrooms for a long period, reader-response theory (RRT) has been the first major influence on the teaching of literature in schools since New Criticism. Reader response theory is based on the assumption that a literary work takes place in the mutual relationship between the text and the reader. It stems from the idea that when reading literary texts, readers avail themselves of emotions, beliefs, and histories for the sake of meaning construction

(Rosenblatt, 1978, 1983). Meaning is constructed in the interaction between the reader and the text. This meaning is both the reflection of the reader and the text itself. For RRT, reading literature is a dynamic process that evokes certain responses to the texts' characters, events, and actions in relation to the reader's thoughts and emotions. Researchers in the field explain that readers' responses are shaped by their experience, particularly, by their expectations. Each reader has their own expectations of how a certain character might behave, and how certain things could go according to their lived experience. Based on their belief systems, they may reject actions of certain characters, and resist forms of social practices and norms presented in the literary work. Both assimilation and resistance aid the readers to build their view of the world (Galda, 1982, Hancock, 1993; McGee, 1992, Mellor et al., 2000; and Shine & Roser, 1999).

Readers are experience builders, and a text represents forms of stimuli for the response, serving as a “guide, a regulator, a blueprint, and an avenue for interpretation” (Mart, 2019, p.81). Oster (1989) explains that while constructing meaning, readers promote their thinking skills, improve their understanding of certain notions, experience other cultures, and elevate interpretive skills, which can help them refine their creative abilities in writing. This view appeals to educators, especially language teachers. In responding to texts, Beach (2000) says, students move from the usual pedagogical focus to interpret and contextualize characters' actions or dialogue with reference to various social and cultural contexts. They can also contextualize characters' acts by drawing on historical knowledge of past cultural perspectives and models (Galda, 1982).

Another premise of RRT is the focus on the personal, social, and moral functions of literature (Beach, 1990; Hynds, 1990; Iser, 1978; Rosenblatt, 1978 & 1983).

According to these researchers, the literary experience functions 1) as a source of personal, social, and political exploration that provides readers with the necessary tools to interpret human experience, and 2) as a vehicle through which readers broaden their cultural understanding and sensibility.

Using this approach in literature and language classes is argued to boost learners' critical thinking, advance their moral reasoning, and cultivate their human sensitivity, which is all necessary for a meaningful learning experience. To elicit readers' responses, RRT relies on classroom discussions, which are essential for improving language awareness if they are "directed toward enabling the student to perform more and fully and more adequately in response to texts" (Rosenblatt, 1974, p. 353). Researchers such as Jewell and Pratt (1999), and Kim (2004) highlight the positive effect of literature discussions on various aspects of language learning including, motivation for reading, emotional involvement, articulation of opinions, and creation of meaning.

However, RRT has been through years of scrutiny and criticism, both as a theory and in terms of its pedagogical value. From a theoretical perspective, reader-response criticism, Rabinowitz (1987) says, has not adequately addressed the role of the author and the author's social and cultural influences. As instructional practices, response-oriented approaches overlook the social complexity of classroom communities with students of varying backgrounds, abilities, and experiences (Eagleton, 1983). This approach may not challenge students' worldviews, systems of thinking, and identities in the sense that it focuses more on the reader as an individual, neglecting the context

of the text production, bypassing sensitive issues of race, ethnicity, ideology, and cultural differences.

There is more to reading literature than just responding to actions and characters. There are two sides to literature, and we should cover both of them to enhance our literature and language classes. Reading literature is highly dependent on the readers' mental models, experiences, background knowledge, and linguistic and socio-cultural competencies. At the same time, literary works involve socially and culturally situated identities; and include culture-specific ways of acting and reacting presented by authors with their specific mental models, social experience, background knowledge, etc. The response is not only dependent on the reader and his knowledge, but it can be guided, mapped, and sometimes even restricted by the authors' intentions. In the view adopted by this research, both authors' intentionality and readers' responses are basic constitutive principles of literature as discourse. We cannot lean toward one at the expense of the other because both are equally important for the text to meet its communicative purpose. It is worth noting, however, that the idea of response has its roots in cognitive psychology, psycholinguistics, and neuroscience, and later in cognitive literary studies. Response theory is grounded in schema theory and mental model theory, which is significant to our research and the field of language and literature teaching. Therefore, the idea is revisited in the upcoming sections.

#### **1.4.5. Language-Based Approaches**

Similar to stylistics, but slightly more accessible to EFL learners, the language-based approach (LBA) advocates for the systematic, detailed analysis of the language of literary texts. It is built on the assumption that paying close attention to the structure

and language of the text will increase the student's awareness and understanding of English, and promote "meaningful interpretation and informed evaluations" of the text (Lazar,1993 p.23). LBA might differ from stylistics in premise and objectives, yet it borrows its procedures and techniques from stylistics. Since not all learners are ready or able to undertake a stylistics analysis, teachers in LBA use a variety of instruction activities such as predictions, reading aloud, rewriting the story, a summary of the plots, gap filling, and brainstorming.

Literary texts are used to elicit the various forms of language use, registers, styles, and diction. In addition, they are "open to multiple interpretations and hence provide opportunities for classroom discussion; and they focus on genuinely interesting and motivating topics to explore in the classroom" (p.27). This better serves the purpose of improving learners' language proficiency through literature. Building on Carter and Long's (1991) idea, Van (2009) stresses that through LBA learners acquire skills that facilitate access to texts, develop a sensitivity to various genres, and boost their communicative competencies.

However, we believe that despite recognizing literature's aesthetic, social, and cultural dimensions, LBA certainly neglects them. Literature, in this approach, is a tool to teach English, but not an end in itself. It is used as a vehicle through which learners gain access to a variety of language forms and structures. In our EFL classrooms, we need to achieve more than just language proficiency. Literature need not be stripped of its humanistic, social, and cultural aspects; it ought to be used for its main purposes which are to provide truth, shape reality, teach tolerance, know and connect with others, and ultimately help us become better people.

#### **1.4.6. Cognitive Approaches**

Historically, cognitive sciences including psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and neurolinguistics have always intersected with literary studies, sometimes unintentionally, yet perhaps one of the most tensioned and complex relationships is between literary criticism and cognitive sciences. Nekolajeva (2014) notes that there is a mutual advantage of the contact between these two fields, cognitive science using fiction to illustrate for brain functions and processes, at the same time providing insights that confirm the intuitive arguments of literary critics. In fact, when exploring some of the major findings of schema theory, or language and brain research, we see that most of these findings have been assumed by literary critics for decades. They were incorporated into their definitions of literature, their arguments about the value of literary texts, and their suggested approaches to literary reading.

Richardson and Steen (2002), in their introduction, 'Literature and Cognitive Revolution', trace back the link between the two sciences claiming that cognitive sciences have been borrowing from literary criticism its terminology and major concepts such as metaphor, scripts, stories, stream of consciousness, and multiple drafts to build linguistic, neuroscientific, and psychological research. This part re-examines cognitive science findings relevant to reading literature, discussing the possibility of a cognitive approach to teaching literature in EFL classrooms.

Cognitive approaches have remained on the verge of affecting the mainstream, but have not managed to do so (Burke & Troscianko, 2017). However, the influence of cognitive sciences on literary studies is eminent. Jackson (2000) stresses that cognitive sciences provide empirical evidence about the biology and psychology of reading,

writing, and responding. These are the fundamentals of the study of literature, which, as part of the humanities, is struggling for status in the field of education. We believe it needs to be cross-breaded with hard sciences like neuroscience, cognitive psychology, and biology. In our modern world, where technology is paving its way towards dominating educational scholarship, scientific rearmament is needed for humanities to maintain their position in education.

The Cognitive approaches to literature have been mainly interested in the processes of thoughts, feelings, imaginations, and emotions evoked by reading literary texts. They seek to provide methodologies and theories to describe both the production and reception of these texts. The cognitive analysis of literature surpasses both reception skills (perception, reading, comprehension, interpretation, memorization, etc.) and productive skills (summarization, writing, discussion, paraphrasing, etc.)

Cognitive psychology has mainly informed reading research about text processing and textual information storage and retrieval from memory; hence, the link to literature and language teaching. Through our classroom discussions, tests, activities, and assignments, we can tell if our students can read or not; but, we know so little, if nothing at all, about how our students understand and form meanings of texts. By studying how the brain functions, learns, memorizes, deciphers, and builds knowledge, we can achieve a better understanding of the relationship between texts and cognition.

Cognitive sciences establish empirical scientific claims about the link between narrative and cognition, highlighting the importance of narrative to human experience. Narration, or storytelling has always been an integral part of human existence, lying at the heart of every great civilization. Myths, religion, philosophy, and politics, all center

around the human ability to tell stories. Cognitive scientists conclude that narrative precedes writing, and even precedes language, which can be illustrated in cave drawings from long-lost civilizations. It can also be seen in children, who with no adequate linguistic competence, can communicate happenings in the form of narrative. This can only further emphasize the role of reading stories and fiction in learning and acquiring language. It is no surprise, then, that cognitive sciences use narrative, specifically fiction, to illustrate the mechanisms the brain uses to process information and knowledge. Turner (1996) notes that if we want to study the human everyday mind, we need to study the literary mind because the everyday mind is essentially narrative.

Equivalently, Bruner (1991) explains that our experiences and memories are organized in the form of stories and narratives, and will eventually take the form of the narrative through which we communicate them. This is perhaps why fiction appeals to readers, evokes their emotions, and stimulates their thoughts. We use our personal narratives (previous experiences and memories) to make sense of the literary works we read, which in turn will leave imprints in our brains, that enable us to organize, process, interpret, and produce future narratives. Furthermore, the narrative is linked to two integral aspects of learning: memory and emotions which are the main concerns of cognitive sciences. Hogan (2011) argues that the study of literature can advance and improve affective cognitive research. This strong link between literature and cognitive sciences cannot be overlooked in our classrooms instead, we can incorporate the findings about memory, reading, and emotions into our classroom practices.

Nikolajeva (2014) synthesizing a definition of cognitive literary studies from various perspectives states that it is:

a cross-disciplinary approach to reading, literacy and literature that suggests rethinking the literary activity as such...including interaction between readers and works of literature, but also *the ways literary texts are constructed to maximise, or perhaps rather optimise reader engagement* ...cognitive criticism does not deal with readers exclusively, but also with (implied) authors' strategies in text construction as well as with artistic representation, including referentiality– the relationship between representation and its referent in the perceptible world. (p.4)

Analyzing this definition, we can observe that RRT is part of a broader approach to literary analysis, where readers' responses are juxtaposed with the author's intentions. We use the word intention here, not only to mean the intended message of the text but also the author's linguistic, aesthetic, and ideological choices. Cognitive sciences, in this sense, do not oppose traditional literary criticism but enhance it with scientific insights about how fiction affects human cognition, and how cognition shapes text production and comprehension. Cognitive criticism explores, scientifically, concepts already known in literary theory scholarships such as the implied reader/author, text-context relationship, point of view, and scripts/ models (Steen, 2002 as cited in Nikolajeva, 2014, and Hogan, 2011). It provides empirical evidence on how the brain processes and responds to these aspects of literary analysis; such evidence can be highly significant in EFL classrooms.

#### ***1.4.6.1. The Role of Teachers in a Possible Cognitive Approach to Literature***

Minimizing the boundaries between hard sciences and literary studies can cause drastic changes in the role of teachers. First and foremost, it requires investments in teacher training in the fields of neuroscience, neurolinguistics, and cognitive psychology. Dijk (1979) notes that in order to understand the “functions and effects” of literature, we need to know how readers understand, evaluate, memorize, and reproduce texts. This is a rather problematic task. It is difficult to gain access to readers' ‘cognitive

and emotional engagement' with texts, which includes what they gain from the text, how they gain it, and how they extract "aesthetic pleasure to acquire more sustaining knowledge" (Nikolajeva, 2014, p.2). This means that we need to cross-examine readers' responses and gathered knowledge from the text, the process through which they formulated these responses and knowledge, and how they came to appreciate the aesthetic value of literature (which is central in engaging readers' thoughts and emotions), that enables them to cultivate their learning in the future.

Researchers like Gretter (2012), Nikolajeva (2014), and Hartner (as cited in Burke and Troscianko, 2017) mention a few requirements for teachers in a cognitive approach to literary studies. We have appropriated the most significant ones to our study.

- Teachers need to be aware of the scientific advancements in the field of cognitive science, particularly reading and information processing;
- Teachers should be able to translate the findings of this science into classroom practices. This does not mean they have to do the work of educational theorists, but they need to have the capacity to design lesson plans and choose activities and projects that are brain-based.
- Teachers need to raise students' awareness about how the brain functions and the cognitive benefits of reading literature. This can take the form of lectures, awareness-raising activities, or any other form (PPT animated presentation, suggested readings, Mooc, etc.)
- Teachers need to provide students with all the necessary background information and context needed for the literary analysis.

- Teachers' choices of literary works should align with their students' cognitive development and abilities (this will be further explained in CRT design).
- Teachers need to account for the emotional, affective side of reading literary texts, and the possible sensitivity of the students' responses to the works chosen.
- Teachers should be trained to use stories and narratives both as instruction tools, and response-eliciting tools.

#### ***1.4.6.2. Contributions of Cognitive Sciences: Cognition in Literature and Literature in Cognition***

In this part, we list and explain some of the major theories and findings from cognitive sciences. The decision of what to include and what to exclude in this section is influenced by the aims and objectives of our research. We have selected those aspects and theories that we incorporate into the interdisciplinary approach we propose to teaching literature in EFL classes.

**1.4.6.2.1. Schema Theory: Revisited.** One of the main contributions of cognitive sciences to the field of education is schema theory- a theory that stood the test of time regardless of its criticism that was sometimes hostile in tone. As one of the most widely adopted aspects of cognitive theory, schema theory has remained prominent in reading research, RRT, and stylistics for more than four decades. With the development of cognitive psychology in the 1970s, based on the work of Gestalt Psychology, schema theorists inspired reading research with the idea of the constructive nature of comprehension and the role of the reader's background knowledge in the construction, understanding, and interpretation of meaning in texts. Examining the interaction between the text and the reader, cognitive scientists and theorists contributed to the

understanding of how readers assimilate information in texts, remember this information, and make inferences.

It is important to note, though, that there is no consensus over the definition of the term schema both in cognitive psychology and reading research. Theorists in the field have proposed various views of its structure, features, and functions. Words like stereotypes, prototypes, templates, scripts, plans, grammar, frames, and macrostructures are used to refer to the schema. Each of these concepts describes a certain type of background knowledge that is needed under specific circumstances. For example, Rumelhart and Ortony (1977) use the term story grammar saying that we have specific ‘grammars’ for different types of narratives, whereas Minsky (1979) uses ‘frame’ to denote a data structure for representing a stereotyped situation. Similarly, Schank and Abelson (1977) use the terms ‘scripts’ and ‘plans’ to indicate a structured representation describing a stereotyped sequence of events in a particular context. Individuals have these scripts for events like attending a wedding, doing the dishes, visiting a doctor, etc. In this research, we use the term schema as an umbrella term that includes the various concepts mentioned. What interests us is how readers use their background knowledge presented in frames, scripts, or plans to make sense of the narrative. In our literature classroom, raising our student’s awareness about the definition and role of schema in text comprehension has always been essential. It is noteworthy that refined versions of schema theory have been proposed like dual coding theory (Paivio, 1971), and mental model theory (Van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983; Van Dijk, 1982, 2006, and 2014).

Schema is defined as abstract knowledge structures for representing generic concepts restored in memory (Anderson and Pierson, 1984). It is the abstractions

derived from the experience that reside in “a potential, non-specific state, awaiting input” (Sadoki et al., 1991). It is also defined as the abstract knowledge the reader brings to the text. When human beings experience the world, they tend to structure these experiences into basic information, concepts, relations, and definitions that are stored in the brain after being filtered and combined into networks of knowledge. Each is related and centered in a specific context, for a specific situation. Schema, then, can be thought of as the total knowledge someone has about a given subject matter learned from experience.

Readers use schema to fill in the gaps, to read what is not explicitly said in the text, and to make inferences and sense of events and actions within the narrative. To assimilate information in the text, readers’ brains seek the pre-existing scripts, frames, and plans, to understand, appreciate, and interpret the text. Researchers identify various types of schemata: 1) formal schemata, relating to the background knowledge of the formal rhetorical structure of the text; 2) content schemata, containing conceptual knowledge about what usually happens in a specific situation, which is similar to the notions of scripts and frames; 3) cultural schemata, including the total set of beliefs, values, norms, social habits, and customs of the members of a specific community (which similar to the concept of cultural models of Gee, 2001); and 4) linguistic schemata, the sum of knowledge about grammar and vocabulary. The interrelation between these types of schema and their interaction with the textual information results in text comprehension. According to the schema model of teaching, these various kinds of knowledge are structured in a hierarchy system of building blocks, each large one containing small ones and each small one containing smaller ones (An, 2013).

Schema theory was examined in L1, ESL, and EFL reading comprehension; it foregrounded the development of various reading models with the empirical investigation of the various reading processes (Anderson et al., 1977; Hacker, 1980, Pearson, 1982). Studies have shown that background knowledge of readers is more likely to influence the comprehension of a given text than linguistic competence. Efficient comprehension requires readers' ability to relate the textual material to their schemata. Readers rely more on what they know about the topic or similar topics to deduce the meaning of the text. This stresses the point of familiarity, where readers can be engaged with content familiar to them, or may have more difficulties understanding totally unfamiliar structures of texts. Readers, Hudson (2007) notes, engage in the strategy of comparing what they know with the information within the text. Through this strategy, readers either confirm their comprehension of the text or recognize the mismatch between the incoming information and their pre-existing knowledge. In the process of comprehension, readers can assimilate, accommodate, accept, reject, or tolerate new information. They undertake a continuous evaluation of the value of the text being read.

From our experience in teaching literature, we have observed that the degree of familiarity with the author, the genre, the literary period, the themes, etc. has a significant impact on students' engagement and comprehension. For example, studying 'Fahrenheit 451' was challenging to our students who were not familiar with dystopian literature as a genre, and stream of consciousness as a technique of point of view (although both concepts were taught previously). Yet, after this experience, the students found it much easier to analyze 'The Giver', another dystopian work, and passages from

‘Mrs. Dalloway’, a book that heavily uses the stream of consciousness. Similarly, after analyzing ‘The Little Prince’, a book based on the philosophy of existentialism, students were able to easily identify and explain the themes of responsibility, choice, and human essence in ‘Peter Pan’, which are central themes in existentialism.

This is not to ask teachers to avoid presenting unfamiliar aspects in their classrooms but to draw their attention to three main things. The first is to be aware that teaching the familiar is totally different from teaching the unfamiliar; they need distinct strategies, activities, and effort. Teachers need to adopt pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading activities that trigger and activate the schema necessary for text comprehension. This is called schema activation, which is the process by which textual stimuli trigger the brain to elicit relevant information (An, 2013). Moreover; they need to align these reading practices with clear purposes (Hudson, 2007). Defining small achievable and specific goals while reading the literary text, such as identifying a theme, a symbol, a motif, a character type, or a conflict enables the recollection of the students’ appropriate schema.

The second is that readers may not have sufficient background knowledge in all four types of schema; therefore, our activities and questions need to trigger the various types of schemata to ensure that readers can compensate for any insufficiency. The concept of familiarity coupled with the assessment of fresh textual knowledge based on pre-existing information, inherently underscores the significance of intertextuality in the process of reading, learning, and teaching literature. Schemas and scripts assist readers in connecting fictional knowledge with real-life knowledge and previous fictional knowledge. Intertextuality, as an integral standard of discourse in general and literary

discourse in particular, can be used systematically in literature classrooms to improve the learning experience as elaborated in forthcoming sections. In addition, it is necessary to pinpoint that the premise of RRT has some basis in schema theory. Readers' responses are the results of their assimilation, comprehension, and storage of information from the text based on their prior knowledge and social experience. The idea of response is central to our research, which seeks to integrate students' cultural frames of reference into the teaching process. These frames of reference are forms of cultural schema that readers use to form their responses and evaluations of texts.

**1.4.6.2.2. Emotions: Where Literature and Cognition Converge.** Memory and emotion are two main areas of research in cognitive sciences because they are two pillars of learning and acquiring social knowledge. Emotions are not only a part of the response to literature, but a part of the author's process of writing and his/her characters' actions, reactions, decisions, and experiences. In the reading process, various emotions and feelings can be triggered like sympathy, empathy, attachment, and/or detachment. Gretter (2012) claims that literature is "the only place where one can slow down emotions and describe them in detail" (p.93). Emotions and literature are intertwined, at the same time, emotions have a strong impact on memory. If stories stimulate the reader's affective side, there is a higher probability of them being retained in memory. When memories of certain events carry an emotional value, they are more likely to produce better predictions, attention, and reasoning when one encounters similar events in the future (Dolan, 2002).

Emotions can both help and hinder the trigger and retrieval of the appropriate schema for learning new material. They can help link the acquired new knowledge, in

our case knowledge of the text, to real-world knowledge. Gretter (2012) explains that emotions are basic forms of decision-making; they help us choose the actions and strategies necessary for different situations. Immordino-Yang and Damasio (2007 as cited in Gretter 2012, p. 98) state that “knowledge and reasoning divorced from emotional implications... are of little use in the real world.”

One of the contributions of the study of emotions in cognitive sciences is the development of emotion-based or affective approaches to teaching and learning, particularly language learning. These approaches preach the serious consideration of students’ affective responses to the material being taught, which is directly and significantly relevant to our literature classrooms. Advocates of these approaches believe that emotions and cognition are inseparable. Winas (2012) clarifies that it is vital that we understand that these emotions are not “private individual experiences”, but are rather “embodied phenomena that are profoundly social and cultural in nature.” Quoting Worsham, she adds that they are “tight braid of effect and judgment, socially and historically constructed and bodily lived, through which the symbolic takes hold of and binds the individual in complex and contradictory ways, to the social order and its structure of meaning”(p.150).

The role of social and cultural values, beliefs, and norms in emotions calls for our attention to the process of reading foreign literature, which might challenge these systems. Students may experience emotional discomfort when exposed to ‘the other.’ The approach we adopt highlights the link between emotion, culture, and storytelling which is central in EFL literature classrooms and CRT, where we seek to teach ‘*to and through culture.*’

Classes like literature, that challenge deeply held assumptions and beliefs, are more likely to evoke strong emotions in our learners thus, we need to include explicit teaching of the effect of emotion on learning and vice versa. Emphasizing the students' conscious awareness about how they perceive their world and the world of 'the other' needs to be a goal of teaching. Literature, says Ghosn (2001), has the potential "of fostering emotional intelligence by providing vicarious emotional experiences that shape the brain circuits for empathy and help the child gain insight into human behavior" (p.1). Emotional intelligence is defined as knowing one's feelings and using that knowledge to make good decisions. Researchers even claim that literature helps learners improve their readiness for empathy (Ghosn, 2001; Pinsent, 1996).

Fiction is a representation of experiences, fears, hopes, disappointments, struggles, joy, sadness, failure, and success. It provides opportunities to learn about human nature with its virtues and deficiencies and to be an observer and evaluator of these experiences, nurturing the emotional intelligence required for future learning. We need to engage our students in metacognitive processes of reflecting on their own feelings about certain textual events, characters, and decisions, as well as guide them to identify the emotions of those same characters in the fictional world. Activities inspired by this research are described in Chapter 3.

**1.4.6.2.3. Memory: Information Storage and Retrieval.** Through this study, we argue that we need to learn about how our brains learn before we start our teaching. This part provides significant information about encoding, storing, and retrieving information, which can help us enhance our literature study and teaching. Our research

makes use of brain-based techniques compatible with the functions and processes of memory.

Churches et al. (2017), in their book ‘Neuroscience for Teachers’, provide a simplified account of neuroscientific data from grounded research in the field about how the brain learns and functions, and advise teachers about how they can use this data effectively in their classrooms. Our brains consist of specialized cells called neurons. These cells are responsible for making connections in our brains, which results in learning. Interconnectivity between neurons creates intelligence, ability, and effective remembering; they are able to send neurotransmitters (electrical impulses and chemical messengers), which enable neurons to communicate signals around the nervous system.

The connections between the neurons are called ‘synapses’ which are central in learning because the relationship between neurons across the synaptic gap can get stronger or weaker according to the type and form of material presented. For cognitive scientists, teachers are responsible for changing these connections every single moment of every day in the classroom. Our teaching shapes the neural connections of our students; therefore, we need to empower our teaching and learning with neuroscientific knowledge.

The memory process has three main stages according to neuroscience, encoding, storage, and retrieval. At the encoding stage, the brain converts incoming information from the senses into forms that can be stored. We can encode information, visually, acoustically, or semantically. Memory consists of three separate structures: a ‘sensory store’, a ‘short-term store’, and a ‘long-term store’, that is sensory memory (SM), short-

term memory (STM) or working memory, and long-term memory (LTM). Churches et al. (2017) summarize the differences between the three types in Table 01.

**Table 01**

*The general characteristics of working memory compared to long-term memory from Churches et al (2017, Types of Storage Section)*

| <b>Features</b>            | <b>Sensory Memory</b>              | <b>Working Memory</b>      | <b>Long term Memory</b>                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>Storage Method</b>      | Impressions of sensory information | Active rehearsal is needed | Passively stored<br>Waiting to be accessed |
| <b>Length of Storage</b>   | 250-500 milliseconds               | Up to about 20 seconds     | For days, years or even your whole life    |
| <b>Capacity of Storage</b> | Extensive                          | About seven items          | Seemingly infinite                         |

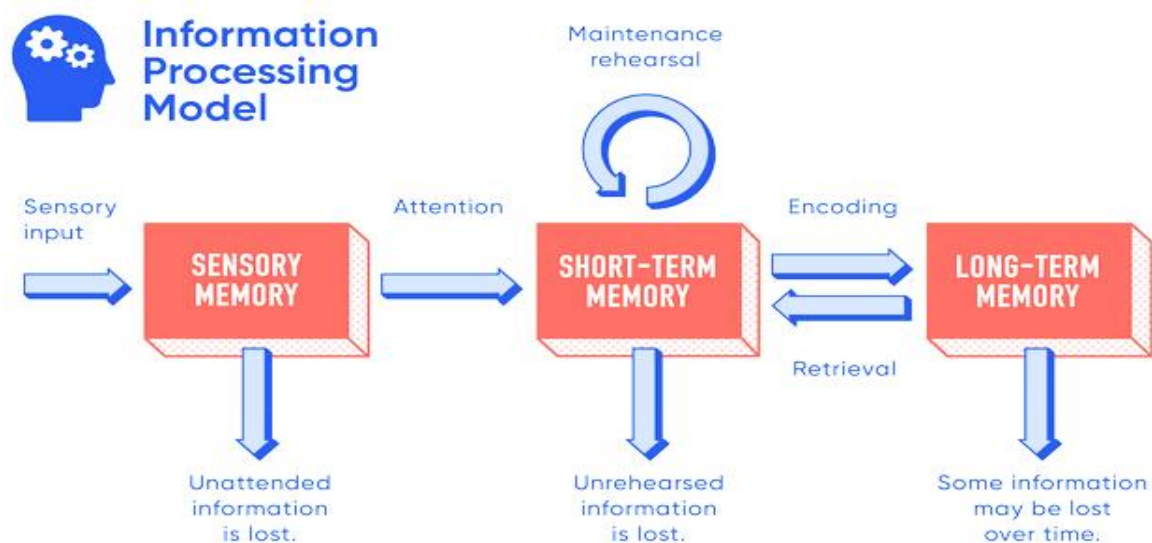
Encoding occurs both in STM and LTM, but through different mechanisms. In short-term memory, the encoding is mainly acoustic. The brain can encode information in long-term memory in both acoustic and visual ways, yet it is basically semantic in nature. This, Churches et al. (p.82) claim, “illustrates why it is important to create lessons that allow for the development of meaning, understanding, and application of knowledge.” STM is linked to our ability to problem solve using images and spaces, and the ability to process sounds and words and language. LTM is concerned with holding the information that one can simply declare (declarative memory), which in turn contains two types of memory; one holding ideas and concepts (semantic memory), and another holding autobiographical information such as personal experiences (episodic memory). Moreover, LTM contains procedural memory which refers to learning that requires action rather than declarative knowledge such as driving a car.

Van Dijk (1979) explains that at the level of the working memory (STM), the reader processes the sound sequences as phonemes, morphemes, and syntactic structures, to which we assign meanings. At this level, perception, understanding, and

thinking happen. Once information is interpreted in STM, its conceptual information (meaning) is transformed into our LTM, wherein the knowledge processed is restored (for more information check Atkinson and Shiffrin, 1968; Baddeley and Hitch 1974; and Craik and Tulving 1975). Still, we cannot remember all the information stored in LTM. Van Dijk (1979) claims that such things as the “verbatim structure of sentences or texts we hear or read” are mostly forgotten (p. 146). We tend to remember what is reviewed, repeated, and practiced (Check Figure 1).

### Figure 01

*Information Processing Model Following George Miller's Theory, 1956*(<https://dataworks-ed.com/blog/2014/07/the-information-processing-model/>)

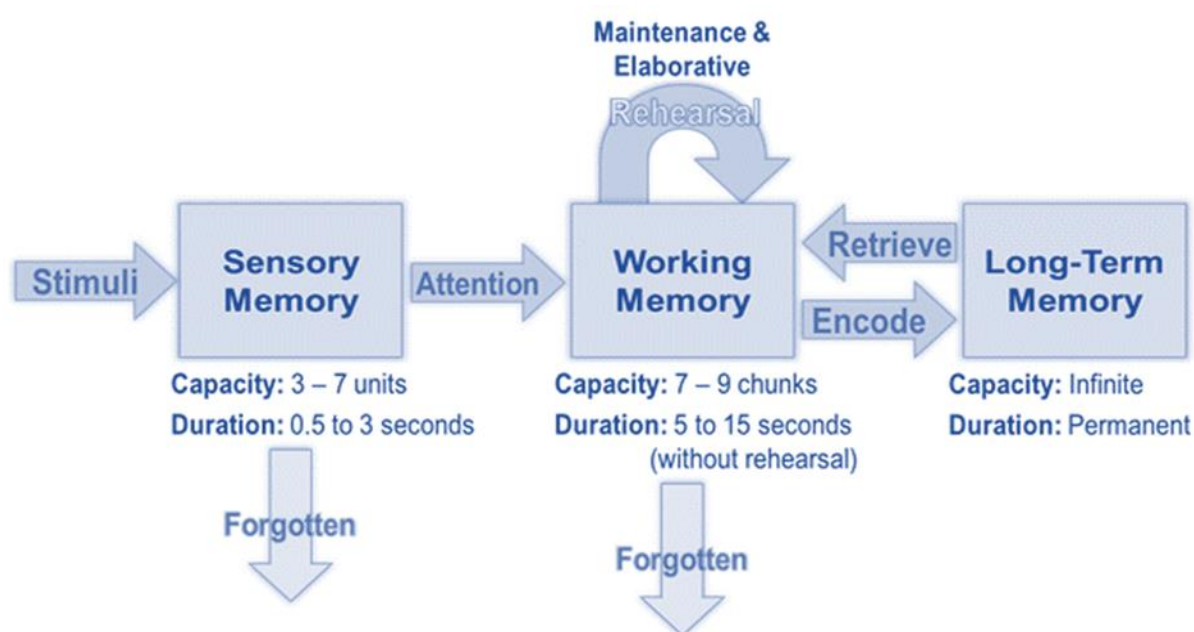


We gradually assign meaning to the text in the working memory, but since its capacity is limited (check Figure 2 below), we need to provide the information in smaller chunks. In our literature class, we should be aware that for the information to be moved from STM to LTM effectively, and for our students to remember all the

literary periods, all the themes of a book, or all characterization types in a novel, we need to break down our texts, tasks, questions into smaller parts. We need to respect the duration and capacity of the types of memory mentioned. Cognitive research provides various techniques to enhance memory and improve learning, this research incorporates “chunking”, “spaced repetition” and “active recall” in classroom instruction. The techniques named are explained in lesson planning in the methodology chapter.

## Figure 02

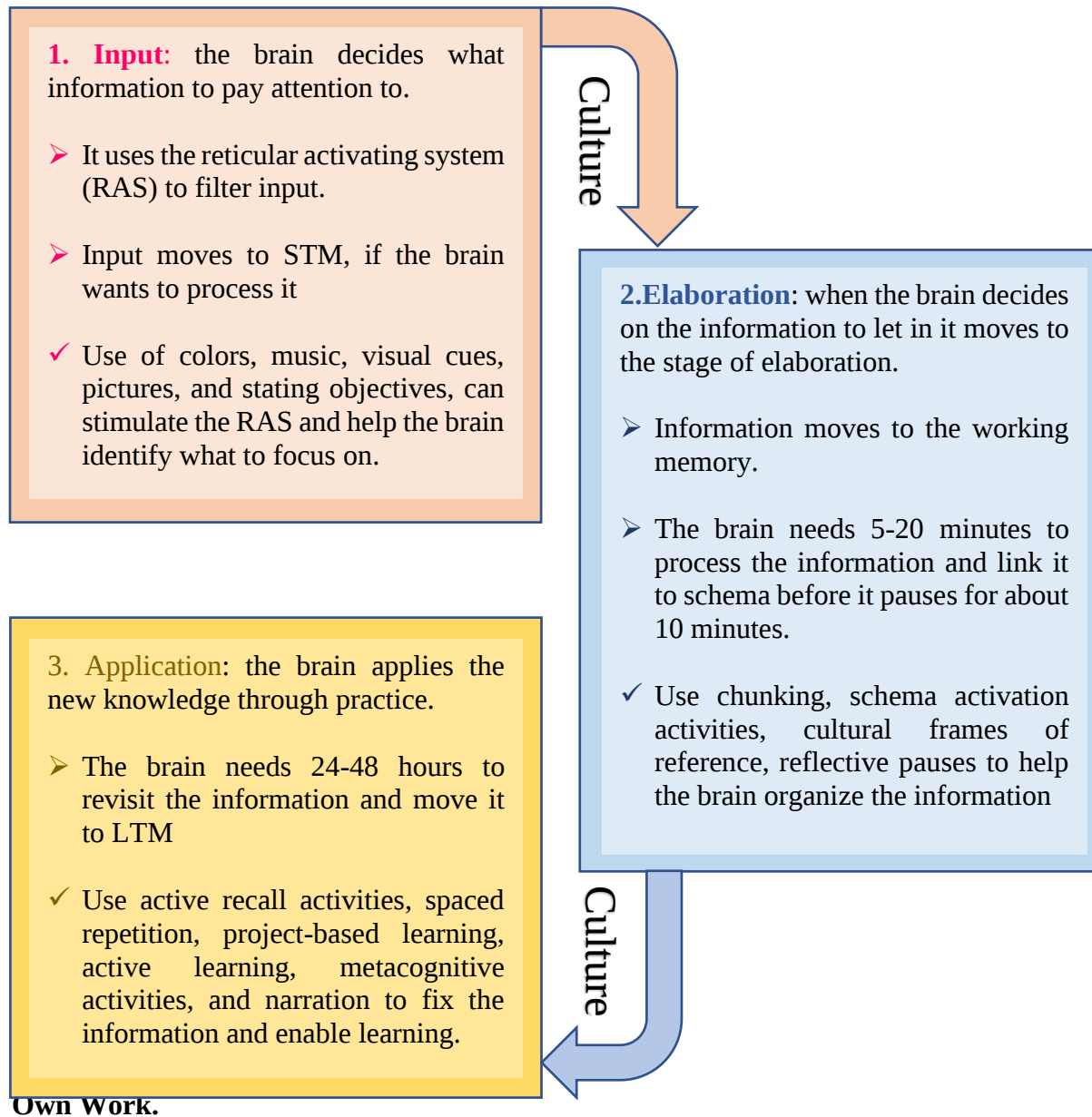
*Capacity and Duration of Memory Based on George Miller, 1956 (<https://dataworks-ed.com/blog/2014/07/the-information-processing-model/>)*



Sousa (2017) and Oakley and Sejnowski (2018) identify the stages of information processing. In Figure 3 below, we designed a figure, summarizing them and identifying some teaching techniques and tasks to enhance performance at each stage. The techniques are explained in Chapter 3 in detail. Note that culture is the mediator between these stages. The link between culture and cognition is examined in Chapter 2.

**Figure 3**

*Stages of Information Processing: Application in our Literature Classrooms*



**1.4.6.2.4. Metacognition: Thinking about Thinking.** The term metacognition was coined by John Flavell during the late 1970s'. He defines it as "cognition about cognitive phenomena, or "thinking about thinking" (1979, p.906). The term refers to the knowledge we have about our own thinking and learning activities; it is the awareness, management, monitoring, and control of our own thoughts (Kuhn & Dean, 2004;

Martinez, 2006). Metacognition is described as a multi-dimensional set of general domains of skills that are distinct from general intelligence; it can compensate for deficits in intelligence or one's prior knowledge of a specific subject in a particular context (Lai et al, 2011). Metacognition is significant to reading research in general and, if properly integrated, to our literature class. Cognitive scientists provide various classifications of metacognitive knowledge. Flavell divides it into three main types: knowledge of persons, knowledge of tasks, and knowledge of strategies. The first indicates any knowledge one has about how people operate cognitively. It includes one's awareness of their own characteristics, strengths, and limitations. The second involves understanding the nature of the information that a person encounters and the inherent demands of the task at hand. The third refers to knowing the strategies that are more likely to be useful in our task.

Brown (1982 as cited in Hudson, 2007) recognizes two different parts of metacognition, knowledge about cognition, and regulation of cognition. The former is one's knowledge about oneself as a learner and the internal and external factors that may affect him, while the latter is the ability to monitor and regulate one's learning process. Knowledge of cognition includes the declarative knowledge we have about ourselves, our learning, and the factors that affect our learning, the procedural knowledge we have about strategies we use, and the conditional knowledge we have about why and how to use those strategies. These metacognitive knowledge and skills develop gradually from childhood. With age, education, and experience these skills sharpen.

Comparing good/experienced readers to poor/younger readers, researchers concluded that among the main differences between the two is the ability to monitor the process of reading comprehension. Summarizing the findings of previous research in the field, Hudson (2007) notes that poor/ younger readers show deficits in areas such as “coping with failure of comprehension, recognizing textual organization, effectively monitoring comprehension, levels of metacognitive awareness, and application of their repertoire of strategies” (p.119). Successful readers’ metacognitive knowledge helps them select the necessary strategies for their reading comprehension process. Through metacognitive skills, readers can repair and compensate for various sorts of deficiencies.

It is important to note, though, that not all problems of reading can be solved by metacognitive knowledge since reading failures may be attributed to various scenarios. For instance, students may demonstrate adequate linguistic, cultural, and social competencies, but lack monitoring strategies; conversely, they can have a sufficient metacognitive understanding but lack the linguistic knowledge necessary to comprehend the text. Metacognition does not offer solutions for every problem in reading but aids substantially in improving the reading process for our learners. Donker et al. (2014) state that focusing on developing students’ metacognitive knowledge by teaching “which strategies to use and how to apply them (declarative knowledge), when and why to use them (procedural and conditional knowledge)” had the strongest effects on students’ writing, science, math, and reading performance.

Metacognition is teachable; we list several strategies and activities that metacognition offers for our literature classes (the activities are described in detail in Chapter 3).

●**Awareness-raising activities:** Although our learners may already possess metacognitive strategies, encouraging thinking about thinking in our classrooms is essential in helping learners identify aspects like their learning styles, struggles, limitations, and cultural frames of reference. Questionnaires and focus group discussions are sufficient awareness tasks.

●**Reflective practices:** Reflection is a strong strategy to develop metacognitive skills and trigger cognition about cognition. There are various techniques for reflection, we advocate dedicating sections for reflective questions after each lesson as a form of lesson wrappers, asking students to keep learning diaries and journal their reading process reflecting on the various emotions that accompany it, and encouraging self-assessment of assignments and tests.

●**Familiarizing learners with the learning material:** cognitive sciences claim that metacognitive knowledge precedes metacognitive monitoring and control. In our literature classrooms, learners need to be aware of the form and structure of the literary text and its contextual information before the actual reading. We need to familiarize them with the textual world, the knowledge of the tasks (reading, analyzing themes, identifying plot type, analyzing point of view, etc.), and the strategies needed for each. Using test wrappers, scaffolding, asking learners to record how they prepare for the test, incorporating the muddiest point technique, and diagnostic quizzes, are useful tools.

●**Clearly defining reading/ learning objectives:** It is important for metacognitive thinking that certain tasks are linked to specific intelligible goals. Our literary reading needs to be associated with feasible small objectives to keep students on task.

#### **1.4.7. The Sociocultural Approach**

Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1987, 1978) has been a foundation of research in the area of cognitive development for decades. The theory emphasizes the central role of social and cultural interaction in the development of the child's cognition and mental abilities, highlighting the key role of language in this interaction. Cognitive functions are shaped and influenced by socio-cultural values, beliefs, and norms, and this varies from one culture to another and from one language to another. Each culture provides its children with the necessary tools of "intellectual adaptation", which help them in using their basic mental functions. A central aspect of this theory is the ZPD, 'the zone of proximal development', which is defined as the difference or space between what a learner can do without help, and what he/she can achieve with assistance and guidance from a more skilled person.

For Vygotsky, the adults, or the 'knowledgeable other' have a significant role in the cognitive development of children. By engaging the latter in meaningful activities and practices, and exposing them to culture-specific views of the world, adults enhance children's development. They guide them in finding meanings attached to various objects and concepts and assist them in problem-solving. According to this theory, mental abilities such as reasoning and critical thinking can only be enhanced by interaction with significantly more knowledgeable adults. This, Vygotsky calls 'scaffolding.' Scaffolding is defined as "a type of assistance from adults, which enables a student or an inexperienced person to solve problems, perform activities or accomplish targets which he/she could not achieve without help" (Panwar et al., 2016 p. 185).

Children are born with basic mental abilities and functions such as memory, but higher mental functions are developed through the influence of social interaction and guided learning. The idea of scaffolding is linked to the idea of cooperative learning and community building in CRT. Learning happens through socio-cultural communication, where learners acquire knowledge from each other and from more knowledgeable people like teachers. It is one of the most crucial aspects of the Vygotskian theory. Newman and Holzman, (1993, p. 73) argue that “Vygotsky’s strategy was essentially a cooperative learning strategy” since he created “heterogeneous” groups of children and pushed them toward “cooperation and joint activity” by “giving them tasks that were beyond the developmental level of some”.

In addition, the theory promotes constructivism as a philosophy of learning and teaching. Constructivism claims that learners create their own knowledge based on their interaction with the environment and other people, interrelating the physical world with the socio-cultural one (Fosnot, 1996). Learners are meaning and knowledge constructors and generators (Panwar et al., 2016). In language classrooms, the adaptation of the sociocultural approach has shown great success (White-Clark, DiCarlo, & Gilchrist, 2008 as cited in Panhwar et al., 2016). This is mainly because it is learner-oriented. Learners in this approach are active autonomous agents who generate new knowledge drawn on their prior knowledge and interaction with their teachers, classmates, and society. EFL classrooms represent a cross-cultural/inter-cultural context, where the students meet the other’s language, culture, and social values. The socio-cultural approach enables students to learn about the new culture through their own cultural frames of reference.

In literature classrooms, Beach et al. (2006) indicate, that the Socio-cultural learning theory emphasizes:

**1) Community Building:** Teachers should socialize learners into a sort of “a literary community of practice reflected in the practices of a highly engaged literary book club” (p.8).

**2) Scaffolding and Modeling:** Teachers need to model and demonstrate the uses of practices related to literature studies before engaging students in them. The teacher needs to consider the current ZPD of his students and challenge them beyond their current knowledge.

**3) Providing Choice:** Beach et al. (2006, p.10) explain that learners are “more likely to be engaged in an activity when they have some sense of ownership in or responsibility for planning and participating in that activity.” These ideas are central in CRT (Check Chapters 2 and 3).

### **1.5. Literature in Higher Education: Content and Assessment**

When teaching literature, the teacher is confronted with a number of questions such as what to teach? For what purpose? What to test? and how to test? Do we teach by literary periods, or by literary genre, or by the author? Do we emphasize literary analysis or literary criticism? Do they need to know more about the literature itself or should the focus be on the reading process? Poetry, drama, or fiction? Knowing the answers to these fundamental questions is vital for the success of literature classes. Showalter (2003) notes that teachers are constantly anxious about the infinite amount of literary knowledge and the limited academic time. Deciding what to include and what to exclude is a difficult task, especially in higher education, where we do not have any

guiding textbooks or curricula to follow. In fact, the teacher is both the course designer and the instructor-researcher.

### **1.5.1. Content and Coverage**

For a long time, studying literature was mainly the study of poetry, yet with the development of literary theory and approaches to teaching literature came a variety of content and test types. Each of the previously described approaches to teaching literature focuses on a different type of content. New criticism, structuralism, and stylistics, for instance, were mainly interested in poetry, since their focus was the study of the language of literature, its structure, and rhetoric. Reader response theory used drama and fiction since it was concerned with readers' responses to the actions, events, characters, and experiences. Researchers classify methods for organizing and choosing literature instruction into several types; we mention the most common ones.

First is the chronological method, where students study the development of literature throughout history focusing on literary periods. This content is easy to organize, but it is time-consuming and might be monotonous and redundant. The second method is author study. Organizing content by authors' works and lives is very common in literature classrooms. Since this type focuses on various works of the same author, it enables learners to examine elements like style and language use, still, at the expense of other elements of literary analysis and literary theory.

The third type is the thematic method. Here, the teacher focuses on broad themes such as love, good vs. evil, innocence, coming of age, etc. and accordingly chooses a variety of texts from different authors and genres to illustrate these themes. The fourth one is to organize content by genre. In this method, the teacher can either focus on the

structure and characteristics of one genre or allow students to examine the similarities, differences, and peculiarities of various genres. The fifth one is organizing the content by type or theory of analysis. Again, teachers can focus on one model of analysis for example the feminist or the formalist method, or opt for a comparison between various theories. Using this method of instruction, teachers can risk that the focus of the class would be merely on the strategies and tools of these theories, rather than on the texts themselves. The last common type is by aspect or devices of literary analysis. That is moving from themes to plot analysis, to characterization, and so forth. This method might be the most flexible and least monotonous. Teachers can include books from different authors, genres, or literary periods.

We examined the content of literature in 5 Algerian Universities (Algiers 2, Ziane Achour, Blida 2, Amar Telidji, and ENS Bouzareah), and found that the most common titles in both undergraduate and postgraduate studies are:

➤ **By Literary Period**

- ✓ Romanticism
- ✓ Victorian Literature
- ✓ Realism
- ✓ Post-Colonialism (African Literature)
- ✓ Modernism

➤ **By Author**

- ✓ Jane Austen (mainly *Pride and Prejudice*)
- ✓ Charlotte Bronte (*Jane Eyre*)
- ✓ Charles Dickens (mainly *Hard Times*)

- ✓ F. Scott Fitzgerald (The Great Gatsby)
- ✓ T.S. Eliot (The Waste Land)
- ✓ Chinua Achebe (mainly Things Fall Apart)
- ✓ Joseph Conrad (Heart of Darkness)

➤ **By Literary Theory**

- ✓ Formalism
- ✓ Post-structuralism
- ✓ Gender Studies
- ✓ Feminism

When analyzing the details of their course designs, we could conclude that the focus of these classes is to teach the students about literature, rather than teaching them how to do a literary analysis or criticism. For example, in the chapters related to literary periods, students are exposed to lists of characteristics of the period, and writers of the period, illustrating with passages from various books. Students, however, are not taught (according to the description of the course) how to analyze a text with reference to its literary period.

Instead of providing them with the tools necessary to make a critical review of a certain work or a certain period, we provide them with experts' views and criticism about those works and periods and expect them to memorize and internalize them without questioning. This is an issue that seems to be universal in literature classrooms (Beach et al., 2011; Hall, 2005). Our obsession with coverage and the emphasis on quantity at the expense of quality leads us to fail in accounting for students' views, responses, and experiences, and preparing them for future readings.

Moreover, other common things between these courses are a) the neglect of some fundamental aspects of literary theory and literary criticism such as narrative theory, b) the absence of some significant literary genre like fantasy and science fiction, and c) the unsystematic study of literary analysis devices like themes, plot types, symbols, motifs, etc. Often, students are not shown how to identify, trace, and analyze these aspects, but are given a set of definitions and examples about these elements.

Showalter (2016) says that she herself has been guilty of thinking that mere exposure to particular elements, ideas, texts, authors, or theories is enough to make students learn about them. This is a mistake we often make in our literature classrooms because of the huge amount of content that awaits us to cover. Our literature classes, Moody (1988) notes, teach students that what matters is success in examinations; and that what they need to succeed in is nothing but “a skillful recycling of some expert's view, while an honest effort to make their own sense of something is unlikely to impress” (p. 98). The result is that good students will be able to discuss the meaning of a certain text without actually meaning anything to them. As discussed earlier in the relationship between cognition and learning literature, when our brains cannot make any association between our experiences and what we learn, the information learned is less likely to be stored and remembered. Once the test is over, our students forget it all. Slatoff (1970) makes reference to his experience with his students saying that even though most may have the ability to talk about structure, identify themes, and find imagery, very few are able to draw on their experience to make the work matter to them.

To facilitate the task of choosing the right content for our classrooms, we suggest:  
a) defining clear, achievable goals for our classes, and b) treating literature as discourse, which narrows down our objectives and coheres with the premise of CRT.

#### ***1.5.1.1. Defining Objectives for Literature Classes***

The purpose of teaching literature changed over history; each time it does, the content of literature classes changes as well. Identifying the objectives of our course simplifies course design. The objective of a course, however, should not be to cover a set of topics, but to “facilitate students’ learning and thinking” about those topics (McKeachie as cited in Showalter 2003, p.24). McKeachie claims that when we say our objective is to introduce or expose our students to a certain theory, author, or idea, we are not communicating an objective or a goal, but we are stating what “we want to do” (p.25).

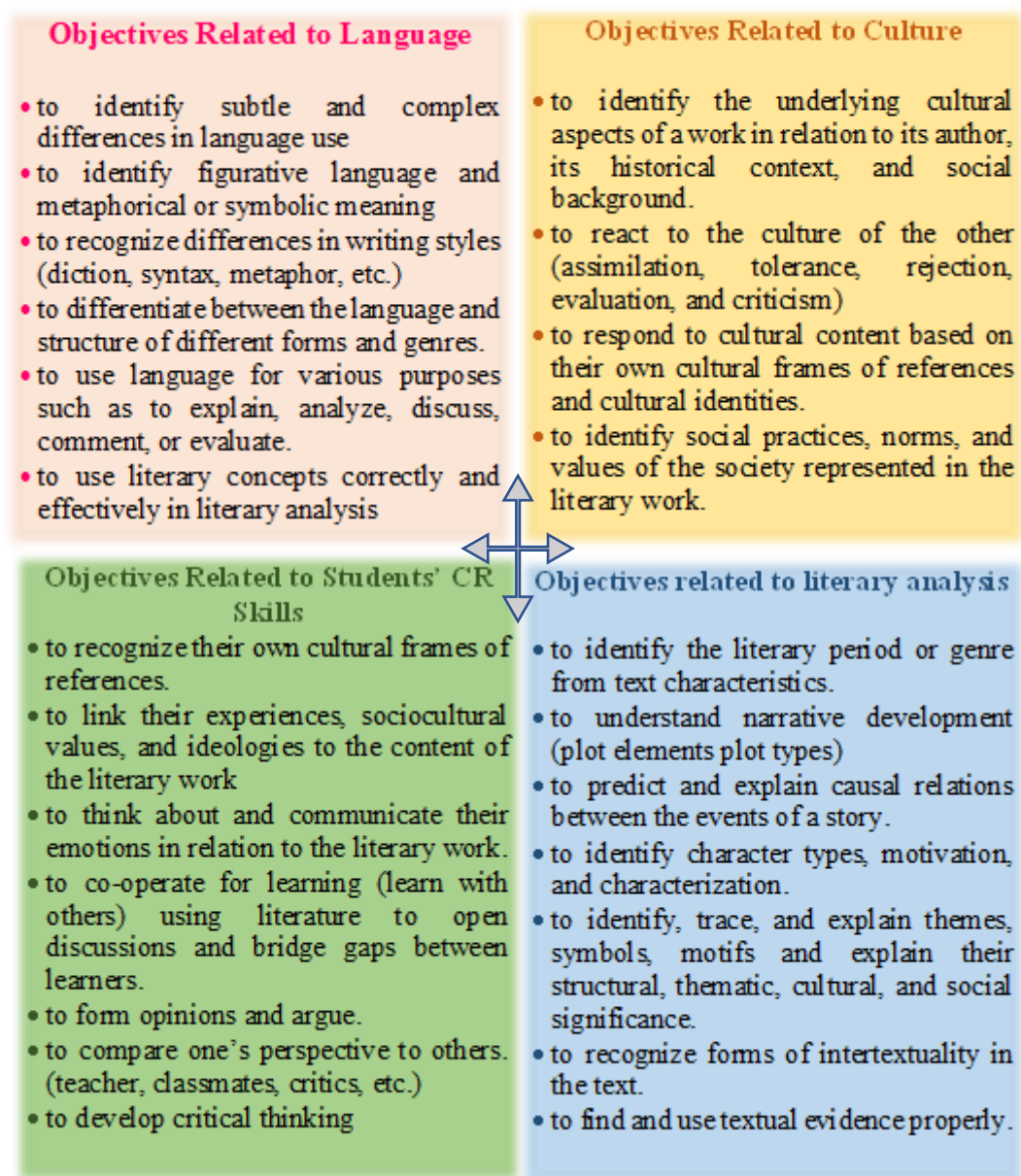
Our objectives should target specific skills. Showalter adds that we need to help our students “do literature as scientists do science.” This means that we need to train them to read, think, evaluate, criticize, analyze, and write like literary experts. We ought to help them develop their critical thinking, encourage them to ask questions, model our analysis for them, and guide them in finding their own patterns of analysis.

Our intentions for students’ learning should be explicit, and our choices of books, activities, assignments, and projects should be justified with regard to our objectives. Each class has its own specifications; therefore, our objectives cannot be standard, but flexible. There are, however, various sets of objectives from which literature teachers can adopt and modify. Writers like Beach et al. (2006), Showalter (2003), Damrosch (2009), and Rogers (1997) propose various goals for literature classrooms; we integrate

a few of them, and we categorize and propose others in Figure 4. The list can go on depending on the particularity of each class and its students' needs.

**Figure 04**

*Objective Categories for Literature Classrooms*



Own Work.

### ***1.5.1.2. Literature as Discourse: A Perspective for Course Content***

Since our research emphasizes the role of culture and cultural identity in learning and teaching literature, we treat literature as discourse. Discourse is more than just a

text; it is a text immersed in a sociocultural context; it includes the linguistic and non-linguistic parts of language use and communication. Discourse is defined by Foucault (1969) as the production of knowledge through language. Knowledge being both the source of discourse and the result of it. This knowledge is influenced by sociocultural norms, beliefs, values, and ideologies. Foucault (1972) adds that discourses are conventional ways of thinking that both create and are created by conventional ways of thinking. This means that discourse shapes and is shaped by a set of elements like history, social beliefs, social practices, ideology, power, identity, and the relationship between participants (writer/reader, or listener/speaker). It is the result of the interaction between such aspects.

The relationship between these elements and discourse is reciprocal and, as Gee (2001) states, is a chicken-egg situation, where we cannot identify which element affects the other first. Perhaps one of the most comprehensive definitions of discourse is Gee's, "discourse is a characteristic way of saying, doing, and being," (2011, p.30) which emphasizes that through discourse we communicate, write, speak, and interact (saying), we shape and represent behavior, attitude, and social conduct (doing), and we construct, develop, negotiate, and project identity (being). Moreover, discourse circulates power and ideology in society (Fairclough, 1992). Discourse, then, is a vehicle through which we form and represent our views of the world and transmit them via various forms, genres, channels, and contexts (writing, speech, fiction, poetry, film, songs, political speeches, etc.).

Drawing on works of discourse analysts such as Brown and Yule (1983), Johnstone (2008), Van Dijk (2014), and Gee, (2001, 2011, and 2015) we can synthesize

the following characteristics of discourse that explain why viewing literature as discourse is significant to the teaching of literature.

➤ **Discourse is context-based:** context helps identify and support a range of possible meanings; it guides readers' interpretations of the text by eliminating the meaning possible to that context other than those the form can signal and the meanings possible to the form other than those the context can support (Hymes, 1962). Literary texts can be highly dependent on context. It is important to teach types of contexts and their role in text interpretation and comprehension. Contexts can be linguistic (referring to the relationship between parts of the text), social (referring to the social norms, values, practices, and behaviors, surrounding the creation of the text), cultural (indicating the customs, traditions, and beliefs of the culture of the author), cognitive (the situation in which the text is processed- it is schematic, subjective, and individual).

➤ **Discourse is Social:** Literary works represent social norms, practices, habits, and beliefs, and readers interpret works with relevance to the same elements.

➤ **Discourse is a subjective participant construct:** Both writing and reading the literary work are influenced by the participants' schema and prior knowledge, an idea we have already pointed out in RRT and cognitive approaches.

➤ **Discourse is experience-based:** Both literary text production and interpretation are based on the experiences of the writer and the reader.

➤ **Discourse is Cultural:** Literature is a vehicle to transmit culture, especially in EFL contexts.

➤ **Discourse shapes and is shaped by identity:** The socio-cultural identities of both the writer and the reader guide the processes of production and interpretation; therefore, accounting for cultural identity in the classroom is vital.

➤ **Discourse circulates power:** No discourse is free of power or ideology and literature is no exception, which makes it a rich content to teach critical thinking, political awareness, resilience, and tolerance.

➤ **Discourse shapes reality:** Literary works represent views and pictures of the world as seen by a specific culture, person, or society. Being the products of a person's schema, experience, identity, beliefs, and values, they portray world views that are likely to shape and influence the views, beliefs, values, and consequently the lives and realities of the readers. This draws our attention to choosing the books that are more likely to leave a positive impact on our students.

De Beaugrande and Dressler's theory of textuality (1981) provides an eminent view of discourse which, we believe, needs to be assimilated in our literature classrooms. De Beaugrande and Dressler explain that discourse has to fulfill seven standards of textuality.

**1) Cohesion:** It refers to the overt use of cohesive devices to build the text into a semantic edifice. Through cohesion, the surface elements appear as progressive occurrences and their sequential connectivity is maintained and made recoverable. Although the idea of cohesion may seem irrelevant to literary studies, yet is linked to linguistic analysis of literature (syntactic forms, diction, grammar, syntax, and lexis). In addition, the idea of discourse having a surface structure, linked through cohesion, and a deeper structure (coherence) is important in literature class, where our learners need

to understand that literary analysis requires attention to the structure and what is beyond the structure.

**2) Coherence:** the covert underlying logical relations between the ideas of the text. Coherence is a reader-oriented interpretive notion, which means that it depends on the reader's schema and prior knowledge for interpretations. Texts appeal to us differently. Coherence is also seen as being related to the representation of what Enkvist (1990) calls a "consistent worldview." It is seen as the quality that guarantees that the readers' expectations are fulfilled. We should guide learners to recover coherence in narratives to facilitate interpretation.

**3) Intentionality:** It refers to the writer's attitude that his text is coherent. Every writer has a specific type of audience in his mind and accordingly, he chooses the themes, the topic, the characters, etc.

**4) Acceptability:** The reader's attitude that the text is coherent. Readers tend to accept or refuse the structures, language, themes, and actions in a certain book depending on the various aspects mentioned earlier (culture, religion, traditions, etc.). This, on the one hand, highlights the importance of reader response in our classrooms. On the other hand, it urges us to consider cultural differences, and possible cultural shock or clashes. The class requires explicit discussions about the cultural representations in literary works.

**5) Informativity:** Every discourse is at least somehow informative. The degree of informativity is measured by the degree of familiarity with the content to the reader. This idea of familiarity is important in literature. Literary works inform us about other cultures and societies, other lives that might not bear any resemblance to our own. Our

literature classes should aim at familiarizing learners with the target culture and, at the same time challenge them with new perspectives to improve their critical thinking.

**6) Situationality:** Every discourse is meaningful within a specific context or situation. This highlights the role of context in literary analysis. Our classes need to teach students how to utilize and employ textual information to interpret the text, and how to seek and search for knowledge (historical, biographical, cultural, etc.) relevant to the meaning of the text.

**7) Intertextuality:** Every discourse is influenced by past discourses and has the potential to influence future discourses. Discourse is inherently intertextual; “any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (Kristeva, 1986, p.66). She adds that intertextuality is the integration of history into a text and a text into history. This is a vital aspect of literary studies. We ought to highlight and explain the various forms of intertextuality a literary work can demonstrate. We should aid our students to make links between what they are reading, and other works, authors, or periods. Intertextuality activities empower students’ observation, association, and analytical skills.

Perceiving literature as discourse keeps the teacher alert to the multilayered nature of literature and the possible intervening factors in our students’ comprehension and interpretation (identity, beliefs, traditions, schemata, culture, power, etc.).

### **1.5.2. Assessment**

Literature is multifaceted, which makes its testing and assessing difficult where we need to test various aspects at once (critical analysis, essay structure, argumentation, illustration, etc.). Our testing methods should correspond to the approach we are using in teaching literature, and align with our content and objectives. Alderson (2000) calls

attention to the number of skills included in second-language and foreign-language reading. The latter has many components that can be developed differently by various readers. Deciding which skills or components to test requires identifying the skills that contribute most to the reading and interpretation of literature (language skills, cognitive skills, evaluation skills, cultural skills, etc.). The responsibility for this decision falls on the shoulders of the teacher alone in higher education. In addition, there are a number of factors that a teacher needs to consider in testing; the format, time allotment, rubric, scoring method, and instructions, all of which need rigorous training and experience.

The rhetorical use of language in literary texts, the dependency on contextual information, the interrelatedness with culture and identity, and the cognitive (attention, memory, emotion) effort required and consumed when reading them are the main challenges of assessment. Still, it is the singularity and individuality of the reader's response that makes the central issue. Students respond, interpret, and comprehend texts differently. The process of interpreting, though partly conventional, social, and cultural, or might be guided by our teaching, is essentially subjective. Alderson (2000) notes that it is hard for teachers to know what sort of meaning can be tested to conclude that their students have actually understood the text when they respond to it in personally idiosyncratic ways.

Culler (1977 as cited in Hall, 2005 p. 63) says that our aim should not be to check if our students have read or remembered the story but to examine their progress as readers of literature. That is to verify whether our students have acquired the necessary skills that enable them to read literature in the future. In other words, our teaching should not focus on the text per se, but use the text to prepare our learners for future readings.

Carter and Long (1990) recognize three common types of tests, paraphrase and context questions, describe and discuss questions, and evaluate and criticize questions. They recommend that we also use language-based tests in EFL and ESL classrooms, which include general direct comprehension questions such as asking about the tone of the narrator, text focus questions that relate to text language and structure, and personal response questions, where learners are asked about their personal views.

In his article, 'Levels of Teaching and Testing', Gordon (1955) describes a hierarchy of questions, each of which places a degree of demand on students' abilities in literary reading and analysis. He identifies five levels of questions: "(1) to remember a fact, (2) to prove a generalization that someone else has made, (3) to make one's own generalization, (4) to generalize from the book to its application in life, and, finally, (5) to carry over the generalization into one's own behavior" (p.331). Tomkins (1968) adopts his view and organized them as follows:

- a) Level one questions:** test students' memory only.
- b) Level two questions:** test students' independent thinking about certain actions, events, or attitudes in the book.
- c) Level three questions:** test students' personal interpretation of the text.
- d) Level four questions:** test the student's ability to link their experience to reading.
- f) Level five questions:** require evidence of a change of behavior on the part of the student.

Gordon emphasizes that students' change in behavior is the main evidence that our teaching goals have been achieved. He says after checking through level four questions if the students see the connection between the text and their lives, we ought

to check whether the understanding of that connection carries over to their behavior. This level requires a thorough knowledge of one's students' levels of proficiency, reading history, test performances, and attitudes. CRT, we believe, can help us test effectively since it necessitates that teachers collect information about aspects like their students' learning styles, preferences, struggles, strengths, etc. at the beginning of the academic year.

This view echoes to an extent Bloom's 'Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain' (1965). The cognitive domain consists of the learning skills related to mental processes; it includes those objectives dealing with "the recall or recognition of knowledge and the development of intellectual abilities and skills. Bloom (1956, p.7) claims that this domain is the most central "to the work of much current test development."

The taxonomy is a hierarchy of skills ordered from the lowest to the highest level as follows: knowledge (the ability to remember facts without necessarily understanding them), comprehension (the ability to understand the learned information), application (the ability to use the learned information in new situations), analysis (the ability to break down information into its smaller components), synthesis (the ability to put together elements or parts to form a whole), and evaluation (the ability to make judgments about the value of ideas, works, methods, etc.). Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) modified it to remembering (recognizing, recalling), understanding (interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, explaining), applying (executing, implementing), analyzing (differentiating, organizing, attributing) evaluating (checking, critiquing), and creating (generating, planning, producing).

We suggest using this taxonomy in testing because it permits organizing our test questions with respect to our teaching objectives. We can focus on one or more of the various skills provided by Bloom and Anderson and Krathwohl and respectively choose the type of questions in our tests. In Table 2, we give some sample questions and question keywords under each category.

**Table 02**

*Sample Literature Questions According to Bloom's Taxonomy and Krathwohl's Revision of the Cognitive Domain*

| <b>Level of the Cognitive Domain</b> | <b>Question Keywords</b>                                                                   | <b>Sample Questions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Knowing/ Remembering</b>          | Recall, define, identify, list, what questions,                                            | Define stream of consciousness.<br>What are the plot elements of the novel?<br>Identify the steps of plot analysis.                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Comprehension/ Understanding</b>  | Summarize, compare, contrast, classify, explain, describe, identify, etc.                  | Explain the theme of choice in "The Little Prince"<br>Compare the points of view in The Little Prince and Peter Pan<br>Identify the significance of fire in Fahrenheit 451.                                                              |
| <b>Application/Applying</b>          | Demonstrate, apply, illustrate, choose, adapt, employ, etc.                                | Demonstrate the characteristics of Victorian literature in Dickens' hard times.<br>Choose the appropriate literary theory to analyze "So Long a Letter" by Mariama Ba<br>Apply booker's plot type analysis to Harry Potter by JK Rolling |
| <b>Analysis/ analyze</b>             | Analyze, discuss, compare, contrast, organize, etc.                                        | Analyze the theme of existentialism in "The Little Prince"<br>Discuss the point of view of J.M Barrie on Motherhood and Gender Roles.                                                                                                    |
| <b>Synthesize/ evaluate</b>          | Evaluate, criticize, assess, collect, propose, relate, examine, investigate, comment, etc. | Examine the use of religious motifs in The Lord of the Rings.<br>Provide a critical evaluation of Achebe's view on the identity crisis.                                                                                                  |
| <b>Evaluation/Creation</b>           | Revise, review, evaluate, compare, value, justify, etc.                                    | Compare the world of Fahrenheit 451 to our modern world.<br>Create an alternative version of the ending of The Giver. Justify.                                                                                                           |

**Own Work.**

It is important to note that these question keywords can be used across various levels depending on the formulation of the question and that they can be used in direct questions as well as with quotes.

## **Conclusion**

This first chapter examined the various definitions of literature, its value, and its use in language classrooms. It traced the development of teaching literature throughout history, identifying the approaches to and methods used, and the purposes attached to each. While explaining the different views on teaching and learning literature, the researcher consistently highlighted the techniques, practices, and procedures this research borrows from those methods. The chapter ends with an exploration of literature content and assessment in higher education offering a perspective to facilitate course and test design, which aligns with the CRT as explained in the second chapter.

# Chapter 2

## Culture, Literature, and Cultural Responsiveness

## **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the link between culture, literature, and language teaching and introduces cultural responsiveness (the central piece in the approach we adopt), which seeks to teach to and through culture. The chapter consists of two parts. The first one sheds light on the concept of culture, its development, its definitions, and its link to the study of literature and identity. The second part deals with the approach of cultural responsiveness. It explains its premise, theory, and method, underlining its goals, objectives, and principles, demonstrating how we could use them in EFL literature classrooms.

### **Part One: Culture**

This part focuses on culture. It examines the most relevant definitions and views on culture from sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies, establishing the place and role of culture in our current study. It links culture to literature, language, identity, and cognition highlighting the interconnectedness and reciprocity of these constructs.

#### **2.1. Literature as Culture**

Culture has always been a central issue in literature studies and teaching. Though it is pedagogically promising as a resource of knowledge and a tool for enhancing linguistic, social, and cultural competencies, it is a complex, challenging concept that cannot be defined easily. As previously explained, reading literature is seen as the most expedient way to access the culture of another speech community and learn about “the other.” In fact, among the basic arguments for advocating the reading and instruction of literature, particularly in EFL and ESL contexts, is its capacity to promote deeper

understanding and tolerance of cultural diversity, thereby fostering human growth and development. Hall (2005) notes that cultural awareness can be “promoted particularly effectively through language and literature pedagogies” (p.40).

The study of literature predominantly comprises the study of culture. Literary works not only mirror the culture of diverse individuals, groups, societies, and civilizations, but also readers assimilate and integrate their cultural frames of reference in text comprehension and interpretation. This makes reading literature “a symbolic construction of particular cultural meanings” (Campbell, 1994 as cited in Rogers, 1997, p.97). The language of the literary text can inform us much about its users and their communities and societies. At the same time, when used correctly, it can enhance readers’ awareness of their own cultural identities, beliefs, values, and frames of reference.

Based on the current perspective amongst practitioners and theorists who regard literature as texts of culture, we perceive our EFL literature classes as contexts of intercultural communication, that enable safe contact between ‘the self’ and ‘the other.’ In addition, adopting the view of literature as a discourse in our research emphasizes the close connection between literature and culture, where discourse both shapes and is shaped by culture. Before we further examine the importance and role of culture in EFL literature classrooms and CRT, it is necessary to closely examine the concept of culture, its definitions, and its uses in social sciences.

## **2.2. History and Development of the Concept of Culture**

The concept of culture is often used in social sciences and education, but just like literature, there is no consensus over the definition and meaning of the word. When

examining the history and evolution of the concept, we came across various, and sometimes opposing views. For example, some viewed culture as tantamount to civilization; whereas others interpreted it through a Calvinistic lens, positing that culture is a quest for perfection grounded in religious beliefs. Moreover, some recognize ‘small culture’, and ‘Big culture’, while others identify ‘singular culture’ and ‘plural cultures.’ Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), critically reviewed and compiled a list of 164 different definitions of culture, categorized according to the emphasis made by the researchers in their definitions (emphasis on learning, emphasis on rule or way, emphasis on psychology, emphasis on history, etc.).

The development of the notion of culture is intrinsically intertwined with the evolution of Anthropology, the study of the nature, origin, and destiny of human beings through time and space; subsequently, it was associated with the advances in Sociology. Researchers like Edward Tylor, Henry Morgan, Franz Boas, and Emile Durkheim have contributed significantly to the discussion around culture, its meaning, and its effect on the human experience. The term culture comes from the Latin words ‘colere’ and ‘cultura’, which mean growing and cultivation. The word has an inherent meaning of ‘natural growth’ and ‘development’ into it, which automatically assumes a link to words like civilization. In fact, one of the most known and adopted definitions of culture is that of Tylor (1958, p.1) who uses the terms culture and civilization interchangeably. Tylor says “Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” 19<sup>th</sup>-century anthropology treats culture and civilization as synonymous, which Hammersly (2019)

attributes to the fact that the primary focus of anthropological inquiry is centered on the evolution of societies from primitive to advanced stages. During this period, the term 'civilization' came to signify the level of 'development' achieved by Western societies in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) note that the two terms were used to define each other; culture as “a particular state or stage of the advancement in civilization” and civilization as “an advancement or state of social culture” (p. 13). They list several researchers, who influenced by Tylor’s definition, have argued that culture is the totality of all human activities, customs, beliefs, social and religious orders, manifestations of social habits, laws, art, etc. individuals acquire as members of the society, which come to manifest their civilization (Boas, 1930; Dixon, 1928; Wissler, 1920; and Winston, 1933 as cited in Kroeber and Kluckhohn; 1952, p. 43). Although the terms culture and civilization started to diverge in later anthropological and sociological research, these views continue to be among the most widely used.

Moreover, culture refers to a way or a mode followed by a certain community. Each group, tribe, society, or speech community has a set of standardized beliefs, values, and norms that govern and explain social patterns of behavior and habits. These patterns are passed from one generation to another, encompassing aspects like language, relationships, decision-making, politeness, spirituality, etc. Culture in this sense is what distinguishes ‘us’ from ‘the other’, which is central in contexts of intercultural communication like literature classrooms.

Another relevant idea to this context is that ‘culture is learned.’ Researchers like Wissler (1916), Davis (1948), and Haring (1949) (as cited in Kroeber and Kluckhohn,

1952, p.58) note that culture consists of behavior patterns that are socially learned and transmitted. Culture is not genetic, but is man-made. The aspects of culture mentioned earlier are all man-creation; they are acquired in the society to which one belongs. This means culture is teachable. The teachability of culture and the learners' readiness to learn cultural patterns is what makes teaching literature possible, especially in EFL classrooms where culture lies at the heart of language teaching. Exposure to a certain culture enables us to understand the people who created those cultural patterns and be more aware of our own cultural and social patterns (through comparison and contrast).

Similar to the distinction made between big or high culture with capital 'C' (art and literature) and small 'c' culture (social norms, beliefs, and attitudes), Hammersley (2019) analyzes the history of the concept distinguishing two broad views on culture; culture as singular and as plural, each one consisting of two versions of interpretation.

### **2.2.1. Culture as Singular**

In this view culture is perceived as related to universal human ideals that vary in degree among people and societies; it includes two main definitions

- **Culture as Aesthetic Cultivation:** Here culture is linked to art, literature, drama, music, etc. The most influential definition in this perspective is that of Matthew Arnold (1873, as cited in Arnold, 2006). Influenced by Romanticism and humanism, he says that culture is the “pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world” (p.XXII). Culture in the aesthetic vision is seen as a source of knowledge and understanding. The ideas and attitudes represented in literature specifically, and other forms of humanities generally, contribute to the advancement of personal and social

virtue. According to Arnold, this personal development that results from finding the ‘best that has been thought and said’ ultimately helps in reaching ‘spiritual perfection’.

In his book, ‘The Calvinistic Concept of Culture’, Henry R. Van Til (1972) claims that culture in Arnold’s view is the study of perfection-to make reason and the will of God prevail. He adds that culture goes beyond religion in seeking “the harmonious development of all powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature” (p.25). Culture as represented in art and literature, then, touches all the aspects of human life and growth; the focus on it is what constitutes and contributes to ‘a good life’ full of virtue away from the effects of industrialization and materialism. This is supported by philosophical and sociological conceptions in which culture stands for the moral, spiritual, and intellectual attainments of men.

- **Culture as developmental:** This definition of culture covers all aspects of human life that are the product of learning and socializing rather than heredity and biology. In this sense, different societies possess and exhibit varying degrees of culture and cultural development. This culture is subject to change over time, where societies and communities are in constant comparison of the levels of progress.

### 2.2.2. Culture as Plural

This has been the dominant view in anthropology starting from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, wherein cultures are representations of distinct modes of life.

- **Cultures as Distinct ways of life:** Unlike in the singular view of culture, in the pluralistic one culture representation is not restricted to art, music, and literature, but extends to all aspects of life. Any simple form of social activity, attitude, or behavior can demonstrate a cultural facet. In this way, societies and communities have

distinguished forms of life, based on elements like environment, economy, nature, resources, etc. Through these cultures individuals and societies express various identities.

- **Culture as meaning-making:** Within the pluralistic view, some researchers claim that culture is a process, not an object. What matters is the means through which a group of people make sense of their social experience. Meaning is what produces, informs, and structures social actions and activities and, at the same time, is formed against specific social, cognitive, and linguistic contexts. Essential to both the creation of meaning and the construction of social practice, are language and discourse. This view can be brought in line with Structuralism in sociology and linguistics, and later discourse analysis.

Although considered as opposing perspectives in the research about culture, these four views can be seen as complementary as well. Culture, though embodies modes of existence, it is most notably exemplified through art, music, and literature. Culture provides models of explanations for our social conduct, norms, customs, traditions, and habits (giving them meaning), and informs and guides our construction of new meaning in any sort of learning. It influences and shapes our worldviews and identities.

Schein (2004) argues that though some might ask why we need such a complex concept as culture, while we have simpler constructs like values, beliefs, customs, habits, and social behaviors, “the word culture adds several other critical elements to the concept of sharing: structural stability, depth, breadth, and patterning or integration” (2004, p.14). He says when we say something is cultural, not only it implies that it is

shared, but also stable; therefore, defines the group sharing it. First, being the deepest, less tangible, and less visible aspect makes all the other constructs above attributes or manifestations of culture. Second, explaining breadth, he adds that culture is pervasive; “it influences all aspects of how an organization deals with its primary task, its various environments, and its internal operations” (p.14). Finally, the word culture entails patterning or integration of all the constructs above into a coherent whole; it links and integrates beliefs, values, customs, skills, habits, etc. into a paradigm making the society “sensible and orderly” (p.15).

### **2.3. Culture: Features, Levels, and Categories**

Literature in the current study is perceived as a discourse, which is defined as conventional ways of speaking that both create and are created by conventional ways of thinking. The word conventional here suggests social and cultural agreement around language use, discourse production, interpretation, and circulation in society. Discourse is a text immersed in a social and cultural context. It both shapes and is shaped by social conduct, ideology, beliefs, attitudes, norms, relationships between participants, etc., which are all attributes of culture. There is an undeniable inherent tie between language, discourse, and culture. Kramsch (1998) notes culture can be defined as “membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings.” She adds that even when these members leave the community, they always share a system of “standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting” (p.10); these standards are modeled by culture.

### 2.3.1. Features

Researchers like Kramsch (1998), Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), Paige et al. (1999), and Malinowski (1944), have highlighted some main features of culture that we reformulated below stressing their relevance to our EFL and Literature classes.

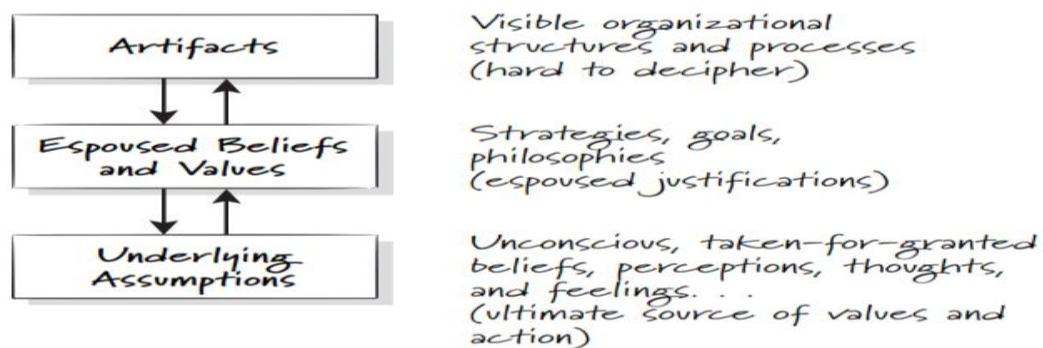
- Culture is the result of human intervention; it is socially hereditary; it is learned and acquired through socialization; therefore, it is teachable.
- Culture is both the source and product of socially and historically situated discourse communities, created and shaped by language (Kramsch, 1989). This puts culture at the core of teaching literary discourse and foreign languages.
- Cultures are fundamentally heterogeneous and dynamic. Culture is an “ongoing group process which operates in changing circumstances to enable group members to make sense of and operate meaningfully within those circumstances” (Holliday, 1999, p. 248). We consider literature a witness and manifestation of the dynamicity of culture throughout times and spaces.
- Cultural factors can be more important than linguistic factors for comprehension.
- A culture can include subcultures. We can speak of national culture, at the same time identify cultures like ‘youth culture’, ‘social media culture’, ‘science fiction culture’, and various affinity group cultures (fans, supporters, ideology proponents, etc.). Literary works can illustrate these various types of culture, representing various sub-groups of a larger community.
- Culture can be both explicit and implicit; it can be categorized into three main levels, surface, shallow, and deep culture.

### 2.3.2. Levels

Researchers provide various classifications of the levels of culture; however, there seems to be a general agreement that they are three in number. One of the most known classifications is that of Schein (1992, 2004). The latter explains that culture has three main levels artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions.

**Figure 05**

*Levels of Culture: Schein (2004, p 26)*



The first is at a surface level and it includes the visible aspects of culture- “the phenomena that one sees, hears, and feels when one encounters a new group with an unfamiliar culture” (2004, p.25). This level covers elements such as language, architecture, clothing, manners, style, observable rituals, etc. The second consists of the shared beliefs and values of a given community, which predict much of the behavior that can be observed at the level of the artifacts.

At the third level, we find those beliefs and values that can be ‘empirically tested’ and that continue to work reliably in solving the group’s problems. Schein (2004) argues that when a set of beliefs and values repeatedly solve problems in society, they are taken for granted, once this happens, they become a reality or ‘basic assumptions.’ The

members of the group will then strongly hold onto these assumptions, making “behavior based on any other premise inconceivable” (p.31); Figure 5 illustrates these levels.

This view aligns with Hammond’s classification of the three levels of culture (2015). Though the two views share common patterns of classification, we adopt Hammond’s view in teaching as described below since we think Schein’s might be less comprehensive for learners. Zaretta Hammond (2015) elucidates the distinct forms or levels of culture, saying that it is vital to expose our learners to all of them to enhance their cultural competence, aid comprehension, and facilitate intercultural communication.

The first one is ‘**surface culture.**’ At this level, we find the observable concrete elements of culture like food, dress, and music. Hammond states that changes at this level do not create any emotional disturbance or anxiety, since these elements usually have low emotional charge. It is necessary to note here that this idea, though largely validated, is prone to error. In some religious or ethnic groups, these elements can have an extremely high emotional charge, like Hijab for Muslim women hence, as teachers, we should be knowledgeable about the target culture.

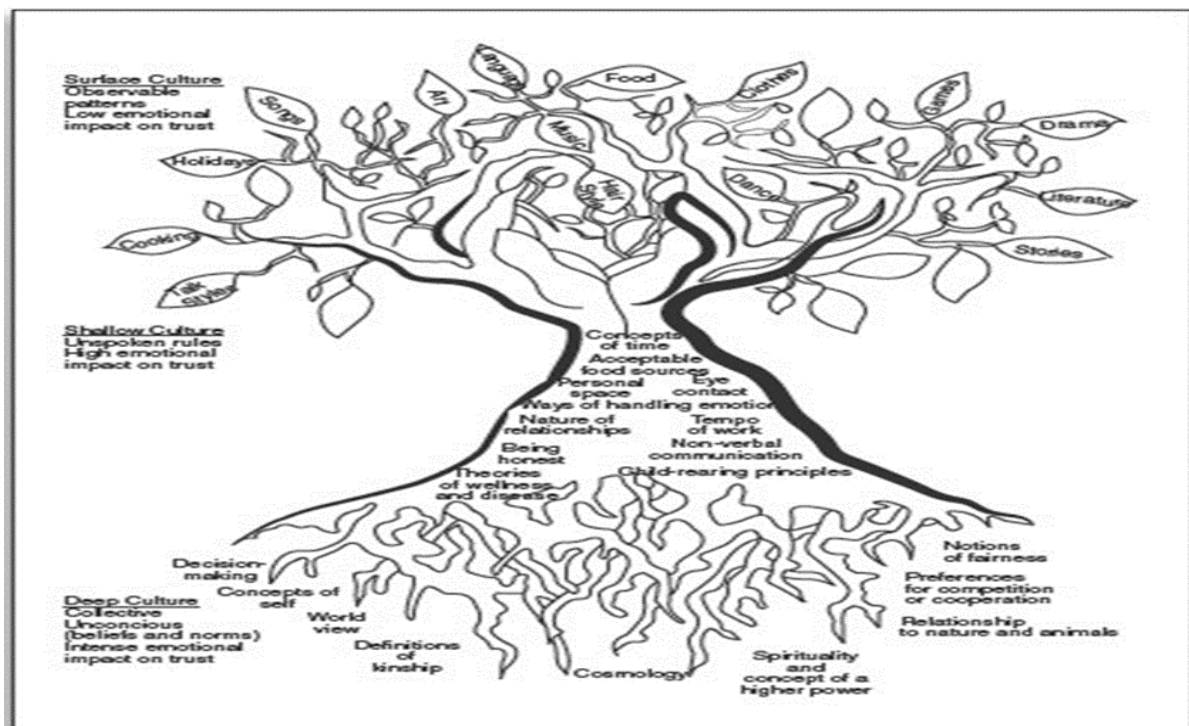
The second one is the ‘**shallow culture**’, where we find the unspoken rules of social interactions, norms, and values. Aspects like courtesy, politeness, personal space, and rules for non-linguistic communication (body language for example) are part of this level of culture. It is where we put our deep cultural values into action. Indicating elements of this type in literary works enables the learners to identify, interpret, compare, contrast, and evaluate social behaviors and attitudes. This level has a higher emotional charge and violations of the learner’s social norms and values can cause

distress and unacceptability that might translate into resistance and rejection of the literary work. Therefore, teachers can use this level to teach tolerance, acceptance, and appreciation. Learners, through constant examinations of such elements, can learn more about themselves and others.

At the last level, we find **‘deep culture’** that consists of “tacit knowledge and unconscious assumptions that govern our worldview” (Hammond, 2015, p.39). It comprises rules that guide ethics, spirituality, ideology, perspective, and perception. Elements of this type have an intense emotional charge, and challenging them results in cultural shock. Our cultural and mental models and frames of reference (schema) direct our understanding and interpretation of the world around us, regulate learning, and cultivate the process of creating our worldview. This worldview, then, guides our behaviors and social conduct across time and space. Our schema provides frames, scripts, and plots for our comprehension. Hammond (2015) explains that we create these schemata based on our deep culture, which in turn serves as software for our brains. At this level, we need to help our learners spot, depict, translate, and interpret the worldviews embedded in literature and influenced by authors’ cultural and mental models. Those mental models are shaped by the ‘standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting,’ which we call ‘culture’. She uses the tree metaphor to illustrate these levels (Figure 6 below).

**Figure 06**

*The Three Levels of Culture: Hammond (2015, p.24)*



### 2.3.3. Categories

In addition to levels, researchers have accentuated some broad types of culture. Majumdar and Madan (1956) recognize two broad parts of culture, “material and non-material intangible, imponderable part” or social culture (p. 14). Bidney (as cited in Majumdar and Madan, 1956, p.14) summarizes this idea by saying that culture is a product of agrofacts (products of cultivation), artifacts (products of industry), socifacts (social organization), and mentifacts (language, art, literature, etc.). Agrofacts and artifacts belong to material culture, and are associated with the physical environment of a certain community; they are used for sustaining and improving life conditions whereas, socifacts and mentifacts are part of social culture, which assists the creation of the material culture. Each community has a distinct form and use of material and social

culture. People of various societies have different natures and environments, which are marked by distinct utilization of natural and industrial products. These categories interact, completing each other, to form heterogeneous but harmonized standards for social behavior, actions, attitudes, etc. that help shape the community's identity. From what has been said so far, we can deduce that 'agro' and 'artifacts' can be observable at the surface level of culture, while 'socifacts' and 'mentifacts' are mostly contained within the shallow and deep levels.

There is a strong link between culture and learning; therefore, teachers and learners alike must be aware of the aspects and constructs aforementioned. We argue through this research, and via the instructional tools and practices we adopt in the experiment, that a meaningful teaching-learning experience starts with awareness and understanding of the concept of culture, its elements, levels, value, and role in shaping human experience, cognition, and learning.

## **2.4. Language and Culture**

Smith (1971) summarizes the importance of language when he says, "teaching is above all a linguistic activity" and "language is at the very heart of teaching." (p.24). Akin to this, Gee (2015) says that any teaching is essentially language teaching. When we teach physics, we teach the language of physics, when we teach literature, we teach the language of literature, and so on. This is even more evident in EFL classrooms, where language is the means and end of teaching. Despite its importance, as a concept, language is taken for granted by EFL teachers; most of us cannot define it and don't feel the need to do so. Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) recognize three layers and views of language:

**1) Language as a Structural System:** Language is seen as a set of structures that are acquired through education. Here, Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) explain, that language is defined by a set of formalized linguistics and usually literate norms. They claim that this perspective creates a prestige of variety in language that is only spoken by the elite. This is where we create a standardized form of written language, developing “an authority which is not usually enjoyed by non-standardized and unwritten forms of language and they become prescriptions for “good” language use” (McGroarty, 1996 as cited in Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p.12). Any deviations from the prescribed standard form of language are regarded as defective and incorrect. This view is often attached to language education, which is seen as the teaching of the correct use of language.

**2) Language as a Communicative System:** In addition to its structural nature, language is seen as a system used for communication. Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) argue that even though linguists defined language as a means of communication, they overlooked the definition of communication itself. This view meets the first one in that communication is considered a simple process of using linguistic structures (grammar) to express thought.

**3) Language as a Social Practice:** Citing Carey (1989) Liddicoat and Scarino (2013, p.13) say that “Communication is not simply a transmission of information, it is a creative, cultural act in its own right through which social groups constitute themselves”. For a successful language classroom, language needs to be regarded as a social practice that influences and is influenced by culture, society, history, beliefs, and learning.

Examining these views, we can deduce that for effective teaching and meaningful learning, teachers are required to establish a precise and comprehensive definition of language. They need to have a deep understanding of the concepts they are to impart to their students. For us, language as a means of communication is a set of structures that are socially and culturally situated. Knowing or speaking a language is more than knowing its grammar; it is using that system or structure to engage in social practices effectively. Language use and learning, then, is an engagement in and with social practices (Kramsch, 1995). These social practices are immersed in a specific culture.

Our research adopts a discourse analysis perspective, in which discourse is the production of knowledge through language; the latter being the medium of discourse production and interpretation. There is ‘a language’ for each discourse, or what Gee (2015) calls ‘social languages.’ Each specific context (cultural, social, or cognitive) calls for a specific type of discourse, thereby for a specific language use. Linguistic structures (grammar, diction, syntax, cohesion, etc.) of each discourse are shaped by those same contexts compassing attributes like identity, belief systems, values, and social conduct. This means, on the one hand, that each genre of discourse had a favorable form of language (science vs. literature vs. religion for instance). On the other hand, it signifies that for each specific social environment and circumstance, we channel distinct linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of language use.

Various research highlights the link between culture and language in SLA, EFL, and EFL contexts (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1989, 1998, and 1993; Kramsch & Zhu Hua, 2016; Lazar, 2001; and Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013 Meyer, 1991). These researchers claim that the study of language is essentially the study of another culture, and that

language learning cannot be decontextualized from culture since it shapes both language acquisition and learning. For Bakhtin (1981), culture comes into being as we struggle over, with (negotiate), and through (navigate) language in linguistic events and practices such as classrooms, readings, and conversations. For him, culture is a set of linguistic experiences, where cultural constructs like literature play a key role.

Kramsch (2008) notes that the focus of language teaching should not be on the teaching of the linguistic code only, but also on the teaching of meaning. Meaning according to discourse analysis is situated in socio-cultural contexts (Gee, 2001); it is situated in social practices. When children learn words, they tend to associate them with different things, situations, and a variety of different contexts, “each of which contains one or more salient features that could trigger the use of the word” (Gee, 2001, p.41). These features are not “a random list of associated meanings”, but they hang together to create a pattern that is significant for specific socio-cultural groups. When children become adults, in addition to these patterns of meaning, they could develop explanations of those meanings. The latter are called cultural or discourse models.

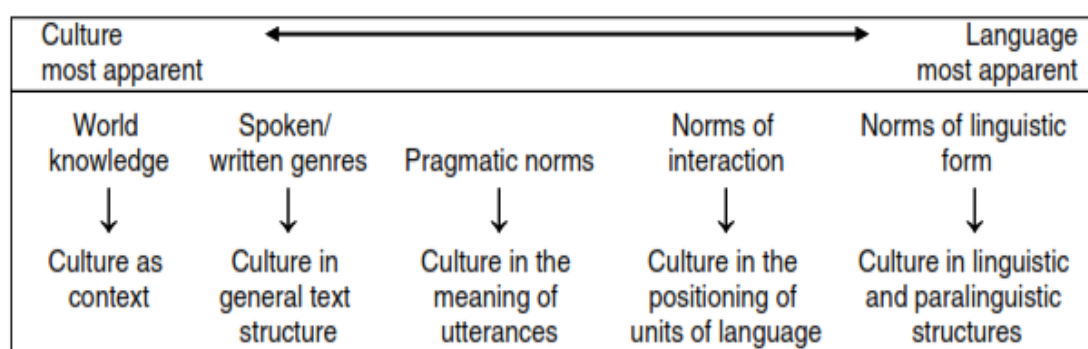
While situated meanings refer to those we assign to words according to specific contexts and experiences, cultural models embody the rationales behind the formation of these specific significations. Gee (2001) defines cultural models as ‘explanatory theories’ that are rooted in the practices of socio-cultural groups. “Different social and cultural groups, ages, and genders have different explanatory theories about the same words” (Gee, 2001, p.42). This theory highlights the link between language, context, and culture. Different contexts call for different cultural models and situated meanings.

If we perceive language as a social practice of ‘meaning-making and interpretation’ in our EFL classrooms, then a mere study of grammar and vocabulary is not efficient. Learners need to understand the link between culture, social practices, and language.

We need to raise their awareness about the interaction of these elements and their effect on communication. Language mediates culture, and culture shapes language and language learning; Kramsch, (1989) states that language symbolizes and expresses cultural reality. Liddicoat (2009) summarizes the relation language-culture-communication in Figure 07 Below. The figure demonstrates the aspects of communication where culture and language are most and least apparent (observable or salient). It represents the intersection between culture and language in communication. Liddicoat, however, emphasizes that regardless of the surface level appearance both language and culture are equally involved and integrated in communication, that is meaning creation and interpretation.

**Figure 07**

*Points of articulation between culture and language in communication: Liddicoat (2009, p.3)*



In this view, culture takes different positions and forms influencing communication and interacting with language:

**1) Culture as context:** Culture is a frame in which meaning is conveyed and interpreted; it consists of the knowledge speakers have about how the world works and how this knowledge is represented and comprehended in communicative acts (shared world knowledge).

**2) Culture in Text Structure:** Like any other part of language texts are cultural activities. Kramsch (1993) specifies that communicating through speaking or writing is an act of encoding and interpreting culture. Culture defines the purpose, genre, and format of texts.

**3) Culture in Pragmatic Norms:** Perhaps the effect of culture on pragmatic norms is more explicit in intercultural communication. When two people from different cultural backgrounds communicate, we can see the distinct pragmatic rules and norms of different aspects such as tone, body language, politeness, etc. Here the effect of culture on language is more discernible.

**4) Culture and Linguistic Form:** Wierzbicka (1979) as cited in Liddicoat (2009, p.12) says that “every language embodies in its very structure a certain world view, a certain philosophy.” Communication is achieved through the use of structural linguistics elements that are culturally contextualized. Lexicon, morphology, syntax, and semantics are embedded in socio-cultural practices. Although language has its universal shared part among all humanity (universal grammar), each speech community has its own culture-specific ways of naming, word formation, sentence structure, etc.

The link between culture and language cannot be overlooked. Our classrooms need to emphasize it to enhance communication and learning. Indeed, culture lies at the heart of EFL classrooms in general, and literature classrooms in particular. These classes

represent multicultural contexts, in which the native culture constantly interacts with the target culture. Our research suggests that teaching literature in EFL classrooms should start by raising students' awareness about their own cultural frames of reference, and juxtapose them with those of the target culture to make learning more meaningful and effective. Learners should be able to recognize, identify, and compare their worldviews with those represented in literary works to grow more competent, tolerant, and resilient. In this study, culture is a process of learning rather than an external knowledge to be acquired. Teaching literature has to include teaching cultural and intercultural competence.

## **2.5. Intercultural Competence: On the Relationship between Communication and Culture**

There are various and distinct views on cultural competence, its definition, development, and place in higher education. Although the term may seem resistant to definitions, examining the concept of culture marks the basis for understanding cultural competence. Davis (2020) defines it as “a journey and a pathway towards becoming competent in working with, and between, diverse cultural situations and contexts” (p.15). He adds that central to achieving this competence is the recognition and respect for cultural diversity.

Intercultural competence which derives from cultural competence is defined by Meyer (1991, p. 138) as “the ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes, and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures.” When people are involved in communicative acts of any form, they bring their background knowledge, view of the world, experiences, and identities into

the process of meaning encoding and interpretation. When encountering ‘the other’ (like in literature classes), we may reject, assimilate, accommodate, tolerate, understand, or contend with the text based on those elements. Intercultural competence can be seen as the ability to balance the factors of ‘the self’ (beliefs, identity, experience, etc.) with those of ‘the other’ to reach comprehension.

Gerfanova and Mikhailova (2019) state that having intercultural competence entails having a solid understanding of one’s own culture, and the ways through which we can connect the cultural elements embodied in different cultural contexts. Bennet (1993) highlights that it underlines the ability to overcome ethnocentrism and be more open to diversity and multiculturalism. Kramsch and McConnell-Ginet (1992 as cited in Atay et al., 2008) claim that teaching intercultural competence helps include comparisons between the learner’s own culture and target culture, thereby helping learners to develop a reflective attitude to the culture and civilization of their own countries.

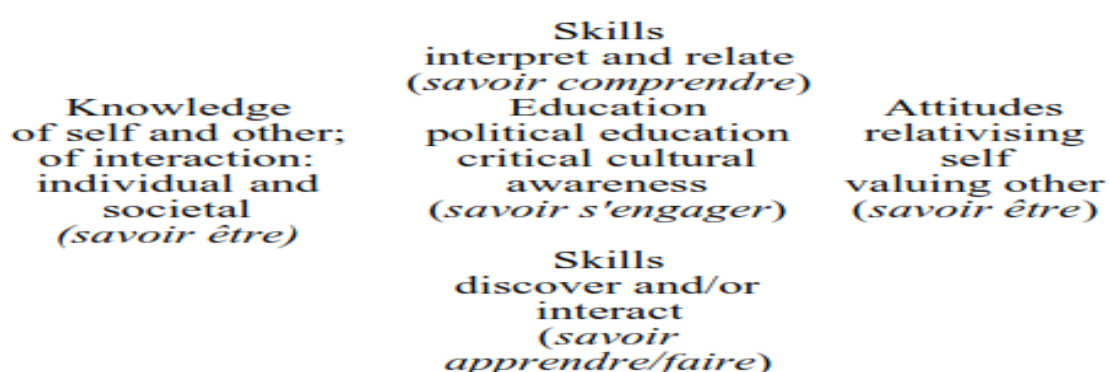
Our literature classes need to assist learners in becoming interculturally competent and sensitive. They need to be given the chance to see ‘the other’, and through the eyes of ‘the other’, and compare it to their views and perspectives. Byram (1997) proposed a model of cultural communicative competence that encompasses three factors, attitudes, knowledge, and skills as shown in Figure 8 below.

Attitudes, Byram clarifies, concern those we hold toward people who are perceived as different in terms of cultural meanings, beliefs, and behaviors- aspects that are often tacit and implicit in one’s social group or community. The attitudes toward ‘the other’ may include stereotypes and prejudice, yet being interculturally competent

does not mean that one should have positive prejudice. It rather means the communicator has attitudes of curiosity, openness, and readiness to “suspend disbelief and judgment with respect to others' meanings, beliefs and behaviors”, and of “willingness to suspend belief” (p.24) in one's own, with the ability to analyze and examine them from the viewpoint of the other. Other important attitudes are the readiness to question, interest in discovery, and willingness to engage with the other.

### Figure 08

*Factors of Intercultural Communication: Byram (1993, p.34)*



Knowledge here can be categorized into two broad types, 1) knowledge about one's own culture and the target culture, and 2) knowledge about the processes of interaction at individual and societal levels. The first one, Byram stresses, though less refined is always present in this sort of communication, while the second is learned systematically and is vital for successful intercultural communication. Through socialization and formal education, we acquire these types of knowledge, which constitute our social, national, or ethnic identities (which in turn shape our communication). This sort of declarative knowledge about ‘the self’, ‘the other’, and the processes of interaction has to be supplemented with procedural knowledge of how

to act in specific situations and contexts. Knowledge includes aspects such as historical and contemporary relationships between one's society and that of the target culture, the means of achieving contact with interlocutors from another country, the national memory of one's own country, the national definitions of geographical space in one's own country and how these are perceived from the perspective of other countries, institutions, perceptions, customs, etc. (p.51)

The skills of interpreting and drawing on existing knowledge are essential for successful intercultural communication. Individuals draw on the knowledge acquired through formal education, as well as, informal means, to make sense of texts of other cultures. The comprehension of texts is reliant upon one's capacity to assimilate their pre-existing knowledge regarding both 'the self' and 'the other' in the process of interpreting and comprehending the text, while simultaneously addressing any potential malfunctions and incongruities that may arise. An interculturally competent individual can mediate between conflicting interpretations of a certain phenomenon. Discovery is another skill in this view. It refers to the skill of “building up specific knowledge as well as an understanding of the beliefs, meanings, and behaviors which are inherent in particular phenomena, whether documents or interactions” (p.38).

The discussion above alludes to the connection between communication and culture. The latter provides the tools through which we pursue, encode, and decode meaning and convey our understanding to others. Communication is described as “an intricate matrix of interacting social acts” that takes place in social environments, reflecting people's views and relationship to the world (Samovar and Porter, 1991, p.10). Communication dwells in sociocultural settings and is governed by the social and

physical contexts in which it occurs; it is “dynamic, interactive, irreversible, and invariably contextual” (Gay, 2000, p.79).

Samovar and Porter (1991) claim that everything we see, say, attend to, ignore, consider, or talk about is influenced by culture, and in turn, shapes our culture; communication, then, is cultural. For them, a successful teacher understands and accepts students’ cultural communication styles. They add that if these styles are misunderstood or overlooked, students’ “academic performance may be misdiagnosed or trapped in communicative mismatch” (p.78). If teachers communicate successfully with their students, they will have the power to shape the future of those students.

Successful communication stems from an understanding of culture. Since cultures differ, communication rules, norms, practices, and behaviors differ as well. Our EFL literature classrooms present an intercultural, multicultural, and pluralistic environment, where the learners’ and teachers’ cultures meet the target one. Interactions between the teacher and learners, or between them and the literary works are embedded within cultural and linguistic practices. As teachers, we need to apprehend the “tenacious” reciprocity between culture, language, and communication.

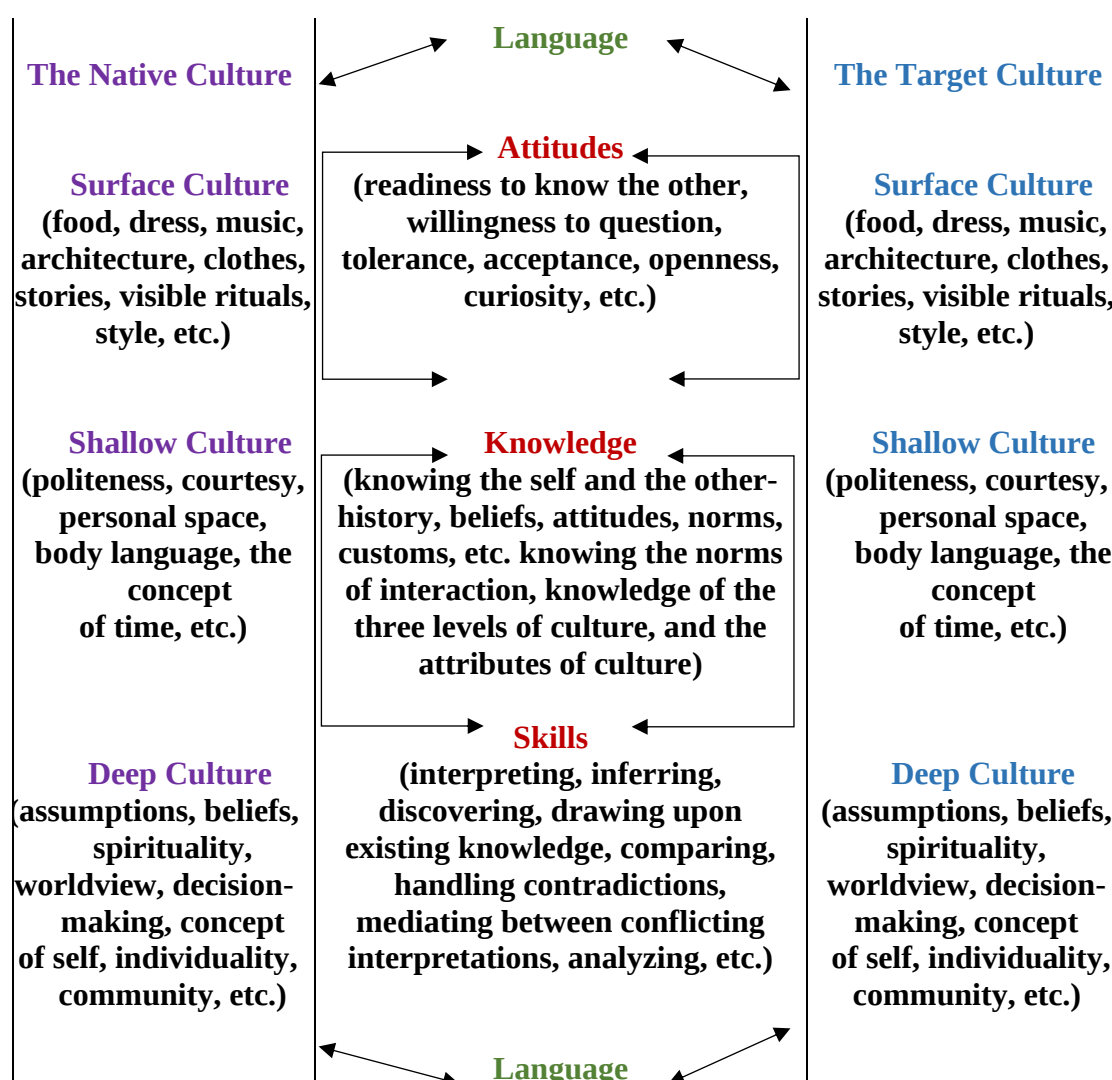
## **2.6. Culture in EFL Literature Classrooms: A Synthesis**

Evaluating and connecting the views above, we could synthesize the scheme in Figure 09 describing the way we perceive culture in EFL literature classrooms. The centrality of culture in literature is incontestable and cannot be disregarded. However, there remains a dispute over what to teach and how to teach in ‘culture as literature’ and ‘literature as culture.’ Our research proposes techniques and instructional tools that highlight the profundity of culture in literature, and instead of suggesting ways to teach

culture, we offer ways to use culture to teach literature. Literary discourse presents and investigates issues of race, ethnicity, appropriation, history, class, politics, social practices, etc. which, if not handled appropriately in the classroom, can lead to cultural shock. When used effectively, however, they enhance the learning experience, help learners build a growth mindset, and assist them in developing tolerance, resilience, and congruence.

**Figure 09**

*Culture in EFL Literature Classrooms*



Own Work.

To promote high academic standards for all different learners, teachers ought to implement an approach that mediates academic content with students' cultural experiences to make such content accessible, meaningful, and relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Our pedagogical approach to teaching literature is culturally responsive. This approach is achieved by ensuring that instructional tools, course design, and classroom practices are interconnected and founded on students' cultural frames of reference, background knowledge, and social experiences. To ensure the effectiveness of our approach we establish the following points about how to treat culture in our classrooms:

1) *Culture is dynamic.* The relationship between language and culture is always changing through communication and interaction. Bakhtin (1981, p.293) says that "language lies on the borderline between oneself and the other." Hall (2005) notes that literature is a borderline activity, and 'readers of foreign language literature are very obviously border crossers', and that is the kind of relationship between 'the self' and 'the other' that we want to establish in our classrooms.

2) *Teaching tolerance does not mean making our learners passively accept the content of literary works.* On the contrary, it is building the attitudes of questioning, arguing, and debating cultural issues showing respect and understanding. We believe that resistance is a vital aspect of reading and interpreting literature, our class encourages the spirit of resistance towards various components of literary works, allowing the readers to voice their views, and promoting critical thinking.

3) *We treat literature as discourse and discourse as culture.* Sarangi (1994, p.414) argues that discourse can be seen as a 'concrete expression' of the language-culture

relationship because it “creates, recreates, modifies and transmits both culture and their interaction.” We view literary discourse as a source of knowledge about a community’s culture, power relations, representations, identities, and social practices.

4) *In EFL literature classrooms, the learners’ native culture is in constant contact with the target culture via language (linguistics forms).* Our classes seek to model the use of one’s attitudes, skills, and knowledge to mediate between ‘the two cultures as we demonstrate in Figure 9.

## **2.7. Culture, Identity, and Literature: Between ‘the Self’ and ‘the Other’**

We already established that when people communicate, they bring their culture, identity, and background knowledge into the process of interaction. When readers interact with literary texts, they use resources of language, socio-cultural experience, schema, beliefs, and attitudes to encode and interpret meaning. These elements constitute the basic attributes of identity. Identity is defined as being about

questions of using the resources of history, language, and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. (Hall, 1996, p.4)

Identity construction involves one’s ethnicity, race, gender, religion, language, age, class, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and history (Hoffman, 2004). These aspects shape both our personal and social identities. The first is how we see ourselves as different from others, and the second is how we perceive ourselves as belonging to a specific community sharing similar attributes. Identity is the “stable, consistent, and reliable sense of who one is and what one stands for in the world” (Josselson, 1987, p. 10); it is a self-formed construction, where drives, beliefs, hopes, individual history, and attitudes dynamically interact.

Identity is about conveying to one another what sort of people we are, which social or ethnic group we belong to, “where we stand in relation to ethical and moral questions; or where our loyalties are in political terms” (De Fina et al., 2006, p.263). Even though identity is self-constructed, it is always built in relation and comparison to a specific social group. It encompasses both the meanings we attach to ourselves and those that society imposes and prescribes for us. Josselson (1996) says, “identity is what we make of ourselves within a society that is making something of us” (p. 28). Similarly, Eliason (1996) notes that is what you say you are according to what they say you can be. Our identities are based on our idiosyncratic aspects, as well as on the social roles we assume in our communities.

Identities are dynamic and multifaceted contingent upon the context in which they are situated. Identity keeps changing as long as its attributes (language, history, age, etc.) evolve. An individual does not have one single identity but can inhabit various identities according to the context in which he/she interacts (teacher identity, gender identity, religious identity, mother identity, etc.). Different contexts call for different identities to be displayed. Gee (2015) notes that identity is being recognized as a specific person in a given context. This indicates that in each context, one or more salient attributes of identity are more apparent and; therefore, more relevant to the communicative act. Culture, despite this dynamicity, is “a stabilizing force in human life” (Gay 2000, p.10).’ It gives a sense of continuity to life and, therefore to the self.

The most powerful and observable attribute of all the identities we can enact is language (Brumfit, 1995, Gee, 2015, Joseph, 2013, Norton, 2013).

Identity...is about belonging to a people, a place, a set of beliefs, and a way of life. Of the many ways in which such belonging is signified, what language a person speaks,

and how he or she speaks it, rank among the most powerful, because it is through language that people and places are named, heritage and ancestry recorded and passed on, and beliefs developed and ritualized. (Joseph, 2013, p.9)

It is through language that we enact, display, represent, construct, and negotiate our identities in society. Language is central in identity construction, development, and negotiation across various contexts. This leads us back to our language and literature classrooms. Researchers like Bruner (2001), Lambert et al. (1973), Noels, Pelletier, & Vallerand (2000), and Wenger (1998) stress the link between identity and language learning, especially in EFL classrooms. When students engage in learning a new language with its inherent cultural facets, they might experience changes in their identities leading to a possible conflict, similarly, language proficiency is influenced by identity attributes such as beliefs, attitudes, social backgrounds, and ethnic orientations, religion.

Gee defines discourse as “a characteristic way of saying, doing, and being” (2011, p.30). That is both learners’ discourses and the literary discourses represent language, social conduct, and identities, which is why we cannot ignore, exclude, or gloss over identity in our EFL classrooms. In our research, we use an approach that teaches through learners’ cultural frames of reference, background knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs, which are basic components of their identities. The study does not address a specific type of identity per se (cultural, social, personal, religious, gender, etc.), but rather incorporates some of the general attributes of all these types into the teaching process. We set up a class, where learners could recognize their own identities’ features, and those of ‘the other’ as embodied in the literary works.

## **2.8. Culture and Cognition**

The approach we designed borrows techniques and principles from neuro and cognitive sciences to teach ‘with the brain in mind’ as Jenson (1998) formulates it. There is a strong link between culture, language, learning, and cognition. The brain is social and cultural; learning happens in specific sociocultural environments, which determines to a great extent the various aspects of learning. Bruner (1996, p.4) points out that though it is man-made, it “both forms and makes possible the workings of a distinctively human mind.” He adds that “learning and thinking are always situated in a cultural setting and always dependent upon the utilization of cultural resources.” Individual differences, then, can be partly (and not completely) attributed to the different sources and opportunities different socio-cultural settings provide.

Resnick (1991) notes that all cognitive acts must be viewed as specific responses to specific social and physical circumstances. These circumstances are culture-specific, and to understand human development and learning, we need to understand the context in which our learners acquire their knowledge and language. We should examine and investigate the students’ relationships with their socio-cultural environment, in which they develop a specific worldview that shapes their cognition and learning. Often, learners take these relations for granted; they do not reflect upon them, leading to a less meaningful learning experience. Our job as teachers is to raise learners’ awareness about the links between language, culture, and cognition, fostering reflection on the cultural value systems that surround the learning experience.

Although early studies like that of Piaget (1954) claim that all children have similar cognitive developmental stages, recent research such as Nisbett (2003),

Saalbach and Imai (2007), Waxman, Medin, and Ross (2007) detected both similarities and differences in the patterns of cognitive organization. These studies examined aspects such as naming, classifying objects as animate and inanimate, classifying people, etc. There were apparent cultural differences in the perception of objects and people and their relationship to the world between Western and Eastern cultures. Bastera et al. (2010) explain that the sociocultural contexts in which children learn a language have a considerable impact “on the nature of the language they have mastered by age four or five, particularly upon the ways children use language to interact with others, to show what they know, or to express themselves” (p.73).

Furthermore, Bastera reports the findings of Bowerman (1996) and Choi (1997) who investigated the early development of special semantic categories in children growing in different cultures, with different languages. The study showed that children classify spatial relationships differently to talk about them. These differences were found to be closely related to how the concept of space is used in different languages, highlighting the effect of culture on cognition and language learning.

On the effect of culture on cognition, Greetz (1973 as cited in Keith, 2011, p.137)

exclaims:

Rather than culture acting only to supplement, develop, and extend organically based capacities logically and genetically prior to it, it would seem to be ingredient to those capacities themselves. A cultureless human being would probably turn out to be not an intrinsically talented though unfulfilled ape, but a wholly mindless and consequently unworkable monstrosity.

This idea is supported by modern neuroscientific research which confirms that culture “contains part of the developmental program that works with genes to build the brain that underlies who you are” (Quartz and Sejnowski, 2002, p. 58). Culture provides the sources and tools necessary for the brain to learn; each society sets up cultural ways

of knowing, being, and acting for its members. This is what explains the cultural differences in language learning, perception, problem-solving, and information processing among distinct societies and communities. This is referred to as a cognitive style, which is a design for a lifestyle set by society that becomes the preferred way in which its members process information, act, and react. While learning styles indicate the individually preferred orientations about the factors that facilitate our learning, cognitive styles denote the intellectual aspects of learning styles, representing “culturally attuned ways of perceiving, organizing, and evaluating information” (Shade et al., 2008, p.65). People belonging to the same community, same geographical space, and sharing the same religion and similar social conduct, tend to develop similar, *but not identical*, ways of speaking, acting, thinking, behaving, and problem-solving.

Ying Yi Hong (2009) proposes the so-called ‘dynamic constructivist model’, that focuses on “the dynamics through which specific pieces of cultural knowledge (lay beliefs) become operative in guiding the construction of meaning from a stimulus” (p.3). The model examines the influence of culture on meaning construction. Ying Yi specifies four postulates for this model as follows:

- a) “Physical and human-made environments foster the relative prevalence of certain knowledge.”
- b) This knowledge is shared among the members of the society through constant use as common ground for communication, and transmission from one generation to another; *“this process underpins the formation of culture.”*
- c) With constant and regular use of this knowledge, it resides in the minds of the members of the society and becomes *“chronically accessible”*, establishing *“the*

*mindset through which individuals derive meaning”* (p.4). This shapes and influences cognition and social behavior. This highlights the causal effect of culture on cognition and learning. When individuals are exposed to two different cultures, they acquire the shared knowledge of both cultures. When stimulated, these sets of knowledge get activated affecting the individuals’ cognition.

Ying Yi clarifies that the “causal potential of culture resides in the activation and cognitive accessibility of the networks of shared knowledge in a cultural group” (p.4). Culture both activates and provides access to background shared knowledge that shapes the cognitive styles of the members of the same community. This is significant to our approach, which teaches to and through culture, where the latter is both a source and an end of learning. We believe that the first step in becoming a culturally responsive teacher is the understanding that our students are members of a community, where culture plays a fundamental role in defining how they respond to each other (*saying* or interaction and language use), how they act (*doing*, or social conduct), who they are (*being* or identities), and how they learn.

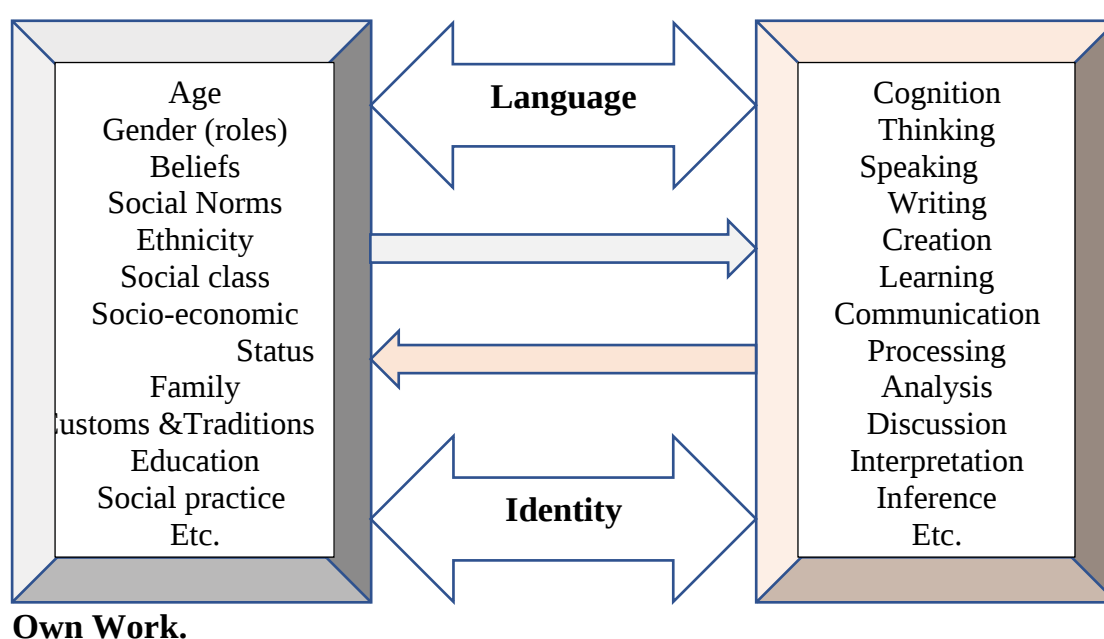
It is important to note that saying that culture shapes human cognition does not exclude individuality and subjectivity from the conversation. Language, discourse, and communication are individual and social acts at the same time (Brown and Yule, 1983; Chomsky, 1965; De Saussure, 1920; Gee 2011, 2001, and 2015; Fairclough, 1992, Foucault, 1969). Language use, discourse production, and interpretation reflect both individual and social conventional features. Interpretations of meaning, Bruner (1996) explains, reflect the idiosyncratic histories of individuals, as well as “the culture's canonical ways of constructing reality” (p.14). He says that nothing is “culture-free,”

but individuals are more than reflections of their culture. Their individuality is what enriches their culture; their specific distinct and unique ways of using their shared cultural frames of reference empower culture in any society. This draws our attention to the importance of celebrating and recognizing both similarities and differences among our students. Culture acts as a sort of '*collective consciousness*' that guides the creation of individual consciousness.

In Figure 10, we summarize the dynamics of culture, identity, language, communication, and learning as we perceive and frame them for our study. The Figure demonstrates how attributes of these constructs overlap and intersect, which makes it impossible to separate them in educational settings. Attributes of culture on the left affect areas of learning on the right and vice versa. Identity at the bottom is shaped by, made up of, and shaping constructs from both sides. Language at the top is the means through which all elements interact and are displayed.

**Figure 10**

*Culture, Language, Identity, Communication, and Learning Dynamics*



## **Part Two: Cultural Responsiveness**

This part presents culturally responsive pedagogy, explains the philosophy behind it, and defines its main goals and objectives. It sheds light on the theory and practice of cultural responsiveness, with an emphasis on the aspects most pertinent to our research aims.

### **2.9. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Brief History and Definitions**

To reach a comprehensive understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy, we have to look at it through a historical lens, examining the reasons behind its development. Researchers refer to cultural responsiveness differently - cultural relevance, appropriateness, congruence, or compatibility- to indicate a teaching pedagogy that uses “the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (Gay, 2000, p.29).

Inspired by principles of social justice and multiculturalism, culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) was designed to help underachieving students of color in the USA by incorporating their racial and cultural identities into course design and practice. Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) recognizes the importance of integrating students' cultural references in all aspects of learning, and accordingly building instructional tools and practices that are culturally relevant to all students. Ladson-Billings (1994, p.20) defines CRT as a pedagogy that “empowers students intellectually, socially and politically [because it uses] cultural referents to impart knowledge skills and attitudes.” It is based on the idea that learning is meaningful when it is predicated upon students' cultural stances, and built on their existing knowledge and skills to

empower their learning. Gay (2000, p.29) adds that it teaches *to and through* the strengths of these students. It is culturally *validating and affirming*.”

CRT was grounded on several observational studies of African-American children, who were struggling in American schools, and often underachieving. It was made popular by Gloria Ladson Billings, who introduced the term in the early 1990s building on earlier anthropology works, which sought to develop ways to mediate between the learners’ home culture and schools, such as Au & Jordan (1981, cultural appropriateness), Mohatt and Erickson (1981, Cultural Congruence as cited in Billings, 1995), Cazden and Leggett (1981), Erickson and Mohatt (1982, Cultural Responsiveness as cited in Billings, 1995), Irvine (1990, Cultural Synchronization); and Vogt, Jordan, and Tharp, (1987, and cultural compatibility). These researchers have observed that teaching ethnically diverse students lacked what Irvin termed “cultural synchronization.” In her book “Black Students and School Failure” (Irvine, 1990), explains that the lack of cultural response or sync between teachers and learners is more evident in:

instructional situations in which teachers misinterpret, denigrate, and dismiss black students’ language, nonverbal cues, physical movements, learning styles, cognitive approaches, and worldview. When teachers and students are out of sync, they clash and confront each other, both consciously and unconsciously, in matters concerning proxemics (use of interpersonal distance), paralanguage (behaviors accompanying speech, such as voice tone and pitch and speech rate and length), and co-verbal behavior (gesture, facial expression, eye gaze). When black students are in sync with their teachers and school, and no cultural contradictions appear to exist, these children can be expected to be more Eurocentric than Afrocentric in their behavior, attitudes, language, style, and use of standard English and language. (p.3)

Due to such issues surrounding African American students in particular, and ethnically diverse students in general, advocates of CRT proposed a form of teaching that engages learners whose experiences and cultures are traditionally excluded from mainstream

settings- a "humanizing pedagogy" that respects and incorporates students' history, experiences and realities into educational practices (Bartolome, 1994, p.173).

According to Billings (1995) CRP ought to help students: 1) accomplish academic success, 2) achieve cultural competence, and 3) "develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (p.160). The forenamed researchers concluded through various observational studies that learners tend to perform best in settings that build on their cultural frames of reference, and promote their racial and ethnic identities; learning is more meaningful when it is established on 'the familiar.' The central tenets underpinning this pedagogy are:

- Assuming the success of students, holding high expectations for all of them;
- Promoting a growth mindset;
- Making the learners the owners of their own learning;
- Assisting students in developing intercultural competence;
- Promoting their cultural identities;
- Developing their critical cultural consciousness.

The culture in CRT is perceived as "ways of being, doing and sense-making" (Hanley and Noblit, 2009, p.5). Culture supplies teachers and students with the basic background knowledge needed for learning. Gay (2000) argues that it lies at the heart of "all what we do in the name of education, whether that is curriculum, instruction, administration, or performance assessment" (p.9). Culture and cultural identities are used in CRT classrooms to empower learners' resilience and reverse their under-achievements. The latter are not seen as the totality of the students' identities or

essences, but singular learning experiences. To create a CRT classroom, teachers need to recognize, respect, and integrate their students' differences, personal abilities, and cultural frames of reference into their teaching practices. Curriculum design, instructional tools, and classroom practices should be based on pre-researched knowledge about the students (Gay, 2000, Hammond, 2015).

CRP also stresses other aspects such as funding, administration, and policy-making arguing that they need to be reformed to eliminate social, political, and economic inequities and inequalities (Anyon, 1997; Gay, 2000; Nieto, 1999). This pedagogy has been used for the last three decades in different settings around the USA and other countries to teach various subjects (mathematics, physics, natural science, geography, history, psychology, etc.). It has proved to be effective in all distinct areas due to its flexibility. From our extensive readings about cultural responsiveness, we do not perceive it as a limited method or approach that provides teachers with basic sets of techniques to follow, but as a philosophy of teaching. CRT can take different forms according to the needs of the classroom. Although it was mainly developed to help students of color in the USA, the premise of the pedagogy meets our understanding of the importance of culture in EFL classrooms, where our students meet 'the other' through the various subjects taught without an adequate comprehension of the importance of culture in shaping both their identities and learning.

We agree with CRT's claim that good teaching is not the teaching that transcends place, people, time, and context. Gay (2000) emphasizes that good teaching is culturally based and determined since it is not the same for all ethnic groups, genders, ages, social groups, etc. (p.22) Teachers should be aware that students' behaviors, learning styles,

preferences, and cognition are socially and culturally bound. The sociocultural environment in which students grow is a deterministic factor in their learning and achievements, and without a clear and holistic understanding of the link between culture, identity, and learning, learners could never reach their full potential.

CRT adopts an interdisciplinary philosophy. It incorporates brain research, socio-cultural theories, social justice theories, multiculturalism, and cultural studies to reach the maximum benefit of education. It seeks to create classrooms with equality and equity, where students have equal opportunities for success according to their intellectual capabilities, personal and cultural strengths, and prior accomplishments. Cultural responsiveness calls for the celebration, validation, and affirmation of students' identities, cultural socialization, and personal experiences, to reverse achievement trends and empower students' learning (Gay, 2000; Hammond, 2015; Shade et al, 2008; and Pai and Adler, 2001).

## **2.10. Culturally Responsive Classrooms: Goals and Practices**

Extensive research on CRT over the last three decades has established several principles for the creation of culturally responsive teaching. Although CRT pioneers and promoters give teachers the freedom to choose what best suits their classrooms from a variety of tools, techniques, approaches, and tasks, they instruct a set of characteristics for the development of CRT classrooms. We have examined and analyzed the literature regarding these characteristics from Banks (2001), Banks and Banks (2019), Billings (1995, 1998, 2001, & 2010 ), Gay (2000 & 2010), Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009), Hammond (2015), Hanley and Noblit (2009), Hollie and Mora-Flores (2012), Irvin (2002), Irvin and Armento (2002), Krasnoff (2016), Ralabate and Nelson (2017), and

Shade et al. (2008), and summarized them as described below. For successful culturally responsive classrooms, teachers need to:

**1) Incorporate Culture:** In CRT culture is used to promote ethnic and cultural identities and support students' learning. It incorporates their cultural frames of reference and background knowledge into classroom instruction and practices. Culture and identity are used as *assets*, where classroom practices affirm and validate students' identities and personal socio-cultural experiences. CRT asks teachers to *explicitly* teach culture, and educate learners about racial identity and their links to learning. Prior to teaching *to and through culture*, teachers are required to reflect on their cultural lenses and biases.

A CRT teacher recognizes and understands his/her cultural frames of reference and their potential effects on instructional design and decision-making. For Spindler and Spindler (1982, as cited in Hammond, 2015, p.55), learning about one's own culture- or 'making the familiar strange'- is far more challenging than learning about a different new culture, that is 'making the strange familiar.' Hammond (2015) stresses that teachers have to map their cultural points at the three levels of culture, identifying the sources of their meaning-making and interpretation. Teachers, then, have to widen their perspectives and their 'interpretation aperture'; they should adopt an attitude of openness and tolerance towards others. In our context, teachers need to understand that despite sharing similar cultural attributes with their students, they still differ greatly, and significantly, affecting behavior, actions, attitudes, and learning.

**2) Research the Classroom and Students:** Gay (2002, p. 106) cites Howard's (1999) statement "We can't teach what we don't know" saying that it applies to knowledge both of student populations and subject matter. Culturally responsive educators base

their curriculum design, content, and material on pre-researched knowledge about the background of their students. The kind of knowledge needed surpasses the awareness or respect of other ethnic groups, or the cultural backgrounds of the students, to include the particularities and details about how these ethnic groups or students act and react based on their culture. This, Gay (2002) pinpoints, “makes schooling more interesting and stimulating for, representative of, and responsive to ethnically diverse students” (p.107). CRT requires teachers to use the first sessions to get to know their students. Teachers could use questionnaires, archival data, interviews, focus groups, etc. to collect necessary information about aspects like students’ preferences, learning styles, previous achievements, skills, communication styles, and socio-cultural backgrounds. The information is going to inform course design and instructional decisions.

**3) Build Learning Community:** CRT advises teachers to encourage collaborative learning, where students work together to reach goals and solve problems. The community of learning functions as Gay (2002, p.110) terms a “mutual aid society”, within which members are responsible for assisting each other through the task, ensuring that everyone contributes. CRT celebrates the individuality of each member of these communities; the needs of each member are not neglected, instead, they are “addressed within the context of group functioning.” The creation of such communities is necessary for the process of promoting students’ sociocultural identities, which is one of the main aims of CRT. The above-listed researchers annotate that CRT educators are aware of the possible conflicts between the members’ learning styles, preferences, attitudes, and beliefs; therefore, they spell out several guidelines to create a communal collaborative learning environment. We compile below the most important ones.

**a) Setting a Welcoming Environment:** Students should feel comfortable in the classroom (use of colors, comfortable physical arrangements, lighting, sound, etc.).

**b) Building Rapport:** Teachers, as the leaders of this community, need to *be warm, supportive, personable, patient, understanding, enthusiastic, and flexible*. They need to exhibit firm, consistent, at the same time loving control. CRT calls for balancing classroom control and management between warmth and firmness. Teachers need to show some flexibility, yet stay on task and finish their work. Building a good relationship with learners based on trust, respect, and understanding is the first step in building the community.

**c) Validation and Affirmation:** Teachers need to validate and affirm students' self-concepts. Learners need to feel that they are capable of completing tasks, accomplishing things, and reaching goals. Affirmation is the acknowledgment of students' personhood both verbally and through actions. It is about building trust, through showcasing care, *similarity of interests, concern, and competence*. Students create a stronger bond with teachers who share similar likes, dislikes, hobbies, beliefs, etc. They are more likely to connect with teachers who show concern and respect for their personal experiences. More importantly, they tend to trust the teachers who *demonstrate competence*; they put faith in teachers who seem more knowledgeable and capable of helping them when needed. Teachers must validate students' efforts, personal experiences, and previous achievements, to enhance their confidence and boost their motivation. Validation is the explicit recognition of students' personal and academic struggles, efforts, and strengths.

**d) Promote Collectivity:** Teachers in CRT stress collectivity rather than individuality. This is not to say individuality is excluded from the equation of CRT, but teaching has

been promoting unhealthy competition and individualistic success stories for a long time, ignoring the collective and social nature of human civilizations throughout history. Collective-collaborative learning does not minimize or undermine individual capabilities but amplifies them. Neuroscience proves that when the brain does not experience a sense of community, it thinks that it is in danger, which hinders learning (Gopnik et al., 2000; Hanson, 2013; and Zull, 2002). Collective work and cooperation foster the creation of healthy relationships in the classroom, which is vital for learning according to CRT.

**4) Promote Active Learning (AL):** Hanson and Moser (2003) note that active learning encompasses a set of techniques and activities that engage and involve students in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data by working in small groups to brainstorm and solve problems. CRT seeks to allow learners to make personal connections with the content; therefore, utilizes active learning activities to fully engage the learners with the material instead of passively listening to teachers' lectures. Such activities include reciprocal questioning, (students exchange questions with their peers and teacher), comprehension questions (summarize the content in your own words, recall the information using your own words, etc.), the muddiest point (students identify the most challenging confusing or difficult part of the lesson), debates, and peer tutoring. In CRT classrooms active learning (PBL) is often supported by project-based learning. The latter is a student-centered method based on problem-solving activities, where students learn through projects, and about project management. Teachers should assign projects in relation to real-world or classroom issues to empower students' skills of creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

**5) Make use of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):** For Jagers et al. (2019, p.13), SEL is the process whereby we acquire and employ the knowledge, skills, and attitudes “to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions” (We consider these skills, knowledge, and attitudes as the components necessary for intercultural communicative competence we discussed earlier). To develop SEL competencies, students should be given more opportunities to participate in the classroom, guided through modeling, instruction, and positive corrective feedback, and be accepted and appreciated in the classroom by teachers and peers. SEL includes five core competencies according to Prodigy (2022):

**a) Self- Awareness:** students need to recognize their emotions and thoughts, and understand their effect on their strengths and weaknesses. To develop this asset, teachers engage students in reflective metacognitive activities.

**b) Self-management:** students should be assisted in regulating their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, and managing their stress and anxieties. To do this, teachers can integrate writing diaries and narratives to express thoughts and emotions. Setting small achievable goals could also minimize stress.

**c) Social awareness:** Teaching should cultivate learners’ understanding of social norms, empathy, and sympathy with others. Incorporating students’ social experiences in the teaching process, and juxtaposing them with the target culture can enhance their social awareness.

**d) Relationship skills:** Students need to learn how to maintain meaningful relationships inside and outside the classroom through cooperative work.

**e) *Responsible decision-making*:** teachers ought to target students' awareness about moral and ethical issues, and aid them in making respectful choices and accepting the consequences of their decisions.

To foster these competencies, CRT endorses the explicit teaching of the various aspects mentioned, supporting it with activities like debates, interest presentations, journaling, etc. However, community building seems to play the most substantial role in shaping these competencies.

**6) Model tasks, activities, and skills:** Borrowed from the sociocultural approach to teaching, CRT necessitates scaffolding- the act of breaking the content into small manageable units, where the teacher guides and leads the students in processing new information through modeling and demonstration. The teacher demonstrates how to solve problems, do tasks, answer questions, outline answers, etc.

**7) Define Clear Objectives:** One of the pillars of CRP is defining clear, feasible goals for each course, each activity, and each task. An instructional objective is a statement that describes what the learner will be able to do after completing the instruction (Kibler et al., 1974). Objectives guide the development of assessment, instructional methods, and content materials, enabling teachers and students to work together towards a common goal. One of the main reasons why teaching fails is the lack of focused, achievable goals. While some may fall into the trap of setting unattainable or general goals, others may entirely disregard this substantial step. Deciding on the specific aims and objectives of teaching is not an easy task; therefore, teachers need to break their content into smaller parts or units, denoting the skills to be improved, the type of knowledge to be transmitted, and the number of problems to be solved for each unit.

Not only do they need objectives for each unit, but for each task, activity, project, or technique they introduce in their classrooms. The objectives could be used to crosscheck the outcome of every lesson- a form of diagnosis. They guide the teaching process and keep teachers and learners focused. These objectives have to be disseminated at the onset of each lesson to inform students about the desirable knowledge, skills, or attitudes to be gained from their learning.

**8) Build and Make Use of Brain Power:** One of the most intriguing principles of CRT is its incorporation of brain research. It requests teachers to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge about how the brain works and to consider that when designing course content, or choosing instructional tools. Understanding how information is processed and stored, how neural connections are made, what hinders the brain from effective learning, and what triggers emotions, facilitates the learning process and makes teaching more effective. Furthermore, teachers should comprehend the link between culture and the brain as explained in the first chapter and the first part of this chapter.

**9) Assume Success and Build Equity:** CRT assumes the success of every student, building equitable classrooms. Equity is another pivotal element of culturally responsive classrooms. It refers to the principle of fairness. The term is often used interchangeably with equality, yet equality can be seen as the outcome of equity (Baldanza, 2016). While equality ensures that all students get similar opportunities and chances for success, similar attention, and access to resources and materials, equity means providing every individual with what he/she needs for success. In equitable classrooms, instructors recognize that students have different levels of proficiency, abilities, skills, etc. and

accordingly provide each with the necessary tools for success. Equity education is learning environments that create fair and equal access for all students, altering practices and resources to respond to the student's individual needs. In CRP, it is defined as reducing the predictability of who succeeds and who fails. It is the elimination of the expectedness of success or failure based on any social or cultural factor, or past performances. It starts with realizing that students do not start on equal footing and might need distinct types of assistance. To reach equity, we should:

- a) Make the curriculum and content culturally sensitive and inclusive of the students' socio-cultural attributes;
- b) Use a variety of material forms, activities, and tasks to meet the distinct learning styles of students;
- c) Facilitate learning by modeling and scaffolding;
- d) Reduce prejudgments in the classroom;
- e) Support different attitudes, accept and validate all forms of appropriate interaction with the teacher and material;
- f) Use different forms of assessment to accommodate the different cognitive abilities;
- g) Within the learning community, promote independence and autonomy;
- h) Enable various forms of students' contributions to the classroom;
- i) Be flexible in terms of teaching forms, content material, deadlines, etc.
- j) Give students voice and choice. This last one is another principle in CRT.

**10) Give Students Choice:** Another standpoint of CRT is including learners in classroom decision-making. CRT researchers and educators claim that the main aim of

CRP is to give learners ownership of their learning. It is a learner-centered approach that seeks to nurture students' autonomy and independence. One of the basic ways to achieve this is by giving learners choice. Teachers should find ways to incorporate students' suggestions, preferences, and requests into classroom practices. Instructions should be flexible, so as to envelop students' voices, penchants, and affinities.

**11) Build Resilience:** Masten, Best, and Garmezy (1990, p.425) define resilience as the “capacity for or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances.” It is about the ability to face and overcome adversity, social, or academic. CRT calls for assisting the learners to build resilience, which is not an innate capability, but rather the result of a supportive environment (Benard, 2004). The ultimate goal of cultural responsiveness is to prepare students for future learning. It is to help them *‘learn how to learn’*. This skill cannot be sustained unless students' resilience is cultivated. Benard (2004) identifies four main competencies for resiliency, *social competence, problem-solving, autonomy, and sense of purpose*. The first involves the skills of communication (intercultural competence is relevant here), tolerance, empathy, and the capacity to connect and establish ties with others. The second includes skills like critical thinking, reflecting, observing, resourcefulness, planning, and mind mapping. The third denotes the students' beliefs in their capacities to succeed and their abilities to act upon those beliefs. The last one refers to having the intention to accomplish, factoring in positive attitudes towards the future. If the principles of CRP are carefully amalgamated, then the above four competencies can be easily targeted.

### **2.11. ‘The Ready for Rigor’ Framework**

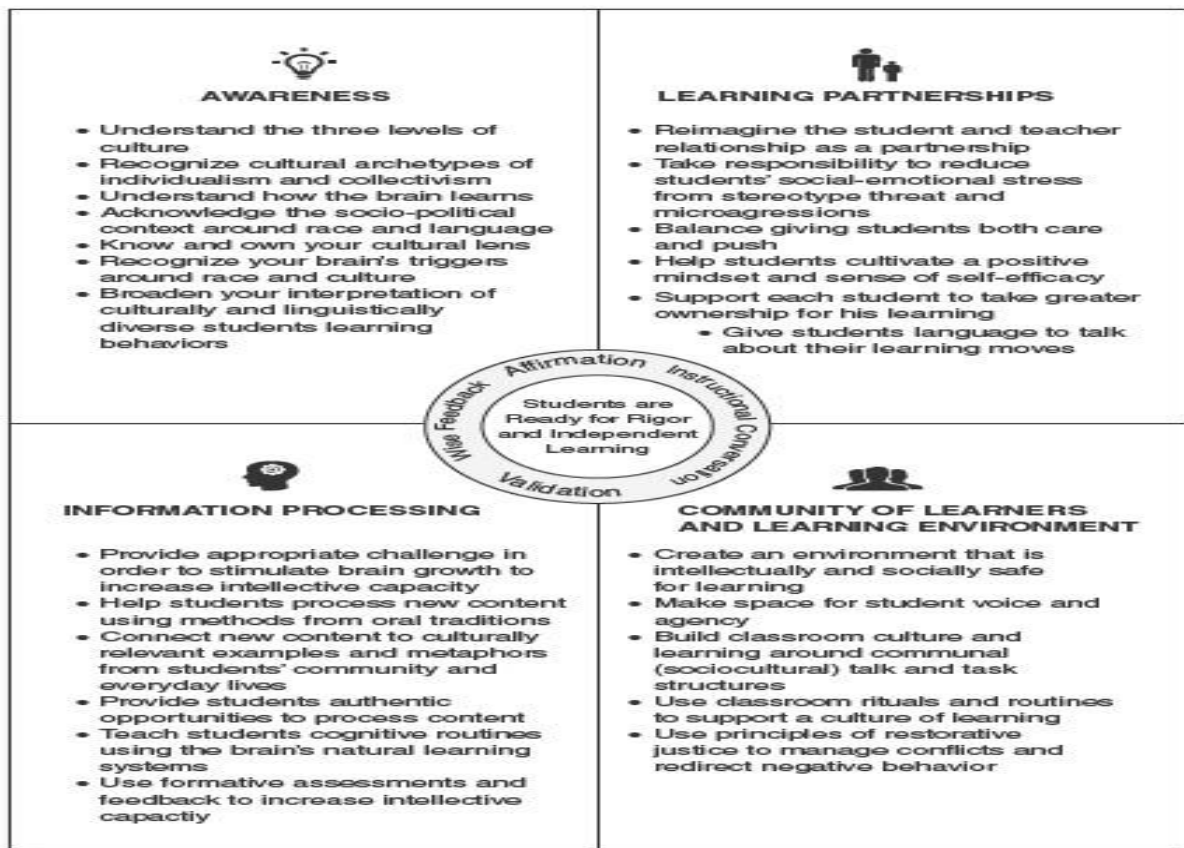
We stated in chapter one that despite being in the field of research for decades, neuro and cognitive sciences still shy away from full integration in the field of education, especially in the field of arts, literature, and humanities. When it comes to highlighting the links between culture and the brain in education, even less research is available. Hammond (2015, p.6) claims:

Too few education researchers, with the exception of Edmund Gordon, Yvette Jackson, Carol Lee, Augusta Mann, A. Wade Boykins, Rosa Hernandez-Sheets, Aida Walqui, Pedro Noguera, and the late Asa Hilliard, have explicitly focused on building underserved students’ cognitive resources as a strategy to closing the achievement gap.

Hammond’s work corresponds to our aim of integrating brain-based research and culture into the teaching-learning process and complements the interdisciplinary approach we propose to teach literature. She designed the ‘Ready for Rigor’ framework- an interdisciplinary approach to demonstrate how culturally responsive teaching works. She says it “approaches culturally responsive teaching as an adaptive endeavor rather than a technical fix” (p.8). It stresses the relationships between the teacher and student, which are “just as important as the technical strategies used to get students to perform at higher levels.” The framework connects four areas of cultural responsiveness, 1) awareness, 2) learning partnership, 3) information processing, and 4) community of learners and learning environment. CRP is perceived as a pedagogy rooted in learning theory and cognitive science. It can close the gap of achievement by building intellectual capacity. The framework is used to help teachers and educators move from theory to practice, directing the students toward independent learning.

**Figure 11**

*Ready for Rigor Framework: Hammond (2015, p.17)*



### 2.11.1. Awareness

The first area of the framework is awareness. A critical element of CRT is *cultural self-awareness* and *consciousness-raising* for teachers (Gay, 2000). Hammond (2015) notes that CRT teachers must nurture socio-cultural and political consciousness. Awareness here encompasses the teacher's recognition, understanding, and locating of his cultural frames of reference and socio-political positions, his students' cultural diversities, beliefs, and socio-cultural backgrounds, and the openness to diversity and difference. Smith (1998 as cited in Gay, 2000) suggests that careful self-analysis should be undertaken by teachers, examining their beliefs about the relationship between culture, cognition, and learning. Teachers need to determine and identify the cultural

assumptions, values, and roots that shape their expectations, communications, interpretations, and behaviors. Bowers & Flinders (1990, p. xi) note that “behavior is largely a matter of communicating in culturally prescribed ways”; self-analysis is essential for teachers to see and comprehend the effect of culture on their own and their students’ behaviors, actions, and reactions.

It helps educators minimize biases in the classroom, by engaging teachers in reflective practices, examining and analyzing perspectives and beliefs about ‘the self’ and ‘the other.’ Skillful teachers, Brookfield (2006, p.17) says, “adopt a critically reflective stance towards their practice.” To build awareness, researchers suggest various forms of self-analysis such as ‘Cultural Therapy’ (Spindler and Spindler, 1994), ‘Teacher Perspective Framework’ (Bennett, 1995b as cited in Brookfield, 2006), and Gudykunst and Kim’s (2003) process of ‘Description-Interpretation-Evaluation.’

In addition to reflective self-analysis, teachers can make use of various sources to build awareness. In his book ‘Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher’, Brookfield (2017) sets four lenses for critical reflection. The first is ‘Students’ Eyes.’ In order to make better instructional decisions, teachers need to know how students are experiencing learning, how they perceive them, and what they think about classroom practices. This might not be easy to reach given the sensitivity of the teacher-student relationship, where the latter might fear vocalizing his/her honest views about the teacher. Therefore, teachers need to implement various forms of classroom assessment to detect these views and track the students’ patterns of interaction with classroom material. In CRT this could be easily achieved through building a learning partnership.

The second lens is ‘Colleagues' Perceptions.’ Brookfield (2017) believes that a critical friend and colleague is at the heart of being a reflective critical teacher. “Talking to colleagues unravels the shroud of silence in which our work is wrapped” (p.66). Colleagues might open our eyes to alternative interpretations, evaluate our instructional tools, or propose different perspectives and problem-solving techniques. Although reflective thinking is a solo personal endeavor, collaboration could enrich the process. The third lens is ‘Personal Experience.’

Although personal experience might be considered subjective and ungeneralizable, it is the richest source of critical reflection. The teachers’ personal experiences of learning are relevant and informative to their teaching. One’s experience in school shapes his/her multiple identities, including teacher identity. Identity construction is the result of the interaction between the individual and his/ her society, where school and education are central; looking back to our experience as learners can help us explain our current teaching beliefs and assumptions.

The final lens is ‘Theory.’ Teachers should spend time reading educational research. Theory, Brookfield, says could express what teachers could not articulate. To empower critical and cultural awareness, teachers should develop the habits of reading and researching. This is twofold; on the one hand, it could aid in solving classroom problems, answer teachers’ questions about specific issues, or update their knowledge; on the other hand, it could draw their attention to tacit hidden aspects that they could not observe.

Cultural awareness is a centerpiece of CRT. It is one of the salient aspects of cultural responsiveness. Banks (2019) stresses that linguistic and cultural awareness are

vital for learners to live in a multicultural, multilingual, globally interconnected world. Hammond (2015) believes that it starts with understanding the three levels of culture, and the differences between individualistic and collectivist societies and cultures. This step is necessary since, through it, we gain insight into our students' preferred cognitive styles. Understanding the culture of a society guides us in choosing the best tools for instruction (collective vs. individual work, competitive vs. collaborative tasks, independent vs. interdependent learning, etc.). Moreover, the area includes awareness about how the brain learns and a holistic comprehension of the connection culture-cognition. This subsumes the knowledge about things like attention triggers, memory, and recall, information processing, the effect of emotions on brain functions, neural connections, and so forth. Choosing brain-friendly and compatible tools, tasks, and activities could enhance brain power and learning (Churches et al., 2017; Jenson, 1998).

### **2.11.2. Learning Partnership**

CRT seeks to establish healthy, meaningful relationships between educators and students. A culturally responsive and competent teacher builds a rapport of care, trust, and support with his students. As explained before, students need to feel that their teachers are competent, trustworthy, and caring. Teachers are required to demonstrate warmth, respect, balanced firmness, and flexibility. Brookfield (2006) describes the skillful teacher as someone who sustains a good relationship with his students. These relationships are considered “the affective glue” that ties up teaching and learning. According to neuroscience, the brain feels safest when we feel connected to others. When we find whom we trust, the brain releases the bonding hormone, which is proven to facilitate learning (Zhuang et al., 2020). Hammond (2015) indicates that this area is

made up of three components, rapport, alliance, and cognitive insight. The three form the equation: *rapport + alliance = cognitive insight*.

Rapport is built through validation and affirmation practices described earlier. Learning partnership is sustained by validation and affirmation; students' learning is empowered through constant recognition and appreciation of their personhood, efforts, and achievements. Alliance is anchored in three main aspects, 1) a shared understanding and agreement to address specific goals, 2) a shared understanding and agreement about the requisite procedures, techniques, and tools to achieve the goals (teachers and students have to be confident that these tools will be effective), and 3) a "rational bond based on mutual trust", creating "emotional connection and the sense of safety" needed for reaching the common goals (p.93).

Cognitive insight refers to the "teacher's ability to understand a student's internal learning process" (p.155). In the process of building partnerships, students become more aware of their cognitive and learning styles and moves, which is the first step towards gaining ownership of their learning. Using formative assessments and instructional conversation leads the teachers to a better understanding of students' strengths and weaknesses so that the learners can make adjustments to their learning moves, and teachers can repair their instructional tools. Formative assessment is the process of using simple tools to investigate if the content has been learned, while instructional conversation refers to classroom discourse/talk, wherein students talk about their learning process and learning strategies. Such conversations are but other forms of reflective critical practices. The partnership between teachers and students guides the

latter in their journey to becoming critical, independent, and lifelong thinkers and learners.

### **2.11.3. Information Processing**

The ultimate aim of CRT is to assist students to ‘learn how to learn’, and lead them towards independence and autonomy, feeling like the leaders of their own learning. Hammond (2015) calls for integrating brain-based research in classroom instruction to maximize and widen students’ cognitive abilities. The establishment of this area depends on the teachers’ knowledge of how the brain works and learns. Accordingly, teachers would choose and design material and tasks that are compatible with the brain’s information processing. The thread here is the connection brain-culture- learning.

### **2.11.4. Community of Learners**

CRT pushes collective-collaborative learning to set a welcoming environment for the social brain to function appropriately. In addition to the aforementioned principles of community building, another core paramount technique is the establishment of classroom ‘rituals and routines.’ Teachers set up culturally responsive routines in the classroom, which might relate to the ethnic background of students to reinforce their sense of belonging. These routines could be as simple as using music, a specific type of greeting, a morning chat, etc. We, however, call it “building the cult of learning.” We believe that any classroom requires a specific culture of learning- a set of habits, routines, and practices that the teacher and his/her students follow regularly to achieve their goals. We could think of them as classroom rules and norms, which bind the teaching and learning processes and keep both teachers and learners on track. These

rules elevate the students' sense of organization. The learning routines and rituals, when combined with clear feasible objectives, will function as brain triggers and stimulators-always directing the students' attention toward the learning goals. In Chapter 3, we specify the routines we assembled for our literature classroom.

### **2.12. 'The Need for Story': Connecting the Dots**

Humans have a basic need for story; human experience is constructed and transmitted through narratives. We have explained in chapter one how narrative precedes language development, writing and speaking, and how the brain is wired for the formation and interpretation of stories. Human civilizations, accomplishments, successes, and failures are preserved in stories, which construct history. Stories constitute a basic part of human conduct; they are the representations of human experiences located within specific socio-cultural contexts. Storytelling is a way to transfer a culture's beliefs, customs, religion, deeds, triumphs, and explanations from generation to generation, embodying both individual and collective experiences (De Fina and Schiffrin, 2007; Dyson & Genishi, 1994,).

Storylines are intertwined with the cultural beliefs, social experiences, perceptions, and views of the world of a specific speech community. They both create and are created through culture. Personal and collective stories are the means through which we construct, enact, and negotiate our identities. Dyson and Genishi (1994, p.4) say:

Stories are an important tool for proclaiming ourselves as cultural beings. In narratives, our voices echo those of others in the sociocultural world what those others think is worth commenting on, and how they judge the effectiveness of told stories. That is, we evidence cultural membership both through our ways of crafting stories and in the very content of our tales.

Through narratives in general, and storytelling in particular, individuals and communities represent themselves highlighting how they differ as individuals and communities from others. Storytelling is considered by De Fina (2003, as cited in De Fina and Schiffrin, 2007, p.5) as “the locus of expression, construction, and enactment of identity.” Individuals use stories to identify ‘the self’ and understand ‘the other.’ We use personal stories to develop unique, distinct personal identities, as well as, ‘collective identities.’ Being a universal asset of humankind, storytelling is the basic form of intercultural communication; it makes one of the most adequate vehicles of culture, ideology, and power.

Individuals in any community are engaged in a constant process of identification, which refers to the systematic establishment of similarities and differences between individuals, collectivities, and between individuals and collectivities (Jenkins, 2008). This process is vital for the socialization and preservation of distinct societies’ heritage and civilization. Identity, here, marks how “individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their relations with other individuals and collectivities” (Jenkins 1996, p.4). Hall (1996) stresses that identification, however, is more about exclusion and differences, than about similarities and inclusions. Identities are formed always through differences between ‘the self’ and ‘the other’, where the narrative plays a key role.

The discussion above makes literature classes an idyllic environment for identity construction, negotiation, and development. In literature, the art of storytelling merges with culture, emotions, and cognition to create an ideal setting for intercultural communication, a type of interaction necessary for the process of identification.

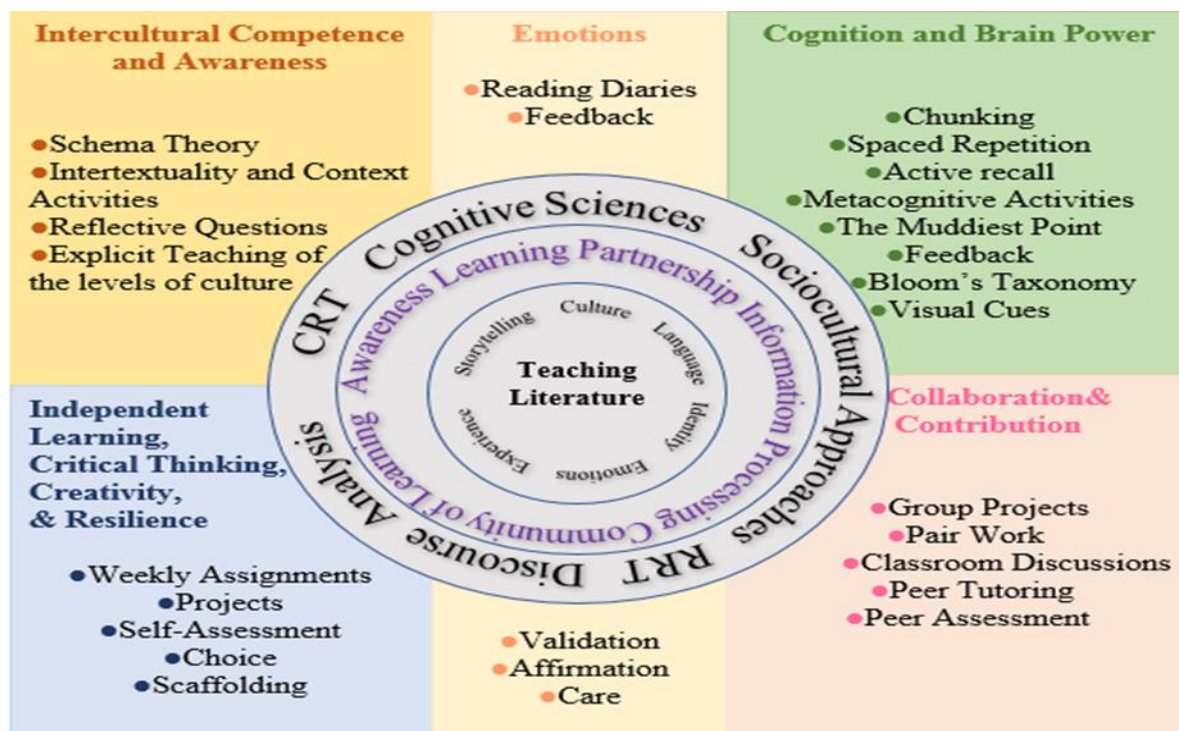
Through teaching literature, we could forge and frame the contact between ‘the self’ and ‘the other’, empowering students’ social and intercultural competence, awareness, and tolerance.

Choosing literature in our research stems from our belief in the power of storytelling in the formation of identity, which influences learning and cognition. Our research proposes an interdisciplinary approach to teaching literature, with the aim of enhancing students’ cultural awareness, promoting their cultural identities, and empowering their cognition. In EFL classrooms, where students might struggle to digest and apprehend a load of linguistic and cultural input, literature class enables the students to meet, examine, compare to, understand, and appreciate ‘the other’ and their culture, which is crucial both for language learning (which is the learning of how other cultures think, speak, and act), and identity formation.

Literature classes seem like favorable settings for CRT implementation. Figure 12 presents the interdisciplinary approach we designed for our class. Adopting the Ready for Rigor framework, we incorporated techniques and activities from cognitive sciences, sociocultural approaches, discourse analysis, RRT, and CRT to account for the complexity of teaching literature, where language, culture, identity, emotions, and experience converge. The activities and lesson plans are described in detail in Chapter 3.

**Figure 12**

*The Interdisciplinary Approach to Teaching Literature*



Own Work.

### Conclusion

The chapter critically examined research on culture from anthropological, sociological, and linguistic perspectives. It provided various views on the definitions, levels, features, and classifications of culture, highlighting its link to language, cognition, identity, and communication which are central assets in EFL literature classes. It introduced CRT, an approach that teaches to and through culture, explaining its premise and objectives, and emphasizing the principles we adopt in our study. The chapter ends with a demonstration of how we incorporate the reviewed research into our teaching.

# Chapter 3

## Methodology

## Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the description of the research methodology chosen to reach the research aim, test the hypotheses, and answer the research questions. It outlines the research philosophy, strategy, tools, and data analysis procedures, describes the treatment, and finally pinpoints the limitations of the methodology and the techniques used by the researcher to minimize them.

### 3.1. Research Design

The research design is perceived as the road map for carrying out the research. It includes identifying a specific, precise problem and then building an action plan to solve it. It starts with establishing feasible scientific objectives, and then determining the approaches and techniques for data collection, selecting the key components of the data, implementing the approaches and experimental setups for data analysis, and finally reporting the findings (Bairagi and Munot, 2019). Before explaining the research design, it is essential to define our variables and remind the reader of the hypotheses and research questions of this study.

Research variables are the constructs or particular properties in which the researcher is interested (Cohen et al, 2007). The independent variable is one that causes a certain outcome, a sort of stimulus to a certain response, while the dependent one is the outcome variable caused by the independent variable (the effect or response). Phakiti (2014) says that independent variables exist freely, and are “hypothesized to have an effect on other variables that are described as *dependent variables*” (p.28). The current research project aims to test the effectiveness of using an interdisciplinary approach (independent variable) in teaching literature in EFL classrooms (dependent variable). It

is based on the null hypothesis (H0) that the approach does not have an effect on teaching literature and students' performances, and an alternative hypothesis (H1) that using this approach improves the teaching of literature and; therefore, enhances students' performance in tests. The research is mainly concerned with highlighting a causal relationship between the two variables. Because teaching is a complex, multilayered phenomenon, we needed to test the effect of using the approach on various aspects (tests, students' comprehension, students' interaction, etc.) which dictated the use of a mixed method. The latter is a research framework where the researcher uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods to collect and analyze data. The following part details all the aspects of the research design.

### **3.1.1. Research Paradigm and Philosophy**

According to Cohen et al. (2007), the scientific research paradigm refers to a wide structure encompassing perception, beliefs, and awareness of different theories and practices used to carry out scientific research. Guba and Lincoln (2005) define a research paradigm as a set of related beliefs/assumptions that underlie an approach to research and its relationship to the world. The research paradigm is the philosophical framework that our research is based on. It indicates the specific pattern of understanding according to which the theories and practices of this research project operate.

Our experience in the EFL classrooms and action research informed our decision to base our project on a merged paradigm between positivism and constructivism to account for the complexity of EFL literature classes. Positivism relies on an objective view of reality. It tends to investigate the existence of a relationship between two

variables based on a pre-established hypothesis, using quantitative statistical data analysis. It is associated with surveys and experimental and quasi-experimental research. These forms of research assume that a causal relationship between two variables can exist and that such a relationship can be investigated objectively through independent measures (Žukauskas et al., 2018, Phakiti, 2014). We used this framework to investigate the causal relationship between the approach we developed and teaching literature, using a one-group pretest-posttest design, where the students were tested before and after using the approach. The data is statistically presented, described, and interpreted using SPSS.

In constructivism, utilizing qualitative methods, the researcher seeks to understand and interpret the meaning attached to a specific action (looking for the why). Phakiti (2014, pp. 43,44) notes that constructivism takes “the *relativist stance* that realities are multiple and exist in people’s minds.” These realities are constructed by individual observers, hence, the paradigm takes “the *subjectivist position* that attempts to know things or find a reality are inherently and unavoidably subjective.” Constructivism adopts non-experimental research procedures that do not rely on the manipulation of variables. It is often associated with prolonged fieldwork techniques such as participant observation and interviews.

We relied on this paradigm to present, describe, and interpret the data gathered from the teachers’ interviews and our classroom observation. We used it to explain the various aspects related to the process of teaching literature through the interdisciplinary approach which cannot be described statistically, such as students’ engagement, reader responses, participation, interaction with material, etc. By merging the two

philosophies, we could draw links between the results gained from the qualitative and quantitative data (tests, interviews, observation, teaching diary, and students' questionnaires).

### **3.1.2. Research Type**

This research is deductive in nature; deductive research is scientific data-driven research. It starts from an established hypothesis with the aim of testing a theory. Anderson et al. (2020) note that deductive approaches involve “the formulation of propositions to be tested, which are derived from theory” (p 190). The data gathered are used to test the evidence against these propositions (hypotheses). In this approach, the researcher can establish the strength and significance of the relationship between the variables. It allows the researcher to identify the adequacy and weaknesses of the theory proposed, and even suggest modifications for future use. In our case, the deductive approach permitted us to highlight the causal relationship between the research variables; at the same time, it enabled the piloting and trial of various teaching strategies and techniques, where we documented the degree of effectiveness of each.

Based on the merged research paradigm, and the deductive approach, our study utilizes a mixed method. The latter “involves trying to forge together two very different sets of assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the social world ...it is often used to describe research that makes use of both data types (quantitative and qualitative) in a way that enables the insights to be mutually illuminating” (Anderson et al., 2020, p 182). This research design has a major advantage for our research, which is triangulation.

**Triangulation** is the process of using data from different sources to cross-check the findings, to add credibility to the main conclusions of the research (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019). Quantitative data helped us demonstrate the causal relationship between the variables, whereas the qualitative ones facilitated our comprehension of the reasons behind such causal associations. Supplementing the test results with data collected from classroom observation, the teacher's reflexive journal, the interviews, and the students' metacognitive questionnaire provided us with further insights about the relationship between our two variables and offered us answers to why certain things happened in certain ways during the treatment.

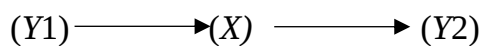
### **3.1.3. Research Strategy**

Prior to choosing our research methodology, we needed to check whether our choice conforms to the research paradigm and philosophy upon which our investigation is based. Experimental methods seemed the most appropriate strategies for our research project. "Experimental research is traditionally based on the active theory of causation, which attempts to identify those variables capable of human control and to manipulate them in order to achieve changes" (Phakiti 2014, p.22). Through experimental research, we can test whether our hypothesis is supported by empirical data in a strictly controlled environment. These methods according to researchers like Reichardt (2019), Phakiti (2014), and Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), are among the most suitable methods and widely used in educational settings, specifically language learning contexts. All experimental designs follow the steps below:

1. Problem formulation;
2. Hypothesis formulation;

3. Preparing the experimental design by identifying: a) the variables, b) the type of relationship investigated, c) the research environment or context, d) the material used in the treatment, and e) data collection and analysis tools;
4. Conducting the experiment;
5. Analysis of the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable post-treatment;
6. Validation of the findings with statistical and scientific description.

This research opted for a one-group-pretest-posttest design instead of a true experimental method. The one-group-pretest-posttest method is either classified as quasi-experimental or pre-experimental. It involves three steps: (1) administering a pretest (Y1) measuring the dependent variable; (2) applying the experimental treatment (X) to the subjects using the independent variable; and (3) administering a posttest (Y2) measuring the dependent variable again. In this design, only one group of participants is exposed to a treatment (no control group). The value of the dependent variable is calculated prior to and post the treatment; participants are tested before and after the intervention, where the effect of the treatment is estimated as the difference between the pretest and post-test observations (differences attributed to the application of the experimental treatment are evaluated by comparing the tests' scores).



This design was adopted because we could not achieve complete true experiments mainly due to ethical considerations. A true experimental research design randomly assigns participants into control and experimental groups. Ary et al. (2010) stress that in a typical school situation, researchers cannot disrupt schedules nor

reorganize classes to accommodate a research study that obligates using groups already organized into classes or other preexisting intact groups. Randomization of the participants in educational settings, particularly in classrooms, is not easily achievable which is why most educational research is quasi-experimental.

In fact, the researcher was assigned all Third-year students in the department, who were arranged and divided into two groups according to their cards and subscription serial numbers. Using randomization and a control group indicates that only the experimental group receives a treatment assumed to have a positive effect on their learning and performance in tests. As the teacher responsible for all the students in the third year, we could not use an approach we believed could improve the participants' learning with one group only. It was neither ethical nor practical. Taber (2019) on ethical considerations of true experiments says:

teachers and educational researchers should in particular seek to avoid doing anything that is likely to harm those they are working with ... In most educational research experiments, potential harm is likely to be limited to subjecting students (and teachers) to conditions where teaching may be less effective, and perhaps demotivating. This may happen in experimental treatments with genuine innovations (given the nature of research). It can also potentially occur in control conditions if students are subjected to teaching inputs of low effectiveness when better alternatives were available. This may be judged only a modest level of harm, but – given that the whole purpose of experiments to test teaching innovations is to facilitate improvements in teaching effectiveness – this possibility should be taken seriously. (p 26)

Moreover, this design is similar to action research where the teacher-researcher seeks to find innovative teaching techniques to empower his/her students' learning, enhance their performances, and address students' problems by implementing various methods and techniques. Ever since we completed our "Classroom Research" class in our Ma program, we have always adopted the philosophy behind action research, which enables teachers to investigate and solve problems in their classrooms, always keeping

them updated and posted about the new approaches, theories, and techniques in the field of education. The one-group-pretest-posttest design is the closest plan to action research, which is always feasible and accessible to teachers.

#### **3.1.4. Time Horizon**

The research follows a longitudinal time horizon, where data is collected at different points in time throughout the experiment. According to Menard (1991), in longitudinal research data are collected for two or more distinct periods (implying the notion of repeated measurements); the subjects or cases analyzed are the same, or at least comparable, from one period to the next. The analysis involves some comparison of data between or among periods. Although longitudinal studies are observational in nature, “experimental research involving a pre-and post-test can be classified as a longitudinal study because it contains temporal measuring points (pre- and post-)” Jennings (2005).

Research of this type needs a significant period of time for the treatment to confirm the causal relationship between our two variables. Marek (2008) citing Stockwell and Hubbard (2014) and Clark and Surge (1991) stresses that short experimental interventions do not account for the novelty effect, in which the newness of being research participants or of using a certain new approach, technique, or procedure leads to temporary increases in performance. It is determined that it requires eight weeks for the novelty factor to drop to a minimal level (20% of a Standard Deviation for more than eight weeks, which is  $< 1\%$  of the variance). Therefore, only interventions that last eight weeks or more can be considered effective and may be

generalizable (Chwo, Marek, and Wu, 2016). Accordingly, our treatment lasted fourteen successive weeks; a detailed description is provided in the upcoming sections.

### **3.1.5. Sampling Strategy**

The participants of the study are thirty third-year students in the English division in the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Zian Achor, Djelfa. The population of the participants is a total of 92 students divided by the administration into two groups of 46 members. As a consequence of the safety measures taken by the Ministry of Higher Education during the pandemic (2019-2021), followed by the minister's new regulations on students' attendance, our department has been witnessing a crisis in attendance. The department recorded a sustained increase in unauthorized absences; a huge number of students have been chronically absent simply because our system allows this now. Unfortunately, only 48 students of the population attended the classes, from which our sample was drawn. The research is based on a non-probability convenience sampling technique, where the sample includes the participants who are the most accessible to the researcher. In our case, the sample includes those students who have been present in all sessions, completed all the projects, responded to all the questionnaires, and read all four books. Out of the whole population, only 30 students met all the conditions. It is important to note, again, that all the population received the same treatment.

The sample consists of 30 female students, aged between 18 and 27. All the students shared the same academic experience of learning literature in their previous academic years. After examining their previous test scores in Literature, we have noticed that there is a variety of scores (check Chapter 4). The tests in the first and

second years did not take the form of essay questions, instead, students had to answer direct questions or write short paragraphs about specific aspects.

Cohen et al. (2007) emphasize that to give greater reliability and enable more sophisticated statistics to be used, the larger the sample, the better. The representativeness of the sample is measured against the number of participants in the entire population. They add that the number 30 of participants is held as the minimum of cases for researchers that enables the use of statistical tests, which is vital in experimental and quantitative methods. Convenience sampling “does not represent a group apart from itself” (p 114), which means that generalization to the whole population is a bit difficult; however, considering the specific circumstances of attendance mentioned above, the sample remains substantial.

### **3.2. Data Collection Methods**

In experimental educational research, using proper data collection tools is the key to a successful investigation of the causal relationship between the dependent and independent variables. EFL classrooms are complex, let alone EFL literature classes where culture, language, identity, and cognition converge. For an experiment in such an educational setting to work, we needed to rely on both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools to cover the various aspects of the teaching-learning process. Our research plan was divided into two main stages or parts.

In the first phase, we started by collecting information about our participants’ previous performances in literature tests in their first and second years (archival data ), the approaches used by their previous teachers in teaching literature (teacher’s

interview), and finally personal information about the students' past experiences with reading and literature (Know You Questionnaire).

The Second phase consisted of conducting the experiment, that is the pretest, the treatment, and the posttest. During the treatment, we relied mainly on an observation checklist and a reflexive journal to collect data about students' interaction, engagement, and understanding of the material. Additionally, we used a questionnaire that took the form of metacognition-reflective activities to check the participants' reactions to the material used and document their attitudes and challenges. It was necessary for us to examine these aspects by the end of the intervention to measure the effect of the techniques used. Through the questionnaire, we gathered some final thoughts regarding the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary approach in enhancing the cultural and cognitive role of literature. The following part provides a detailed description of all the tools used.

### **3.2.1. Data Collection Tools for the First (pre-experimental) Phase**

This set of tools includes a students' questionnaire and a structured teachers' interview, supplemented by archival data on students' test scores in literature in the first and second years.

#### ***3.2.1.1. The First Students' Questionnaire***

A questionnaire is a research tool featuring a series of questions used to collect useful information from given respondents. It can be used to collect both qualitative and quantitative types of data and can feature various forms of questions such as multiple-choice questions, yes/no questions, open-ended questions, Likert scale questions, ranking questions, etc. When creating all the questionnaires in this research, we ensured

that the questions asked, their order and their forms align with and serve the research objectives.

The pre-experiment questionnaire is considered the first CRT tool used in this experiment. CRT researchers and educators suggest that curriculum designs and course outlines should be based on previous pre-collected information about our students. We needed to administer this questionnaire before commencing the experiment to have time to analyze it and use the information elicited in the course and handout design. The questionnaire is entitled “**Know You**”, where the subjects answered thirty short questions linked to their past experiences with distinctive forms, genres, and types of literary works. The purpose of the first ten questions was to help us collect the titles and names of the participants’ favorite movies, books, animations, manga, genres, and characters to use as examples and illustrations in our handouts. The following five questions inquired about their dislikes concerning characters, movies, books, genre, etc. which we needed when making the literary choices for our class.

Participants then had to answer ten “this or that” questions, the answers to which aided the choice of activities and projects during the treatments, and finally participants answered five open-ended questions in relation to their previous experience in literature classes. Our final objective was to know whether they had any challenges in literature, and understood the value of literature classes. The questionnaire was created via google forms and shared via email with the participants who had 24 hours to answer it. Giving them a significant time to answer the questionnaire is due to the nature and number of questions asked. These types of questions are reflective; they require the subjects to

think about their past experiences. We wanted the answers to be well thought-out (check Appendix 1).

### ***3.2.1.2. The Teachers' Interview***

The interview is a qualitative data collection instrument; it is a flexible tool that enables multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken, and heard. Cannell and Kahn (1968 as cited in Cohen et al., 2007, p 351) define it as “a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information.” The questions are focused by the interviewer on content “specified by research objective of systematic description, prediction, or explanation.” We used a standardized open-ended interview, where the wording and sequence of questions were pre-determined in advance. Both interviewees were asked the same questions, in the same order. The interviewees were the two teachers of literature who taught the participants in their first and second years.

The purpose of using the interview is to gather the necessary data concerning the approaches, course outlines, and teaching objectives of the teachers. This was valuable since it helped us decide on the scope and objectives of our course design. The following questions were asked:

1. Do you follow a specific pre-determined approach in your class?
2. If yes, what is the approach? Why did you choose this particular one?
3. If not, what are the techniques you use in your teaching?
4. Do you provide the students with a defined course outline?
5. Do you provide the students with lesson handouts? Why?
6. How many novels or short stories have your students read? Which ones?

7. What was the main focus of your class (literary theory and criticism, literary analysis, literary movements, etc.)?
8. Describe your test forms.

Additionally, the teachers were asked to provide us with their course outlines. The data gathered from the students' questionnaire and teachers' interviews were supplemented by the archival data of the students' scores in literature in the previous academic years, which all guided our treatment and test development.

### **3.2.2. Data Collection Tools for the Second Phase**

This set of tools includes the pretest, the posttest, classroom observation, and the students' metacognitive questionnaire.

#### **3.2.2.1. *The Pretest***

The pretest observation “provides an empirical counterfactual comparison for estimating the treatment effect” (Reichardt, 2019, p.101). While the posttest assesses the effect of the treatment, the pretest is used to indicate what would have happened if the treatment had not been implemented. Based on the information gathered in the theoretical part of the research about testing literature, the test was designed to reflect the most common and standardized types of literature tests (see Chapter 01). Our research calls for a systematic pre-establishment of a set of small objectives for every single classroom practice; therefore, we started by identifying the specific areas we want to assess. These areas would later constitute the main focus of our intervention.

Before experimenting, it was necessary to investigate our classroom. We found out that during the previous academic year, the teacher of literature introduced the students to some literary movements with a focus on post-colonialism and realism. The

students were familiar with theme analysis and plot elements, but not with concepts like character analysis, characterization, plot types, point of view, symbols, motifs, tone, mood, style, etc. We also observed that they do not make a difference between question keywords like analyze, discuss, explain, and identify. Moreover, they do not possess sufficient knowledge about the various types of textual evidence and illustration forms. Therefore, our pre-test focused mainly on theme analysis.

Still, it was not possible to start the experiment. We devoted the first three weeks to reading and analyzing “The Little Prince” by Saint-Exupéry following a so-called ‘traditional method’. What we call ‘the traditional method’ refers to the approach that has been observed in three different classes of literature in the current department between 2019 and 2022. Literature lessons took the form of ‘lectures,’ where the teacher imparts a load of information from literary criticism about a specific book without any pre-given outline to follow. Students are asked to read a specific book before engaging in a literary analysis chapter by chapter with their teacher, where they discover concepts like themes, plot, and symbols, on the way. As a teacher-centered approach, in the lecture mode, the teacher does not provide a clear course outline, theoretical background about literary theory (criticism and analysis), or any instructional guidance on how to write a literary analysis essay.

The pretest took the form of essay questions. Participants had to choose one of three questions to answer; all questions focused on theme analysis but used different forms and different question keywords. The test assesses four main areas: language (grammar and punctuation); unity (cohesion and coherence), analysis (literary discussion, explanation, interpretation), and textual evidence (illustration). The test is

used to 1) determine the level of language proficiency, 2) assess their literary interpretive, and analytical skills, 3) measure their ability to argue and support their claims with the various forms of literary illustrations and textual evidence, 4) check their familiarity with and mastery of literary criticism concepts, and 5) assess their essay writing skills, which are vital for a good performance in literature tests (Appendix 2). The assessment criteria are described in the table below (the criteria are further explained in the description of the treatment).

**Table 03**

*Assessment Criteria*

| Aspect assessed         | Weightage of Marks |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Thesis Statement        | 2 points           |
| Analysis                | 6 points           |
| Textual Evidence        | 5 points           |
| Grammar and Punctuation | 5 points           |
| Coherence               | 2 points           |

**3.2.2.2. The Post-test**

Reichardt (2019) explains that for the effect estimate of the treatment to make sense, researchers need to use parallel forms of tests. When designing the posttest, we made sure that both tests adhere to the following guidelines provided by scientific researchers

- The posttest must be equivalent to the pretest in the sense that the difficulty, length, content coverage, scoring criteria, and procedures are consistent between the two tests;
- Tests may assess the same content, yet they need different wordings or forms to reduce the testing effect as a confounding variable;
- Pretreatment and posttreatment observations need not be operationally identical.

The posttest took the form of essay questions as well; students had to choose one of three questions to develop. The test contained a question about point of view, one about characterization techniques, and one about the link between characterization and themes. The questions were related to the novel “Pride and Prejudice” by Jane Austen. We used different books for both tests simply because this research argues that the approach suggested helps us teach our students the necessary skills to read and analyze any book. The treatment did not focus on the analysis of a single book, movement, or aspect of literary criticism. Rather, it worked on the development of the understanding and mastery of the various elements of literary analysis that enable our students to read, interpret, analyze, and write about literary works, using their own cultural resources and frames of reference (Appendix 3).

The posttest assessed the impact of the approach adopted on the same areas specified before (language, analysis and discussion, illustration, interpretation, essay writing skills, etc.). This research started from the assumption that by using it, we could teach literature to fulfill its potential values and roles discussed in Chapter 1 which relate to these areas of learning. The same scoring criteria were used for both tests.

### **3.2.2.3. *Classroom Observation***

Observation is a data collection tool that is used in both qualitative and quantitative research. It is a systematic recording of behavior in a certain context. Ary et al. (2010) note that it is one of the most appropriate and desirable measurement methods in classroom and educational research. Cohen et al. (2007) add that it offers researchers the opportunity to gather ‘live’ data from “naturally occurring social situations.” They say that there is a certain freshness to the data gathered from

observations that is missing from interviews and questionnaires since the observed behavior, incidents, and activities are less predictable.

The researcher adopted a ‘participant observation’ (the researcher is a participant in the situation). In this type of observation, the researcher is part of the social life of participants in a particular environment. He/she documents and records what is happening for research purposes. This is a convenient type to use in educational experimental and quasi-experimental designs because the teacher is the researcher assessing the effect of a certain treatment on the subjects. This type is the most appropriate one for the study since, as Cohen et al. (2007, p.404) explain, the researcher stays with the participants for a significant period of time recording what is happening, while taking a role in that situation.” This allowed us to:

1. Reduce reactivity effects (the effects of the researcher on the researched, changing the behavior of the latter);
2. See how events evolve over time and catch the dynamics of situations, the people, personalities, contexts, resources, roles, etc.
3. Examine the salient features of the situation that emerge and present themselves to the teacher/researcher/ participant;
4. Form a holistic view of the interrelationships of factors of the situation;
5. Generate “thick descriptions” of social interactions and behaviors of individuals.

(Ary et al, 2010, Cohen et al, 2007, Anderson et al 2020)

Observations include both oral and visual data. Different researchers identify distinctive sets of aspects to observe. On simple view is that of Moyles (2002) who suggests that we record a) the physical and contextual setting of the observation, b) the

participants (e.g. number, who they are, who comes and goes, what they do and what are their roles), c) the time of day of the observation, d) the layout of the setting (e.g. seating arrangements, arrangement of desks), e) the chronology of the events observed, and f) any critical incidents that happened. In classroom research, we observe aspects like the process of activities used, participation, impressions, conversations, interactions, behaviors, etc.

There are several instruments for participant observation; we used a **checklist** (Figure) and a **reflexive journal**. Checklists are the simplest devices for classroom observations. The checklist was divided into four main parts, students' interaction with the material taught (preparation of the handout, participation, asking questions, commenting, etc.), students' comprehension of the material (answering questions, predicting, making inferences, paraphrasing, explaining, etc.), community building/cooperative learning (cooperation, support, contribution to the group discussion, appropriate turn taking, etc.), cultural awareness (eliciting cultural elements, understanding cultural elements, tolerating cultural elements, etc.). These four areas correspond to the four constructs of "The Ready for Rigor Framework" used to design the lesson plans. The teacher filled out the checklist at the end of each session documenting the presence and absence of verbal and non-verbal behaviors and actions detailed in the checklist.

The observation was used to give a holistic view of these areas in the classroom, while other instruments like the tests and the metacognitive questionnaire; and some activities like the reading diaries, quizzes, and assignments were used to document individual performances and learning skills of students.

In addition, the researcher used a reflexive journal to compensate for any deficiency in the observation checklist and analyze the written assignments, the students' reading diaries, and projects. Reflexive journals are qualitative data-eliciting tools. Reflexivity, Annink (2016) says, "emphasizes an awareness of the researcher's presence in the research process, with the aim of improving the quality of the research." (p.3) Reflexive journals or diaries contain critical analysis of the context or situation studied; they are used to record the "researchers' knowledge, skills, expertise, values, assumptions, and emotions evoked by the research... The research journal is a tool for observing, questioning, critiquing, synthesizing, and acting" (p.3). The reflexive journal kept us conscious of the details of our teaching throughout the intervention which lasted 14 weeks. We used it to report the unpredictable, surprising actions, reactions, and behaviors that occurred during the sessions which are not accounted for in the checklist, and to report our reactions, thoughts, and feelings about how things went in each session. It also documented the evaluation of the video projects and assignments, highlighting the difficulties we faced during the sessions. This information might be valuable for future teachers who want to implement CRT in their classrooms.

#### ***3.2.2.4. The Metacognitive Questionnaire***

By the end of the intervention (the 13<sup>th</sup> session), the researcher administered a questionnaire of two parts (Appendix 5). The participants were handed the questionnaire during one of the practice sessions (see the description of the treatment) and were given around 20 minutes to complete it. The first part was a four-point Likert scale questionnaire. A Likert scale is a rating scale used to measure opinions, attitudes, and/or behaviors. This type of questionnaire provides four to seven possible answers to a

statement or question that allows respondents to indicate their positive-to-negative strength of agreement or strength of feeling regarding the question or statement (Mcleod, 2023). Researchers use it when seeking a greater degree of nuance than that elicited from “yes/no” questions.

We used the scale to 1) explore the subjects’ strengths and weaknesses, 2) document their general attitude towards the material used up to that point in time, and 3) engage the participants in a metacognitive practice. The latter gave them the opportunity to reflect on their learning and identify the areas they were already comfortable with, from those which needed more time and effort to be mastered. This questionnaire was both a data collection tool used to cross-check the results of the observation and tests and a cognitive instructional tool, as well.

The first part of the questionnaire contained 40 areas of learning, and the participants had to indicate the degree of difficulty they experienced in each. These areas relate to the materials, activities, and skills involved in the teaching-learning process of literature. The subjects were asked to use the 4 points scale as follows:

1= no difficulty

2=slight difficulty

3=moderate difficulty

4=great difficulty

The second part of the questionnaire was a seventeen-item Likert Scale of five points, eight yes/no questions, and six multiple-choice questions. The Likert scale question required the participants to indicate the degree to which they agree with 17

statements concerning the relations between literature, culture, identity, and language.

The 5 points scale was as follows:

1= Totally disagree

2=disagree

3=Neutral

4=Agree

5=Totally agree

The set of yes/no questions explored the participants' beliefs about literature, culture, and learning, while the MCQ part asked questions about the four books we read “The Little Prince”, “Peter Pan”, “The Giver”, and “Pride and Prejudice.” (see appendix) This part of the questionnaire aimed to check whether CRT helped enhance the link between students’ cultural frames of reference, literature, the target culture, and language learning. It was to examine the extent to which the tools, activities, and handouts used were effective in teaching literature, and underline and reinforce the value of culture (you will find more details in the analysis of the questionnaire).

### **3.3. Data Analysis Procedures**

Data analysis methods vary according to the type of data collected and the instruments used for the collection. Our research makes use of both qualitative and quantitative data and tools; therefore, we used both descriptive statistics and interpretive methods of analysis. Analyzing data involves classification, categorization, order, description, and interpretation. Assimilating Miles and Hubberman (1994), Cohen et al (2007), and Phakiti (2014) suggest tactics for generating and analyzing data we followed the steps below:

- Counting frequencies of occurrence of ideas, themes, responses, behaviors, and actions.
- Noting patterns that result from repetition of the same responses, behaviors, and themes.
- Clustering, categorizing, and classifying the data.
- Connecting data with theory, hypothesis, and research questions
- Constantly comparing data from the same participant, across participants, and across tools (crosschecking the data from the various instruments)
- Identifying the relations between the variables and noting any intervening variable.
- Noting causality between the variables and making inferences based on the theoretical background, observation, and experience.
- Providing statistical descriptions of the relationship between the variables
- Providing both statistical and interpretive answers to the questions ‘what’ and ‘why’ (what is the effect of the treatment? Why do certain things happen in certain ways during the treatment?)

### **3.3.1 Data Organization and Representation**

Another important aspect of the analysis is the way we represent analysis. The analysis is organized by tools following the order of implementation as described in this chapter. The data elicited from each tool were classified differently:

- 1) Pre-and posttests:** Data were organized by individuals, where scores of each individual were displayed before and after the treatment. The reader can see the change in the performance of each participant. However, the mean and standard

deviation of the scores of the whole group were measured to check the general effect of the treatment on the whole sample. We provide the interpretation of both individual and group scores.

- 2) **The Questionnaires:** Data from the metacognitive questionnaire and the “Know You’ questionnaire were organized by group, which enables themes, patterns, and similar answers to be seen. In addition, all data related to a particular area were presented together to allow the reader to check each area separately.
- 3) **The Interview:** Data were organized by theme; the detected patterns and themes from the responses of each teacher were reported and interpreted.
- 4) **The Observation:** Data were represented by session. Data from each of the four areas in the observation checklist were noted in each session, followed by comments and interpretation, where we linked the observed behavior to the treatment and data from other tools. Data from the reflexive journal were classified by themes.

Qualitative data from the observation and interview and data from the ‘Know You’ questionnaire were presented in text (**transcription**), while quantitative data from the metacognitive questionnaires were **tabulated** and **graphed**. The order of data analysis was **by instrument**; data from each research instrument was analyzed separately, and then linked to the previous ones. Finally, a synthesis was made to compare and cross-check data elicited from various tools. This deductive synthesis was organized **by research questions**. Cohen et al. (2007) emphasize that the latter is a useful way of organizing data “as it draws together all the relevant data for the exact issue of concern to the researcher;” it enhances the coherence of the work returning the

reader to the purpose of the research, and “closing the loop on the research questions.” (p.468)

### **3.3.2. Approaches to Data Analysis**

Given the nature of the research and the paradigm adopted, we relied on qualitative and quantitative approaches for data description and interpretation.

#### ***3.3.2.1. Approaches for Qualitative Data Analysis***

Qualitative data analysis is deemed interpretive. Through it, we seek to comprehend the phenomenon under study, synthesize information, explain relationships, theorize about how and why these relationships appear as they do, and finally, reconnect the new knowledge with what is already known (Ary et al, 20). To analyze the qualitative data from the observation checklist, we used deductive coding, where we started from a pre-established coding scheme (defined four areas, under each area specified sets of behaviors, actions, and factors to be observed). We used **typological structural analysis**, which is a classificatory process where we put data into groups, subsets, or categories on the basis of the predetermined criterion (Cohen et al. 2007). We followed the criterion of the observation checklist, and structured narratives about its content providing plausible explanations for the phenomena observed, and linking them to the results of the tests and questionnaires. To analyze the data from the reflexive journal, we used inductive coding, a ground-up approach where we derived our codes from the data sets, allowing the narrative to emerge from the data itself.

For the interview, we used a thematic content analysis, which enabled us to 1) find common and contrasting patterns across the data set, and 2) elicit the information

necessary to develop a view on the past academic experiences of the learners in their literature classes. We transcribed the data elicited from both teachers immediately after collection, and then we used analytical induction and constant comparison for interpretation. Induction, here, is the process whereby we make generalizations based on the connections and common elements between the various aspects investigated (responses to questions, presence and absence of behaviors, interactions, etc.).

It is worth noting that for the detailed analysis of the assessment criteria of the pre and post-test we used descriptive and diagnostic analysis. Descriptive analytics looks at data statistically to tell what happened in the past, whereas diagnostic analytics takes descriptive data a step further and explains why something happened in the past. Since, the interpretive qualitative analysis is prone to the effects of biases, first impressions, interests, agenda, perceptions, etc. they were backed up with quantitative analysis.

### ***3.3.2.2. Approaches for Quantitative Data Analysis***

We used descriptive statistics to analyze the data from the tests and the metacognitive questionnaire. The data were tabulated, analyzed, and graphed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), a software package used for the analysis of statistical data. Phakiti (2014) notes that “descriptive statistics provide the basic characteristics of quantitative data (e.g. frequencies, average scores, most frequent scores)” (p.164). We used descriptive statistics to measure aspects related to central tendency and variability.

The first measurement we undertook was central tendency measurement. We depended on calculating the mean, which is the average of data/scores. It is the sum of

all the scores in a distribution divided by the number of cases. The formula for the mean is illustrated below;  $\bar{X}$  is the mean,  $X$  is the row score,  $\Sigma$  is the sum of, and  $N$  is the number of cases.

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}$$

We used the formula to calculate the mean for the pre and post-test for the sake of comparison. In our case, a bigger ‘mean’ entails, initially, better results. We also used the ‘mean’ for the Likert scale questionnaires, where each ‘mean’ signals a specific value (point).

**Table 04**

*Mean Ranges for Four Points Likert Scale*

| Likert Scale Description | Likert Scale Points | Likert Scale Interval /Range |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| No difficulty            | 1                   | 0.99 – 1.00                  |
| Slight difficulty        | 2                   | 1.00 –1.99                   |
| Moderate difficulty      | 3                   | 2.99–2.00                    |
| Great difficulty         | 4                   | 3–4                          |

For the four-point Likert Scale, means were interpreted according to the table above. If the mean, for example, ranges between 0.99 and 1, it means most participants said they have no difficulty doing the task described, and so on.

**Table 05**

*Mean Ranges for Five Points Likert Scale*

| Likert Scale Description | Likert Scale Points | Likert Scale Interval /Range |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Strongly Disagree        | 1                   | 1.00–1.88                    |
| Disagree                 | 2                   | 1.91–2.60                    |
| Neutral                  | 3                   | 2.61–3.40                    |
| Agree                    | 4                   | 3.41–4.20                    |
| Strongly Agree           | 5                   | 4.21–5.00                    |

For the five-point Likert Scale, the mean range is as presented in Table 05 above. For example, if the mean ranges between 1.00 and 1.88, this means most subjects strongly disagree with the statement given, and so forth. For the Likert Scale, we also used the 'mode', which indicates the most repeated or frequent value (point).

The second measurement was that of variability. We calculated the standard deviation (SD), which is based on deviation scores that show the difference between a raw score and the mean of the distribution. The formula for a deviation score is  $x = X - \bar{X}$ .  $x$  is the standard deviation,  $X$  is the raw score, and  $\bar{X}$  is the mean. We used this test to compare the pre and post-test; the larger the SD, the greater the variability in test scores and the more spread or variation in our data.

The third statistical test conducted was the paired-samples *t-test*. This was specifically used for the pre and post-test comparison. A paired-samples *t-test* examines whether two mean scores from the same group of participants differ significantly (Phakiti, 2014). This test is used to check the research hypothesis and answer the main research question that seeks to determine the causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The *t-test* indicates several important measurements; we relied on:

1. The *p*-value: It gives the probability of observing the test results under the null hypothesis. The lower the *p*-value, the lower the probability of obtaining a result like the one that was observed by chance or if the null hypothesis was true. Usually, the cutoff value for determining statistical significance is that of 0.05. The *p*-value needs to be less than 0.05, the smaller, the better for confirming the alternative hypothesis.

2. The confidence interval: it helps us assess the practical significance of our results. We use it to determine whether the confidence interval includes values that have practical significance for our situation. A 95% confidence level indicates that if you take 100 random samples from the population, you could expect approximately 95 of the samples to produce intervals that contain the population mean difference. This is important since it links our research results to the whole population.

Paired Samples t-tests are based on the assumption that the data are normally distributed. However, Mintab (2015) explains that one sample, two samples, paired samples t-tests, and ANOVA tests are robust to this assumption, meaning that they work with non-normal data as well as if the data were normal. Therefore, the normality test was not considered in this study.

It is important to note that in addition to these forms of statistical tests, the simple percentage was used to further illustrate the results of Likert Scale questionnaires and present responses to some of the “Know You” questionnaire.

### **3.4. Validity and Reliability: Issues and Solutions**

Any research design is deemed limited in terms of the reliability and validity of research tools and results. A quasi-experimental design, where no randomization is achieved, comes with various threats to both validity and reliability. This part explains the two concepts, identifies the threats caused by the choice of the one-group-pretest-posttest design, and lists the procedures adopted by the researcher to minimize these threats.

### **3.4.1. Validity and Reliability: Definitions and Threats**

Validity refers to the extent to which the scores from a measure represent the variable they are intended to. Phakiti (2014, p. 85) defines it as “the extent to which research findings, inferences, and interpretations are accurate, reasonable, and supported by empirical data.” There are several types of validity. When speaking of the context of the treatment (the intervention), we focus on ‘internal validity’ and ‘external validity’. The first is the most fundamental type of validity since it indicates the extent to which the treatment is effective. The fewer confounding variables (factors that may affect the results of the tests other than the treatment) interference, the better the internal validity of the study. Internal validity addresses the true causes of the findings of the research. This means that if the treatment has this type of validity, Losh (2017) notes, then there is a strong causal relationship between our variables. The second type signifies the extent to which the results of the treatment are generalizable. Note that generalizability of results is only possible if they are internally valid, which makes external validity partly dependent on internal validity.

When speaking of the measurement tools used, we identify a) construct validity, b) content validity, c) criterion validity, and d) face validity. The construct validity of a research instrument (tests, questionnaires, observation checklists, etc.) concerns the extent to which the tool measures what it is intended to measure. A high construct validity entails a high correlation for the same aspect being assessed via different tools, and a low correlation for different aspects assessed via the same tool (Losh, 2017). Content validity evaluates if a test or a tool represents the different aspects of the general construct being measured. Criterion validity conditions that an instrument should have

a strong relationship with other instruments that measure the same or similar construct, for example, results from the tests and observation checklists should align if they measure the same elements. The last type, face validity, is used for considering how appropriate the content of a particular test looks on the surface.

While validity concerns the accuracy of a measure, reliability concerns the consistency of a measure. It indicates that the measurement systems used generate similar results under similar conditions. To make a causal assessment, we need to have stable and repeatable measures, i.e. reliable. Phakiti (2014) explains that in experimental designs, a reliability estimate depends on a variety of aspects, such as the mean, the standard deviation of the scores of the tests, the number of test items or tasks, the level of difficulty, etc. He adds that Reliability is not an inherent property of a measurement tool, but rather, is context-dependent (it is based on where, when, and by whom it is used). Reliability may signal validity, but it does not guarantee it. To measure reliability, we can use a) test-retest reliability, wherein participants take the same test again after a while to ensure that the results of the test are not random, b) parallel form reliability, where we administer different versions of an assessment tool that contain items probing the same set of skills, knowledge base, and constructs, c) inter-rater reliability, which assesses consistency across different observers, judges, or evaluators, or d) internal reliability (consistency), which ensures that the various items measuring the different constructs deliver consistent scores.

The type of validity and reliability mentioned were systematically handled throughout the research. Being aware of the threats to internal validity and reliability, the researcher used specific techniques to reduce the limitations of the one-group-

pretest-posttest design and ensure high validity and reliability of both the treatment and the research instruments.

### 3.4.2. Threats to Validity and Reliability in the Current Study

As quasi-experimental research, where randomization is impossible for the aforesaid reasons, the study may face the subsequent threats:

- 1) **History:** any events that happen between the pre and post-test that are not part of the treatment. This includes social, academic, personal, or collective experiences that may have either positive or negative effects on the results of the post-test. Our intervention lasted 14 weeks, which makes the study prone to this threat.
- 2) **Maturation:** Participants may grow older, wiser, smarter, more tolerant, etc. due to maturation regardless of the intervention. History effects are external to the participant, while maturation effects are internal to them.
- 3) **Testing (instrumentation):** Taking the pretest might affect the outcome of the posttest because of familiarity with the form and assessment rubric.
- 4) **Regression towards the mean (statistical regression):** This threat is caused by the selection of subjects based on extreme scores or characteristics.
- 5) **Cyclical changes:** when the pretest is observed during one part of a cycle while the posttest is observed during a different part.
- 6) **Reactivity:** This refers to the change in the participants' behaviors because they know they are being observed. This may lead to 'social desirability effects', where the subjects feel nervous about being observed or may fake good to appear more interactive, more tolerant, smarter, etc. (Losh, 2017).

### 3.4.3. Techniques for Strengthening Validity and Reliability in the Study

To increase the validity and reliability of the study, the researcher ensured adequate quality for instrumentation, treatment action plan, data collection, data analysis, and sample size. Here, we summarize the procedures operated to minimize the threats, improve the types of validity above-listed, and ensure high reliability of research instruments.

#### 3.4.3.1. Reliability

To assess and strengthen the reliability of our instruments we used **interrater reliability**. The researcher asked a colleague (teacher of literature and civilization) to correct the pre and post-test to assess the consistency of measurement used. The interrater reliability was calculated using SPSS. The results are shown in the tables below.

**Table 06**

*Item Statistics of the Pretest (interrater reliability)*

|                   | Mean   | Std.<br>Deviation | N  |
|-------------------|--------|-------------------|----|
| <b>Researcher</b> | 6.5333 | 2.41023           | 30 |
| <b>Rater2</b>     | 7.3000 | 2.26518           | 30 |

**Table 07**

*Intraclass Correlation Coefficient for the Pretest*

|                         | Intraclass<br>Correlation <sup>b</sup> | 95% Confidence Interval |             | F Test with True Value 0 | df1 | df2 | Sig  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-----|-----|------|
|                         |                                        | Lower Bound             | Upper Bound | Value                    |     |     |      |
| <b>Single Measures</b>  | .856 <sup>a</sup>                      | .554                    | .943        | 18.912                   | 29  | 29  | .000 |
| <b>Average Measures</b> | .923 <sup>c</sup>                      | .713                    | .971        | 18.912                   | 29  | 29  | .000 |

**Table 08***Item Statistics for the Posttest Interrater Reliability*

|                   | Mean    | Std. Deviation | N  |
|-------------------|---------|----------------|----|
| <b>Researcher</b> | 12.3667 | 2.86758        | 30 |
| <b>Rater2.</b>    | 12.7167 | 2.89971        | 30 |

**Table 09***Interclass Correlation Coefficient for the Post-test*

|                         | Intraclass Correlation <sup>b</sup> | 95% Confidence Interval |             | F Test with True Value 0 |     |     |      |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-----|-----|------|
|                         |                                     | Lower Bound             | Upper Bound | Value                    | df1 | df2 | Sig  |
| <b>Single Measures</b>  | .973 <sup>a</sup>                   | .919                    | .989        | 94.744                   | 29  | 29  | .000 |
| <b>Average Measures</b> | .986 <sup>c</sup>                   | .958                    | .994        | 94.744                   | 29  | 29  | .000 |

As presented in the tables we can see that the means and standard deviations are pretty close in number between the two raters. In addition, and most importantly, the interclass correlation (ICC) indicates high reliability. “The ICC is a value between 0 and 1, where values below 0.5 indicate poor reliability, between 0.5 and 0.75 moderate reliability, between 0.75 and 0.9 good reliability, and any value above 0.9 indicates excellent reliability.” (Bobak et al, 2018, p.2)

In addition, we used **piloting**. The measurement tools were piloted twice once in the academic year (2019-2020), and another time in the academic year (2021-2022). For the tests, the forms and types of questions were tested using different literary works (The Little Prince, White Nights, Pygmalion, Fahrenheit 451, and Animal Farm). The details of the pilot study (2021-2022) are explained in a forthcoming section.

### **3.4.3.2. Validity**

A first step towards maximizing validity in research was ensuring reliability which enhances external, internal, and construct validity; next, we tried to enhance types of validity relevant to our research as follows:

**a) Construct, Content, and Face Validity:** piloting the instruments was a vital primary step to evaluate the extent to which our tests, questionnaires, interview, and observation checklist assessed what they were supposed to assess. It aided the documentation of how these instruments appealed to students of various classes. Second, the use of triangulation empowered the correlation previously explained.

**b) External Validity:** This type of validity addresses our ability to generalize our findings. The absence of randomization may lead to a low degree of generalizability, however, in our specific context we compensated for it with what Losh (2017) calls “Mundane Reality”. Losh argues that what quasi-experimental research offers and true-experimental research lacks is the representation of authentic real-life environments like classrooms. Quasi-experimental studies do not manipulate the environment and setting wherein the treatment takes place, instead, they study real settings, in our case the classroom, which is identical to the ‘mundane reality’ in which the subjects live their lives. Participants are not isolated from their real-life experiences which makes it easier to generalize the findings to similar populations and contexts. In addition, interrater reliability, instrumentation piloting, and construct validity aid in the generalizability of the results since they emphasize a strong causal relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

**c) Internal Validity:** To maintain a high level of internal validity we had to minimize the threats mentioned earlier as described below:

**c.1. History and Maturation:** To minimize confounding history and maturation (external and internal) factors that might affect the results of the treatment, it is advised that the researcher collects the necessary background information about the participant, and enquires about their sudden changes in behavior or attitude.

However, it is important to note here, that our research seeks to incorporate the participants' socio-cultural experiences in teaching and learning literature. CRT calls for integrating learners' identities into the teaching-learning process to enhance their ownership of their learning. History and maturation are not confounding factors, but are actually relevant variables in the research. Participants' social experiences, cultural frames of reference, preferences, etc. are valuable elements for the success of treatment. Besides one of the objectives of the approach is to encourage a growth mindset, which is inevitably influenced by history and maturation attributes. Therefore, we used observation checklists, questionnaires, reading diaries, and group discussions along the treatment to elicit elements of history and maturation that relate to learning.

**c.2. Statistical Regression:** This happens when researchers study extreme groups. All we had to do was make sure the division and classification of the participants by the administration was not based on the level of proficiency, previous scores, or any other parameter that may affect the treatment. The sample was selected conveniently from 2 intact groups randomly classified by the administration. To

further confirm the randomization, we collected archival data (previous scores) that showed a range of abilities in the sample (check Chapter 4).

**c.3. Reactivity:** To reduce the reactivity effect, we simply did not inform the participants about the experiment. This is convenient since the researcher was the teacher assigned to third-year literature classes by the administration. We made sure never to take observation notes while teaching; all observation checklists were filled after the students left the room.

**c.4. Instrumentation:** To reduce the effect of the pretest on the posttest results, we used the same form but tested different constructs of literary analysis concerning different literary works. Using CRT, we argue that the approach enables us to teach the skills of literary analysis and reading literature regardless of the aspect analyzed or the literary work read.

### **3.5. The Pilot Study**

Quantitative positivist research requires piloting. A pilot is “a mini-trial of data collection, an execution of the procedures of an experimental treatment, and a testing of the research instruments to be used for reliability” (Phakiti, 2014, p4.9). Researchers try out their instruments with a group of participants sharing similar characteristics to the target participants of their study. This is a validation phase, through which we identify the feasibility and practicality of the research tools, the time, the resources needed, and any design issues. Since I have been teaching third-year literature classes since 2018, it was easy for me to pilot the research tools (observation, interview, questionnaires, and tests), as well as the activities and techniques used in the treatment.

The pilot study took place during the academic year 2021-2022, with all third-year students (201 students divided into three groups of forty-nine students and a group of 54 students). However, only around 65 students attended regularly due to the attendance policies discussed earlier in the chapter. The books used were ‘Fahrenheit 451’ by Ray Bradbury, and ‘Animal Farm’ by George Orwell. Here we summarize the results of the pilot.

### **3.5.1. Research Instruments**

We piloted the tests (forms), the observation checklist, the interview, and the questionnaires; accordingly, we made some modifications to improve the reliability of our tools.

- For the tests, we tested the form in terms of face validity and construct validity, and the assessment criteria suggested. The only change we considered is adding one point to the weightage of marks of the thesis statement. This is due to the importance of the statement in mapping learners’ answers.
- For the observation checklist, we added the two last elements in the first section, the third element in the second section, and the first one in the fourth section. This is mainly because we observed the presence of these behaviors during the treatment and wanted to further investigate them with the target participants.
- The interview was semi-structured at first; we changed it into a structured one since we were able to identify the appropriate questions to elicit the information we needed.
- Questionnaires were the hardest tools to structure. Asking the right questions in the right form was no easy task; therefore, piloting them was crucial. For the first ‘Know

You' questionnaire, we made it shorter, with more focused questions after some students complained about its length. For the metacognitive questionnaire, statements starting from 31 to 37 were added to the first part since we observed that most students struggled with those areas.

### **3.5.2. The Activities and Techniques of the Treatment**

One major addition to the activities used in the treatment was the video projects. This decision was based on our observation of how attached the students were to their phones and how impressed they were with apps and social-media websites. I knew this before the pilot study since I have taught these groups the years before, which was the reason behind choosing Fahrenheit 451- a dystopian work that imagines a futuristic world, where books are banned and everything is controlled by technology. Moreover, we modified the length of two lessons (plot types, and characterization), and of course, changed most examples on all the handouts based on the data collected from the 'Know You' questionnaire.

### **3.6. Description of the Treatment: Approach and Framework**

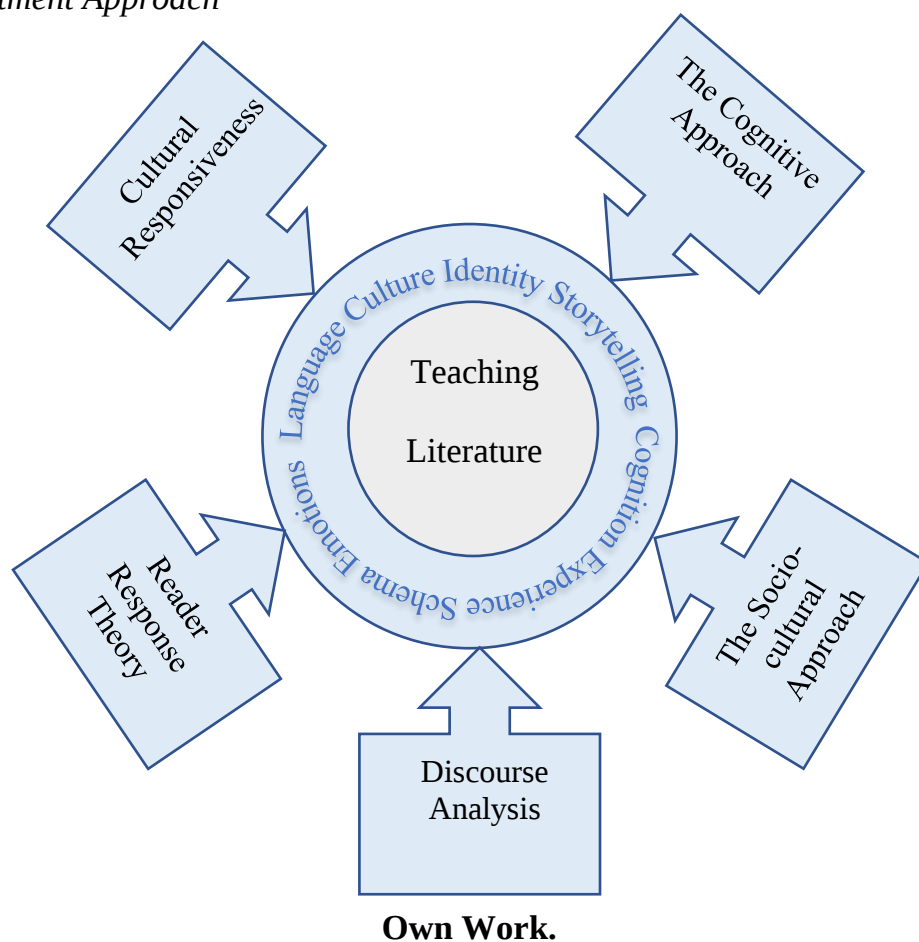
This research adopted the philosophy behind CRT to merge techniques and activities from various relevant approaches to teaching literature to enhance the participants' learning experience. Such an interdisciplinary approach accounts for the various elements that converge in the literature classroom.

Figure 13 below illustrates the suggested method. According to it, we designed our course outline, defined our objectives, selected the activities and techniques, blueprinted the observation checklist, and formatted the tests. CRT advocates the clear

establishment of small, practical, and attainable objectives for each lesson plan, and each area of teaching.

**Figure 13**

*The Treatment Approach*



To design our course, we relied on the interdisciplinary approach above which incorporates objectives, strategies, and techniques from CRT, cognitive approaches, sociocultural approaches, discourse analysis, and RRT as displayed in Figure 14. The objectives are set to meet and cover the four areas of learning borrowed from “The Ready for Rigor” framework described in the previous chapter.

**Figure 14**

*Framework for Course Design*

| Area of Development                                                                                                                  | Objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Techniques, procedures, and activities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br><b>Awareness</b>                                | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Highlight the link between language, literature, culture, and identity;</li> <li>2. Help learners identify their own cultural frames of reference;</li> <li>3. Raise learners' awareness about brain research (help them learn how to learn);</li> <li>4. Help learners identify the link between experience and learning;</li> <li>5. Making the familiar strange and the strange familiar (introducing and juxtaposing the self and the other).</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explicit teaching of the three levels of culture;</li> <li>2. Metacognitive and reflective questions and activities (questions and games that elicit learners' cultural frames of reference, help them reflect on their experience, and link the literary work to the real world);</li> <li>3. Classroom discussion (the class takes the form of a book club where learners are encouraged to share, communicate, and discuss their views about the literary work always in relation to personal and collective socio-cultural experience);</li> <li>4. Intertextuality activities to help learners establish links between literary works, literary works and scientific, philosophical, or artistic movements and theories, literary works and cinema, etc.)</li> </ol>                                                                                                          |
| <br><b>Learning Partnership (teacher-learner)</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a healthy relationship between the teacher and learners;</li> <li>2. Make the learners feel comfortable and safe in the classroom;</li> <li>3. Enhance communication between the learners' and the teacher inside and outside the classroom.</li> <li>4. Reach Equity</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Validation and Affirmation of students' identities, experiences, and learning through continuous, constructive, and instant feedback;</li> <li>2. Display of warmth and concern through weekly checkups and inquiry about learners', balance care and push;</li> <li>3. Manifestation of flexibility (avoiding tight schedules and deadlines, encouraging students' suggestions, giving them choices)</li> <li>4. Display of similarity of interest in literary works, movies, animations, genre, etc.</li> <li>5. Demonstration of competence (always be prepared for learners' questions, prepare background information about each work, ask about, and solve learners' problems, provide the necessary sources, and use a variety of activities.);</li> <li>6. Support inside and outside the classroom.</li> <li>7. Provide equal chances for all the participants</li> </ol> |

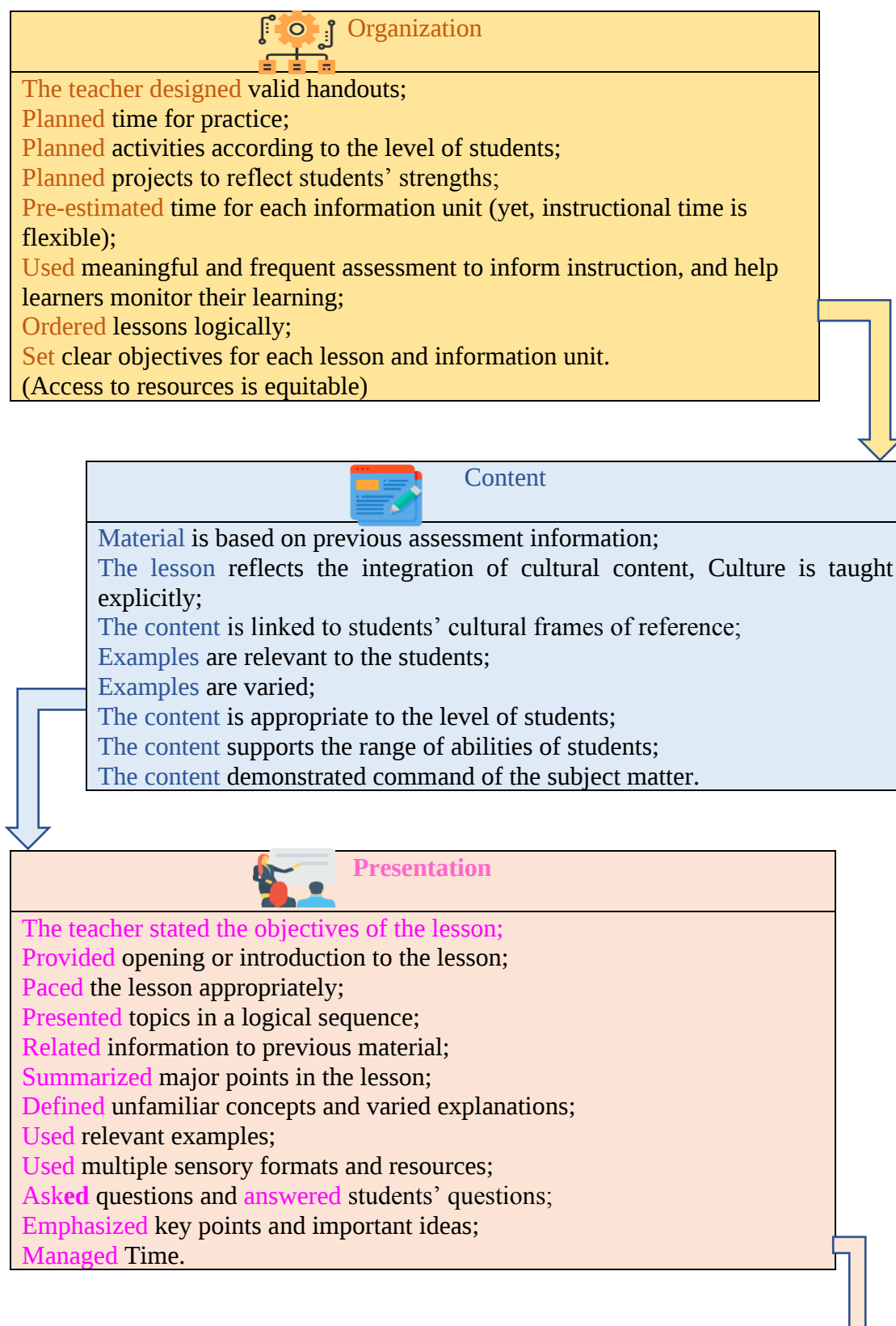
|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p><b>Community of Learning</b></p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build teacher-learner and learner-learner rapport;</li> <li>2. Build a cult of learning for the classroom;</li> <li>3. Establish positive attitudes towards literature, each other, and learning in general;</li> </ol>                                                                         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group work and projects;</li> <li>2. Classroom discussions;</li> <li>3. Peer tutoring and assessment (learners are encouraged to help each other inside and outside the classroom).</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|  <p><b>Information Processing</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build a growth mindset;</li> <li>2. Help learners make use of their brain power, cultural frames of references, and experience in learning literary analysis;</li> <li>3. Ensure successful information processing, memorization, and retrieval.</li> <li>4. Build ‘growth mindsets.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clearly defining the objectives of the course (each lesson, activity, assignment, and test);</li> <li>2. Provide learners with a defined course outline, where they can follow the advancement of their learning.;</li> <li>3. Scaffolding: Model the use of techniques, questions, material, and activities before engaging the students in them;</li> <li>4. Use of audio-visual content and material both as instruction and assessment tools (audiobooks, print, handouts, videos, video projects, etc.);</li> <li>5. Use of oral tradition and narrative as instruction tools;</li> <li>6. Metacognitive-reflective questions and activities to activate schema and link experience to learning;</li> <li>7. Chunking, spaced repetition, and active recall to empower memory;</li> <li>8. Continuous assessment, and self-assessment to help learners identify their weaknesses and strengths, and work on them;</li> <li>9. Challenge learners’ skills and levels.</li> </ol> |

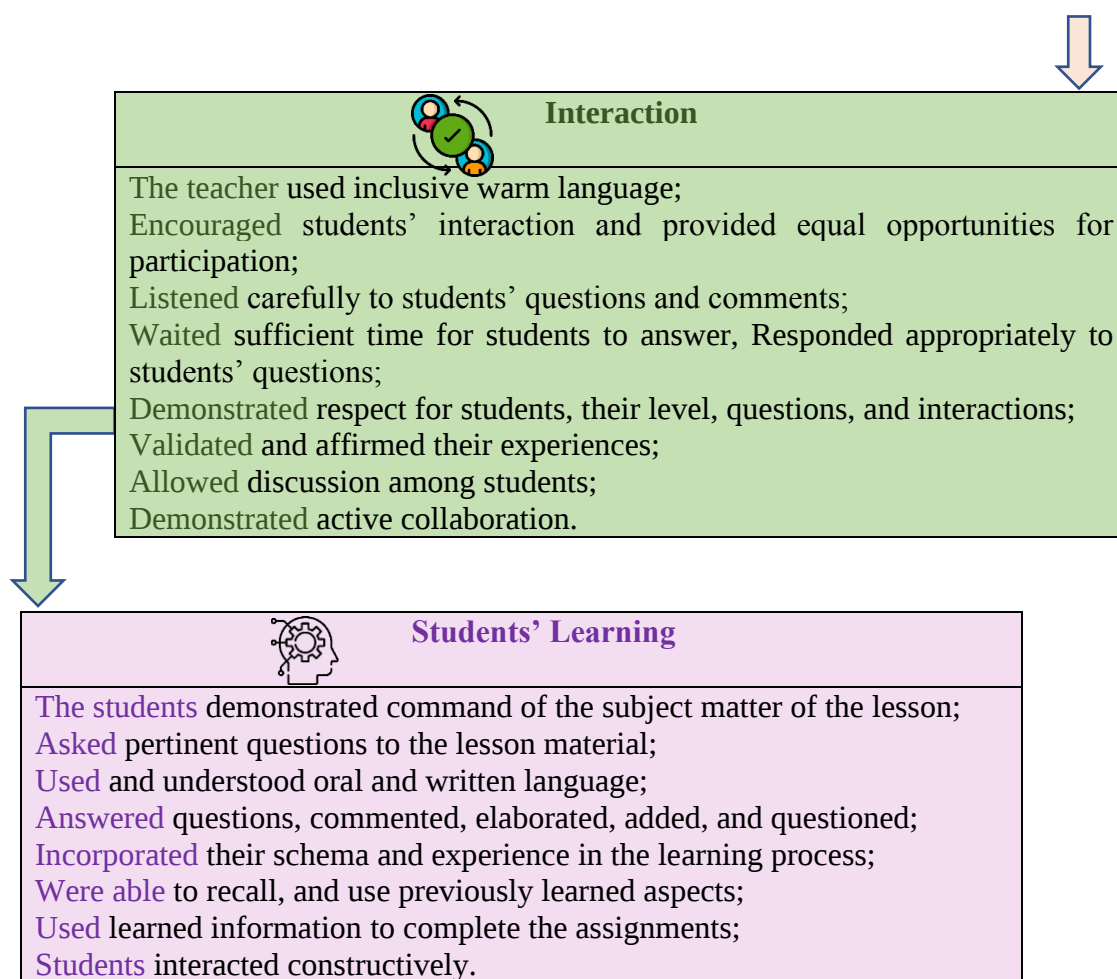
#### Own Work.

To reach the goals stated above, we needed to verify and confirm that our classroom is set for culturally responsive teaching. As seen in Chapter 2, researchers have listed various characteristics of a culturally responsive classroom, the lists and classifications vary, yet fall under the same paradigm. We summarized the different checklists and then developed one that serves the aims of this study (figure 15 below). It is an evaluative assessment tool for the material and classroom practices. The handouts and lesson plans had to cohere with the checklist.

**Figure 15**

*The Researcher's Checklist for a Culturally Responsive Classroom*





**Own Work.**

### 3.6. Description of the Treatment: Techniques and Activities

The treatment lasted fourteen weeks; fifteen sessions were administered including lessons and practice (90 to 120 mins for each session). The focus of the course was literary analysis. The teacher introduced the basic concepts of literary analysis, explained the strategies of analyzing each, and the techniques of writing literary analysis essays about each. The course outline included a general introductory lesson that familiarized the learners with these basic concepts, then proceeded to teach each one separately. The elements taught were themes, plot elements and types, point of view, and character types and characterization. Symbols, motifs, tone, character motivation, and allusion were taught as well, not in separate lessons, but within and with regard to

the other elements, depending on the work studied. The relation between the literary works and their contexts (historical, autobiographical, cultural, philosophical, etc.) was emphasized along the way.

The teacher made three types of handouts. Lesson handouts contained aspects like definitions, types, categories, examples, and sample texts from various literary works. Another form is the study guides' handouts; these were made for each specific work we read providing questions to map the subjects' reading, and sample texts for illustration. These questions tackled the devices studied in the lessons and took different forms according to the skills intended for development (recall, understand, explain, analyze, evaluate, create). Since the research borrows Bloom's Taxonomy, the teacher ensured that each study guide encompassed distinct types of questions to endorse the gradual advancement from knowing to creating (see Figure 16). Finally, we relied on practice handouts, which consisted of various texts from the literary works meant for analysis and discussion. Going through this last type, the subjects had the chance to link the information they learned from the previous two.

In addition to 'The Little Prince' read before the pretest, the participants read three books namely 'Peter Pan' by J.M. Barrie, 'The Giver' by Louis Lowry, and 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen. All four books were used to illustrate the elements taught, each time stressing some aspects depending on the nature of the work at hand (it is worth noting here, that after the pre-test, the researcher provided study guides for 'The Little Prince' as to use later for intertextuality activities). To make the handouts, order, and format of the lessons, we relied on these principles from the various approaches in Figure 13.

- 1) Picture Walk:** In their book ‘Learning How to Learn’, neuroscientists Oakley and Sejnowski (2018), explain that the brain needs a quick walk through the content of any book or material before actually reading it or engaging with it. They use the metaphor of ‘hangers’ to describe this form of scan, which enables our brains to organize information, just like they help organize the clothes in a closet. Without them, information will be scattered. We used this principle for designing the handouts; the first lesson contained a map for all that participants are going to study later. The handout outlines all the aspects of literary analysis briefly, highlighting the links between them and using examples from the participants' responses to the first questionnaire. In addition, students were encouraged to skim and scan the books, the chapters, or sections they were about to read. We argue that this walkthrough, knowing what comes next, and feeling that they have a primary grasp of the concept, empowers their engagement and interaction with the material. Each time we teach a literary device in detail, their brains make links to the pre-established map from the first handout. In conjunction with this, every lesson handout starts with a small introduction, wherein we set small goals with regard to its content. This principle is supplemented by chunking, spaced repetition, and active recall-other neuroscientific techniques used to enhance memory and information processing.
- 2) Chunking:** As explained in the first chapter, short-term memory can only store up to 7 pieces of information that need to be chunked to facilitate its passage to long-term memory. Chunking is the process of grouping bits of information into manageable, meaningful units. Some of its forms are acronyms, acrostics, and

mnemonics. Similar to needing to chunk phone numbers, or credit card numbers into groups of two, three, or four digits to remember, information in our lessons needs to be divided into smaller units of meaning. To aid retention and memory, we need to use no more than eight units of information (Miller, 1956), supplement the chunks with visual cues, use clear titles for each unit, and draw links between them. We used this technique in all the handouts, where we divided the information into eight or fewer sections, each section is self-contained and a complete unit of meaning, yet linked to the rest.

**3) Spaced Repetition:** is a method of reviewing the material at systematic intervals.

At the beginning of the learning, these intervals are short, and they get longer with time. We used the picture walk technique to build the habit of spaced repetition among the participants. Every new lesson systematically reviews previous information, and every lesson handout starts with a recap that reminds the participants of material already specified in the first handout, and then builds on it to introduce new knowledge. This boosts neural connections and schematic connections (see Chapter 1) which are necessary for new learning. As we moved forward, we increased the intervals of repeating the concepts.

**4) Active Recall:** This technique refers to actively retrieving information from memory rather than simply reviewing or re-reading material passively. The effectiveness of this technique is supported by a large number of scientific research (Karpicke & Roediger, 2008; Roediger & Butler, 2011). There are many ways to actively recall information; we used several ones to help our participants to store and retrieve information. First, we encouraged them to **write questions**

**while notetaking**, later at the end of the session, they would be given the chance to ask those questions to their peers and the teacher. Second, students were asked to make **annotations while reading** the handouts at home or the books. We have exemplified how to make annotations as part of the scaffolding. Third, we administered **diagnostic quizzes** from time to time, where learners had to pick a number for a specific question, the teacher then asked a question about previous lessons such as defining the concept, what are the types of, explaining the idea, etc. and give the student the chance to answer, if she fails, someone volunteers to answer the question, if she also fails, this is repeated until someone gets the answer or they ask the teacher to answer. This enables the participants to identify which concepts they have already grasped from those which need more effort or explanation. Fourth, we used **self-assessment** during practice sessions. Participants were always asked to do activities or try answering the questions at home before the practice session. During the session, students were asked to share their answers, then after the final correction, correct their own work writing what they got wrong and what they missed on the side as a form of annotation.

- 5) **The Muddiest Point Technique:** This involved asking students after each lesson about the most difficult, challenging, unclear, or confusing points about the lessons, the assignment, or the projects. These points were reexamined in a new form till the students comprehended them. This is a form of reflexive practice, whereby learners identify their weaknesses.
- 6) **Reflexive Metacognitive Activities:** Each study guide handout, assignment, or video project contains a set of reflective metacognitive questions as forms of

schema activation. This is twofold. On the one hand, they were used to elicit learners' cultural frames of reference, link the books to their personal and social experiences, and identify their strengths and weaknesses. On the other hand, they were implemented to increase brain power and raise learners' awareness as described earlier. We also used lesson and test wrappers as additional metacognitive techniques (check Chapter 1).

- 7) **Scaffolding:** As the sociocultural approach advocates, the teacher modeled every single classroom practice before asking the learners to engage in it. This covered how to analyze, how to illustrate, how to write an essay, how to answer questions of different keywords, how to read for specific information, how to answer exam questions, how to self-assess, how to make a video project, how to research for the assignments, and how to formulate questions. This Scaffolding aids metacognitive processes.
- 8) **Visual Cues:** The lessons' handouts used visual cues related to famous classics, movies, series, cartoons, etc. based on the participants' favorite works elicited from the first questionnaire, and the teacher's favorites as well. This was utilized to capture their attention, build a rapport between the teacher and the subjects, show similarities of interest, and validate and affirm their experience. The study guide handouts incorporated visual cues related to characters, events, themes, etc. of each specific work; these were mainly used to implicitly enhance certain ideas that we wanted our learners to remember or focus on.
- 9) **Video-Projects:** CRT applies project-based learning where participants work together or individually to solve a problem. First, as CRT advocates, we

encouraged the use of multi-channels and the combination of audio-visual material and projects to trigger and stimulate various areas of the brain. Second, we wanted to make use of the participant's existing skills in filming and editing and integrate technology. Cultural responsiveness calls for building new learning on the basis of the pre-existing students' abilities. Participants were given a list of suggestions, out of which they chose their projects. They were also given the choice of working individually, in pairs, or in groups, of suggesting other ideas for the project or modifying the given ones.

The first video project concerned 'The Little Prince', and 'Peter Pan'; the suggestions we gave were as follows:

- a. A dramatic reading of your favorite part (scenes) from one of the books.
- b. A book review that takes the form of a group discussion
- c. Video reaction (comment on the content of a video by Jordan Peterson about Peter Pan)
- d. Role play: Choose your favorite part of one of the books.
- e. Choose one of the main ideas in both books and analyze how it appeals to our modern experience.
- f. Recreate a story that has both 'The Little Prince' and 'Peter Pan' in one universe.

The second project was about 'The Giver', and 'Pride and Prejudice'; the suggestions were as follows:

- a. Role play: choose any scene from 'Pride and Prejudice' or 'The Giver' (this can be filmed and recorded or presented in class)

- b. A group discussion of a central theme or idea in one of the books (the theme needs to be discussed from various angles and perspectives)
  - c. Write a story completion of the ‘The Giver’ (alternative ending). What happens next? Narrate the ending you choose in a video, an animated video, or a presentation in the classroom.
  - d. Imagine a similar world to that of ‘The Giver’ in Algeria and create a storyline. (What would happen?)
  - e. If you were the giver what would you do? Write a storyline with the changes you suggest.
  - f. Imagine ‘Pride and Prejudice’ with Algerian characters. What would change? Narrate your suggested plotline or act it.
  - g. Choose an idea from one of the books and say how it appeals and relates to your personal experience.
  - h. Interview: assume the role of an interviewer, while your friend assumes the role of the writer of ‘The Giver’ or ‘Pride and Prejudice’. What questions would you ask, how would your friend answer? You can film this or perform it in class.
- The criteria used to correct the projects are linked to CRT and its premises. We specify them in the next chapter.

**10)Providing Choice:** One main principle in CRT and the socio-cultural approach is providing students with choice-making space for students’ voice and agency. Learners need to feel that they are the owners of their learning, hence allowing them to be part of course design and decision-making touches on all four areas of the framework developed. It raises their awareness about their frames of

reference, establishes a good relationship with the teacher, builds a relationship and a sense of community among the learners' since they make the choices together, and finally aids information processing because they would feel more engaged and more committed. In addition to the choices given to the participants in the projects, the teacher chose the first two books, while the participants chose the other two for the treatment.

**11) Intertextuality and Context Activities:** The research treats literature as discourse, and is based on the textuality view (a fundamental view in discourse analysis). The teacher developed questions of intertextuality where learners elicited the forms of intertextuality in the works at hand, compared two or more books, and compared books and other forms like movies, series, etc. These forms of activities were meant to emphasize literature as discourse, as well as, illustrate how human experience can intersect throughout various narratives, disciplines, and artistic forms. This implicitly validates the learners' own experiences and pushes them to link their prior knowledge, readings, and schema to literature, which falls under the premise of CRT. Moreover, the teacher explicitly taught context, its various definitions, types, and role in literary discourse and reading. All works were analyzed with respect to a variety of context types (context of writing the work and biographical information, historical context, socio-cultural context, philosophical context, etc.). This amplifies the role of social experience in literature; it raises the participants' awareness of the significance of culture in shaping those experiences that in turn shape literary discourse and literary interpretation and analysis.

**12) Classroom Discussion:** At the beginning of the treatment the teacher and students agreed that the class would take the form of a book club. The session dedicated to the analysis of books (study-guide handouts) always started with a 25-minute group discussion where the subjects shared their thoughts about the book or part of the book they read. The participants could comment on, argue against, discuss, or elaborate on each other's thoughts. The teacher took part in the discussion sharing opinions, and assuming the role of a guide of the discussion. This was the most fundamental activity for examining readers' responses to literature. Moreover, these discussions were implemented to build a sense of community in the classroom. We argue that knowing that they can be heard and sharing their personal opinions automatically validates the students' personal experiences and schema and affirms their role in the learning process. Most importantly, these discussions assisted the creation of an equitable classroom, wherein learners have equal chances for success, each according to his/her strengths and weaknesses.

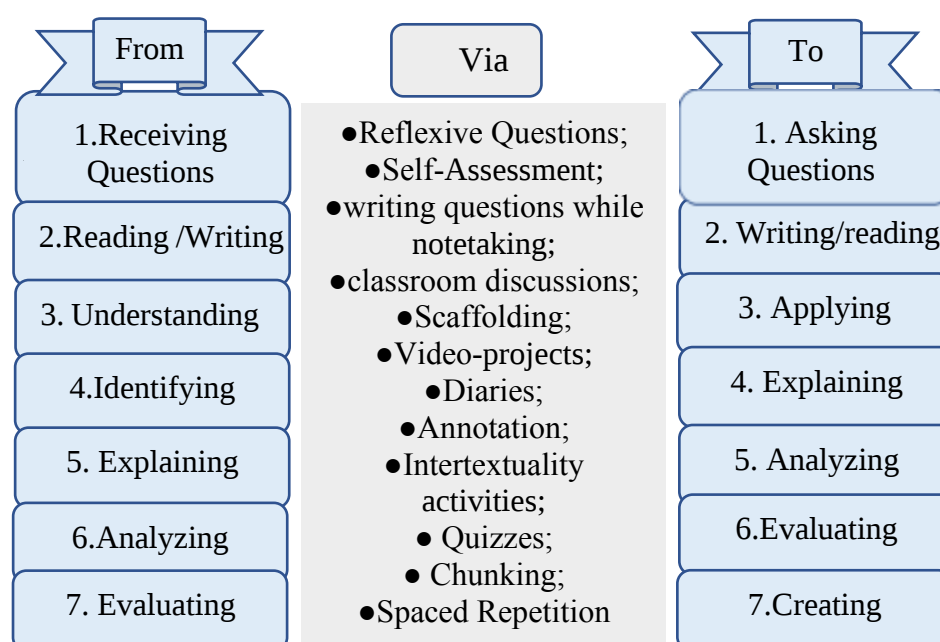
**13) Reading Diaries:** The subjects were asked to use reading diaries to document the process of their reading of the literary works. They record their feelings during the process, their encounter with any shocking ideas, or any relevant events to their personal experiences, and their most liked and disliked moments. The purpose behind these diaries was to enhance the ties between emotions and reading literature (see Chapter 1).

**14) Bloom's Taxonomy:** As clarified in Chapter 1, the hierarchy of skills in the taxonomy is reflective of the gradual successive development of learning skills.

We wanted our learners to move from knowing and remembering information to creating and producing new original work. This, we argue, can only be achieved if we integrate their social-cultural experiences and pre-existing skills into the teaching-learning process. Figure 15 demonstrates how we applied this taxonomy in our course design, with the help of the techniques aforementioned.

**Figure 16**

*Use of Bloom's Taxonomy in Course Design*



**Own Work.**

**15)Feedback:** According to researchers like Hattie and Timperley (2007), Zull (2002), Oakley and Sejnowski (2018), and Hammond (2010), feedback is one of the most powerful tools to enhance brain performance and improve learning. Feedback triggers the brain's reward and pleasure centers, helping it release dopamine which is necessary for motivation and fixation, memorization, and retrieval of information. The brain needs instant and constant feedback to keep the good, correct information, and work on the wrong ones (check Chapter 2).

During the experiment, the researcher used instructive, corrective feedback to enhance students' performance and validate their efforts. We used verbal feedback during sessions and after correcting the video projects to encourage students' participation and interaction, using inclusive language and avoiding negative comments. We always start by pointing out the good things about the answer or performance, then move to specify things that could be improved. We used written feedback when correcting tests, activities, and assignments that sometimes took the form of a paragraph validating students' efforts, highlighting their errors, and suggesting ways to improve their work.

These techniques were used to blueprint and style the handouts, format the lessons, organize practice sessions, and plan the projects. Table 10 frames the process of the whole experiment with the order of actions performed by the researcher. More importantly, they were implemented explicitly and regularly to build what we call in the second chapter 'a cult of learning.

**Table 10**

*Action Plan of the Experiment*

| Step                                                              | Objectives and/or content                                                                                                                                                                     | Techniques and /or Theory                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The 'Know You' Questionnaire &amp; The Teachers' Interview</b> | 1. Collect information about the student's experiences with literature in previous academic years.<br>2. Collect titles of books, characters, themes, etc. to use as examples in the handouts | <b>CRT</b> (cultural responsiveness recommends that teaching be based on pre-researched knowledge about the students. |
| <b>The Pretest</b>                                                | Assess the subjects' knowledge of literary analysis.                                                                                                                                          | <b>Blooms' Taxonomy Visual Cues</b>                                                                                   |

|             | Step                                                                                              | Objectives and/or content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Techniques and /or Theory                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Observation | <b>Session 1<br/>Handout 1</b>                                                                    | 1. Introducing basic literary elements<br>2. Using examples from the first questionnaire<br>3. Highlight the link between the literary devices                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Picture Walk, Chunking, Schema theory</b> (linking lesson content to the subjects' previous knowledge elicited from the questionnaire) <b>Visual Cues</b>                                                |
|             | <b>Session 2<br/>Handout 2</b>                                                                    | 1. Teach theme analysis<br>2. Teach how to write a theme analysis essay<br>3. Teach types of textual evidence and illustration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Spaced repetition<br/>Active recall<br/>Bloom's Taxonomy, Visual Cues</b>                                                                                                                                |
| Observation | <b>Sessions 3 to 6<br/>Handouts 3, 4, 5, and 6 (The Little Prince and Peter Pan Study Guides)</b> | 1. Moving from reading to writing<br>2. Moving from reading to interpretation<br>3. Identify, explain, and analyze themes<br>4. Find textual evidence for arguments.<br>5. Teach the three levels of culture explicitly<br>5. Link work to context (philosophical, biographical, and socio-cultural)<br>6. Compare two works<br>7. Link personal experience to literary work.<br>8. Introducing symbols, motifs<br>9. Highlight the dichotomy of cultural vs. universal issues<br>10. Highlight cultural aspects (teach levels of culture implicitly)<br><b>11. Give the first video project (session 5)</b> | <b>CRT, Spaced Repetition, Active Recall, Bloom's Taxonomy<br/>Reflective questions<br/>Intertextuality questions<br/>Schema Theory<br/>Visual Cues<br/>Classroom Discussion<br/>Project-based Learning</b> |
|             | <b>Session 7<br/>Handout 7</b>                                                                    | 1. Introduce types of questions<br>2. Teach how to answer each<br>3. Practice information from the previous study guides (sample questions from the two books)<br>4. Teach how to outline essays answering each type.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Bloom's Taxonomy, Spaced Repetition, Active Recall</b>                                                                                                                                                   |

|             | Step                                                         | Objectives and/or content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Techniques and /or Theory                                                                                                        |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Observation | <b>Session 8<br/>Handout 8</b>                               | 1. Introduce plot types<br>2. Illustrate using information from the first questionnaire<br>3. Link the plot to devices introduced in previous sessions<br>4. Introduce Character motivation<br>5. Receive First Video Project<br>6. Announce the start of reading of the third and fourth books                                                                                                                              | <b>Chunking, Spaced Repetition<br/>Visual cues, Schema Theory<br/>The Muddiest Point</b>                                         |
|             | <b>Session 09<br/>Handout 09</b>                             | 1. Explain and illustrate POV types.<br>2. Use examples from the students' first questionnaire<br>3. Link to previous aspects<br>4. <u>Introducing Tone and Mode</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Chunking, Spaced Repetition, Active Recall, Visual Clues, The Muddiest Point<br/>Schema Theory</b>                            |
| Observation | <b>Session 10<br/>Handout 10</b>                             | 1. Introduce Characterization (types, analysis, etc.)<br>2. Review character types from the first handout<br>3. Link to other aspects<br>4. <u>Give the Second project</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Chunking, Spaced Repetition, Active Recall, Visual Clues, The Muddiest Point<br/>Schema Theory, Project Based Learning</b>    |
|             | <b>Session 11<br/>A mind map<br/>(The Giver study guide)</b> | 1. Review all the aspects studied using the Giver.<br>2. Learn how to map thoughts through mind maps<br>3. Compare to previous works<br>4. Introducing Dystopian Literature (characteristics, themes, etc.)<br>5. Compare the work to other dystopian novels like Fahrenheit 451, 1984, The Hunger Games, etc.<br>6. Introducing Allusion<br>7. Highlight politics in dystopian literature.<br>8. Highlight cultural aspects | <b>CRT, Spaced Repetition, Active Recall, Visual Clues, The Muddiest Point<br/>Schema Theory, Reading Diaries, Metacognition</b> |
| Observation | <b>Session 12<br/>Handout 11</b>                             | Practice Characterization Analysis                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Repetition, Active Recall, Visual Clues</b>                                                                                   |
|             | <b>Session 13</b>                                            | 1. Identify the subjects' strengths and weaknesses                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>CRT, Metacognition, Reflexivity, Spaced</b>                                                                                   |

|             | Step                                                                            | Objectives and/or content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Techniques and /or Theory                                                                                                     |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Observation | <b>The Metacognitive Questionnaire</b>                                          | 2. Take a break<br>3. Review what we learned<br>4. Give the subjects the chance to reflect on their experience so far.<br>5. Discuss the subject choice of books                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Repetition, Active Recall</b><br><b>The Muddiest Point</b>                                                                 |
|             | <b>The Diagnostic Quiz</b>                                                      | 1. Emphasize Cultural Aspects<br>2. Emphasize the link to context (historical, cultural, and biographical)<br>3. Review and illustrate all devices learned<br>4. Introduce/ review literary eras (Romanticism, the Regency era, realism)<br>5. Compare to previous works in terms of culture<br>6. Compare to other classics<br>7. Compare and contrast with the Algerian culture<br>8. Introduce Indirect Discourse<br>9. Introducing Style.<br>10. Receive the second project. | <b>CRT, Spaced Repetition, Active Recall, Visual Clues, The Muddiest Point Schema Theory, Reading Diaries, Metacognition.</b> |
| Observation | <b>Session 14 &amp; 15 (Handouts 12 and 13, Pride and Prejudice Study guide</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                               |
|             | <b>Extra Session Presentations</b>                                              | 1. Discover students' weaknesses<br>2. Discuss the projects<br>3. Give some students the chance to present their work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>CRT, Metacognition, Reflexivity</b>                                                                                        |
|             | <b>The Posttest</b>                                                             | Assessing the Effect of the Treatment on the Participants' Performance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Bloom's Taxonomy</b>                                                                                                       |

**Own Work.**

### **3.7. Ethical Consideration**

Any research must adhere to a certain code of conduct when collecting data about or from people. Ethical considerations are meant to protect the rights and privacy of research participants, strengthen research validity, and maintain scientific and academic integrity. Following the ethical considerations stated by Bryman and Bell (2007), we ensured that:

- Research participants are not subjected to harm in any way whatsoever.
- The dignity of research participants is prioritized, and the protection of their privacy is ensured.
- The confidentiality of the research data and the anonymity of participants in the research are secured.
- Exaggeration and deception about the aims and objectives of the research or the findings are avoided.
- Honesty and transparency are enhanced when reporting the findings.
- Bias in assessment is avoided.

### **Conclusion**

The chapter described, in detail, the research design and the action plan of the research. Using a hypothesis-driven theoretical framework in response to the research question, the research was based on a mixed method, where both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis tools were employed. As we moved through the components of the research design (paradigm, type, time horizon, procedure, sampling, data collection tools, and data analysis method), the chapter explained our methodological choices, defining the key concepts, and justifying the choices made. Then, it pointed out issues concerning validity and reliability and specified the techniques used by the researcher to enhance the validity and reliability of both the treatment and data collection tools. Finally, it stated the steps, approaches, and procedures used during the treatment. The next chapter will apply the chosen methodology to analyze the data and test the hypotheses.

# Chapter 4

## Data Analysis

## **Introduction**

This chapter is devoted to the presentation and description of the results. As mentioned in the previous chapter, we organized the general analysis by tools following the order of implementation. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part provides the results of the first pre-treatment phase (the ‘Know You’ questionnaire, the teachers’ interviews, the archival data, and the pre-test) and the observation (the observation checklist, the reflexive journal). The second section deals with the statistical analysis of the metacognitive questionnaire and the paired samples t-test, backed up with the diagnostic analysis of the pre-test.

### **Part One: Analysis of the Pre-Treatment Tools and Observation**

In this part, the researcher relies mainly on qualitative data analysis methods (thematic content analysis for the pre-experiment questionnaire and interviews, typological analysis for the observation, and descriptive and diagnostic analysis for the pretest and archival data); we provide percentages whenever needed and make use of tables and graphs to demonstrate the results.

#### **4.1. Analysis of the ‘KNOW YOU’ Questionnaire**

Following the principles of CRT, which necessitates making instructional decisions based on pre-researched knowledge about our students, and to ensure the reliability of our instructional tools, we have collected information via a students’ questionnaire, a teacher’s interview, and archival data, supplementing them with the results of the pretest. Below we report the main findings of each.

The questionnaire consisted of thirty questions. The main purpose of the first ten questions was to help us collect the titles and names of the participants’ favorite movies,

books, animations, manga, and characters to use as examples and illustrations in our handouts (check appendix). Additionally, these questions indicated the following:

- Most of the books mentioned were modern contemporary ones, which was affirmed by the answers to question number 22, where all the participants, except 5, stated that they prefer modern works. Only four classics were mentioned ‘Jane Eyre’, ‘Hard Times’, ‘Things Fall Apart’, and ‘The Great Gatsby.’ This was in tune with the teachers’ interview responses, where their first-year teacher said he focused on postcolonial African literature, and their second-year teacher said he used ‘The Great Gatsby’, and “Things Fall Apart” as examples in his class.
- Modern Romance, tragedy, and dystopian movies were the most favorite among the participants (this aligned with their choice of ‘The Giver’ and ‘Pride and Prejudice’ in the treatment), with young adult romance having the highest percentage of 60%. Only two participants chose fantasy movies, namely Harry Potter, and The Lord of the Rings. When asked if they read the books, they said they did not.
- The favorite characters and setting of the participants belonged mostly to Japanese animations such as ‘One Piece’, ‘Naruto’, ‘Attack on Titans’, ‘The Secret World of Arriety’ and ‘Your Name.’
- 90% of the favorite quotes were taken from non-fiction books, mostly self-help books, which was justified by the answers to question 16, where most participants claimed they prefer non-fiction to fiction. When asked later about this, they explained that the language of non-fiction is easier.

- Unexpectedly, most participants (70%) did not answer the 10<sup>th</sup> question (name a character you dislike). For the 11<sup>th</sup> question, 80% of the participants indicated “The Great Gatsby” as their most disliked book. They attributed this to their past experience with the book in the second year, where they had to read and analyze it.
- Surprisingly, answers to questions 13 and 14 were almost identical for 20 participants, who revealed that the ending of “The Fault in our Stars” was the worst ending, and the death of the heroine was the event they wished never happened. Young adult romance and tragedy movies being the most frequently stated genres explained the choice of “The Fault in Our Stars”. Again, when asked later if they read the book, only 5 participants gave a positive answer.
- 90% claimed that they like reading short stories the most, while the rest chose the novel. This aligned with their answer to the 27<sup>th</sup> question since 80% of the participants listed length and language as the most challenging aspects of reading for their literature classes.

The aim behind questions 17 to 25 was to identify some cultural frames of reference of the participants and the basic linguistic and cultural sources of their knowledge about literature in all its forms. Here are the main findings.

- 60% of the participants preferred reading in English, while 40% preferred Arabic.
- 80% preferred English TV and literature to American, Arabic, and African ones. This might explain their choice of ‘Pride and Prejudice.

- 90% preferred Studio Ghibli to Disney movies, which accorded with their responses to the 3<sup>rd</sup> question. This denoted some familiarity with the Japanese culture, values, and social norms, which were used for comparison and intertextuality activities.

When asked about the easiest thing in literary analysis, most participants (70%) noted that it was not easy to read and analyze literary texts, while the rest did not answer the question. When asked about the hardest aspect of literary analysis, 90% claimed that literature classes were demanding since they required knowledge about a variety of complex concepts and theories; four students provided almost identical answers saying that they could not link what they studied so far to the content of the books they read. When asked to cite their personal opinions about the true purpose of teaching literature, we noticed that most participants relied on internet sources to answer, providing definitions of literature and quotes about its value. Only a few personal answers were elicited such as the following:

Participant 1: *“I think it helps with language”*

Participant 4: *“I read somewhere that it helps us be better human beings”*

Participant 6: *“Reading helps me improve my writing skills and know more about the world so I guess that’s it”*

Participant 11: *“When we read literary works, we become more aware of differences between us and people around the world.”*

Participant 23: *“I think it is important for language”*

When asked about the most challenging aspect of reading for their literature classes, 80% noted that they were mainly hindered by the length and language of the

literary works. We further enquired about this; the participants stated that they feared it the most because they think they lack the necessary linguistic competence to read and understand such works. Most participants did not answer the last question (70%), and the rest did not name a specific book, instead, they suggested a genre, form, or era. The most recurring suggestions were romantic novels, love stories, and modern works.

To support this data, we interviewed the participants' teachers of literature in the first and second years. Below we present the results of the interviews.

#### **4.2. The Analysis of the Teacher's Interview**

The aims of interviewing the teachers were 1) to collect information about our participants' academic experiences with literature, 2) to check whether the teachers implemented any CRT-relevant techniques or approaches, and 3) to make our instructional choices. Teacher 1 (first-year teacher) is a 34-year-old male specializing in literature and civilization. He has a Ph.D. in civilization and has been teaching first-year literature for six years. Teacher 2 (Second-year teacher) is a 31-year-old male specializing in literature. He has a 'Magister' in literature and has been teaching second-year literature for six years. We followed a thematic-content method to analyze the interviews, eliciting the similarities and differences between the teachers' responses, and trying to find common patterns across the data set. Five broad themes emerged from the analysis.

**1) Course Design and Content:** Teacher 1 did not provide his students with a comprehensive course outline saying, *"No, I do not give a defined course outline. Usually, I devote the first lecture to introducing the main issues to be tackled as well as the selected literary works related to each theme or topic."* Teacher 2 claimed that he

usually gives his students a general outline of the course, he added, *“I sometimes keep the titles of the literary works after a week or two because I need to know about the works that they have read and which literary works can be easy for them to read and understand.”* When asked about the content of their course, we noticed that the contents of both years were not focused and bore great resemblance. Teacher 1 said, *“Lectures of the first semester are devoted to literary analysis while the second semester is for literary movements. Usually, I teach post-colonialism... I teach prose, poetry, and drama (definition, features of the text, types, ways to analyze any particular genre. etc.).* Similarly, Teacher 2 taught *‘elements of the novel’*, i.e. plot, setting, characters, and themes providing basic definitions, then moved to *‘differences between prose, poetry, novels, plays, etc.’* and then *‘introduced literary movements.’* Teacher 1 focused only on post-colonialism and African women writers, while teacher 2 introduced post-colonialism, realism, and modernism, yet not in detail.

**2) Instructional Material:** Both teachers did not provide the students with handouts; they depended mainly on their classroom talk to explain and cover the intended information. They had the same argument for this. Teacher 1 stated, *“I do not give handouts. To my experience, I think handouts only make lazy students. Once you give ready-made lectures, the majority of students no longer take initiative and do research.”* Teacher 2 stated, *“No, I never provide them with handouts because I do not have one and I avoid limiting them and myself to some particular lessons. I think it's more encouraging to let them read and do their own research and it's easier for me to be flexible”*. This goes against CRT which calls for the use of various types of instructional material to support and enhance learning.

**3) Teaching Approach:** Both teachers seemed to lean toward the sociocultural approach which shared basic assumptions and objectives with CRT. While Teacher 1 clearly stated that he used the socio-cultural approach, Teacher 2 said he did not use any particular approach, yet from his answers, we deduced that he used some of its principles. For instance, he gave his students the freedom to choose the literary works they wanted to read and said he based his instructional choices on his knowledge of his students (*I need to know about the works that they have read and which literary works can be easy for them to read*). Moreover, he claimed that at the beginning of each lesson, he tried “*to know about the students’ background knowledge then let them think of the definition of the term or the studied idea...*” He allowed “*the students to tell stories and try to get examples from them...look for common examples before providing them with stories that they may not be accustomed to.*” These practices reflect some of CRT principles. Based on these answers, we assumed that our learners understand the relatedness between culture and learning in general and learning literature in particular. However, the results of the observation demonstrated that the participants lacked a sufficient understanding of the role of culture in learning. There is a possibility that this was because the teachers did not highlight this link *explicitly* in the classroom.

**4) The Literary Works:** Teacher 1 assigned short readings to the students assuming that it was early for learners to read lengthy works. He said, “*Since I teach first-year students, I avoid giving novels because they are a bit long to read. I prefer short stories.*”. The second teacher gave his students a list of novels, poems, and short stories including works like ‘The Great Gatsby’, ‘Things Fall Apart’, and ‘The Giver’ among which each student had to choose one to read. This particular choice made by the

teachers had a major impact on the learners' experience with literature and on the treatment. We believe that relying mainly on short literary works, and providing unsupervised choices to the students, nurtured their fear of novels described early in the questionnaire. As a matter of fact, this was noticed in the pilot study as well. The participants of the pilot study struggled with the length of Fahrenheit 451 (which is 100 pages). When asked about the reason, they said they were used to reading short stories and summaries only. When given the chance to choose the second book, they chose 'Animal Farm' saying that it was the shortest, most interesting book they found. This may link to CRT's claims that our present instructional choices may have a long-lasting impact on our students' future learning.

**5) Assessment:** The types of questions used in tests differed significantly between the two teachers, yet both teachers based their tests on memorization more than on analysis, deduction, and discussion. In addition, both did not give essay questions, which we believe, are vital in literary studies (check chapter one). Teacher 1 explained that his exams were divided into two parts. In the first part, students were required to answer direct questions in no more than two sentences per question, whereas the second asked them to write a paragraph about a specific topic. The second teacher had an interesting take on testing. He asked learners to use the poems, short stories, or novels they chose to read and answer questions like, 'Name the author, the main theme, the protagonist of the story, etc.' While it is important to ask direct questions to check students' memorization and recall certain concepts, it is vital to test their ability to produce and create based on their comprehension which is illustrated in Bloom's Taxonomy. This

difference in assessment techniques and forms was mirrored in the significantly distinct scores of the first, second, and third years.

One last similarity between the teachers' responses was their justification for some instructional decisions. Teacher 1 said he depended mainly on short stories because he believed that first-year students did not have sufficient competency to read lengthy works (*Since I teach first-year students, I avoid giving novels because they are a bit long to read. I prefer short stories*). In like manner, Teacher 2 said, "*Since I am teaching second-year students, I try to focus more on literary movements because I doubt their ability to analyze due to their level and I think literary theories are too much at this level.*" This opposes one of the main principles of CRT, which calls for nurturing students' existing abilities and at the same time challenging them.

#### **4.3. Analysis of the Archival Data**

The archival data were valuable for two main reasons. We used them to gather more information about our participants' past performances in literature and to reduce the chances for a 'regression towards the mean' as a threat to internal validity. Statistical regression happens when research is based on an 'extreme group.' Although we clarified in the previous chapter that the groups were intact and randomly divided by the administration, we added the archival data to confirm that there was a variation in abilities in the sample.

Although the data helped us exclude 'regression towards the mean' from the threats of internal validity, showing a variance in scores (Figures 16 and 17); unfortunately, they were not indicative of the students' levels in Literature.

**Table 11**

*Participants' Average Scores of Literature in First and Second Years.*

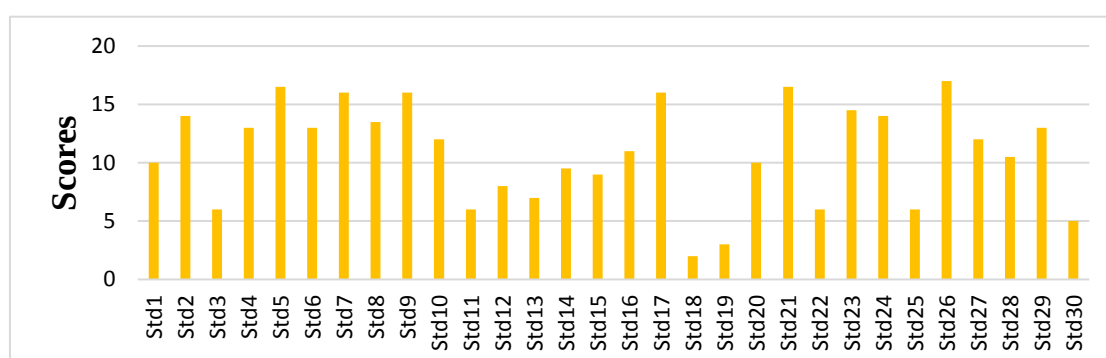
| <b>Subjects</b> | <b>First Year Scores</b> | <b>Second-year Scores</b> |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Std1</b>     | 10                       | 11                        |
| <b>Std2</b>     | 14                       | 12                        |
| <b>Std3</b>     | 6                        | 14                        |
| <b>Std4</b>     | 13                       | 11                        |
| <b>Std5</b>     | 16.5                     | 2                         |
| <b>Std6</b>     | 13                       | 14.5                      |
| <b>Std7</b>     | 16                       | 16                        |
| <b>Std8</b>     | 13.5                     | 13                        |
| <b>Std9</b>     | 16                       | 12                        |
| <b>Std10</b>    | 12                       | 13                        |
| <b>Std11</b>    | 6                        | 16                        |
| <b>Std12</b>    | 8                        | 13                        |
| <b>Std13</b>    | 7                        | 2.5                       |
| <b>Std14</b>    | 9.5                      | 13                        |
| <b>Std15</b>    | 9                        | 16                        |
| <b>Std16</b>    | 11                       | 7                         |
| <b>Std17</b>    | 16                       | 11                        |
| <b>Std18</b>    | 2                        | 1                         |
| <b>Std19</b>    | 3                        | 6                         |
| <b>Std20</b>    | 10                       | 10                        |
| <b>Std21</b>    | 16.5                     | 16                        |
| <b>Std22</b>    | 6                        | 6.5                       |
| <b>Std23</b>    | 14.5                     | 10.5                      |
| <b>Std24</b>    | 14                       | 13                        |
| <b>Std25</b>    | 6                        | 15                        |
| <b>Std26</b>    | 17                       | 13.5                      |
| <b>Std27</b>    | 12                       | 10                        |
| <b>Std28</b>    | 10.5                     | 10                        |
| <b>Std29</b>    | 13                       | 11.5                      |
| <b>Std30</b>    | 5                        | 7                         |

The scores manifested some lucid differences between the two teachers and even more substantial differences with the scores of the pre-test. For instance, Student 3 had an average of 6 in the first year, 14 in the second year, and scored 5 in the pre-test, while Student 5 had an average of 16.5 in the first year, 2 in the second year, and 5 in the pre-

test. This discrepancy might be caused by the different forms, criteria, and requirements of the teachers' assessment. We argued in chapter one that if teachers adopt similar philosophies of teaching and assessment approaches, we could reduce such incongruities which could help our students identify their academic interests and predilections leading to more meaningful learning.

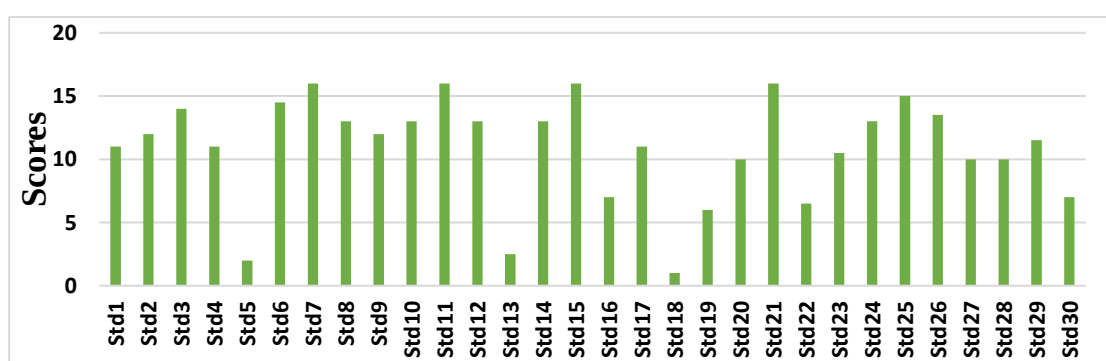
**Figure 17**

*Students' Average Scores in Literature (First Year)*



**Figure 18**

*Students' Average Scores in Literature (Second Year)*



#### 4.4. Diagnostic Analysis of the Pre-test

In this phase, we used the results of the pretest to check the range of abilities and identify the strong and weak areas of performance in the sample. Table 12 presents the scores of the participants according to the criteria of the assessment indicated in chapter

three (**Std** for student, **T.S** for thesis statement, **A.D** for analysis and discussion, **T.E** for textual evidence and examples, **G.P** for grammar and punctuation, and **C** for coherence).

**Table 12**

*Detailed Results of the Pre-test*

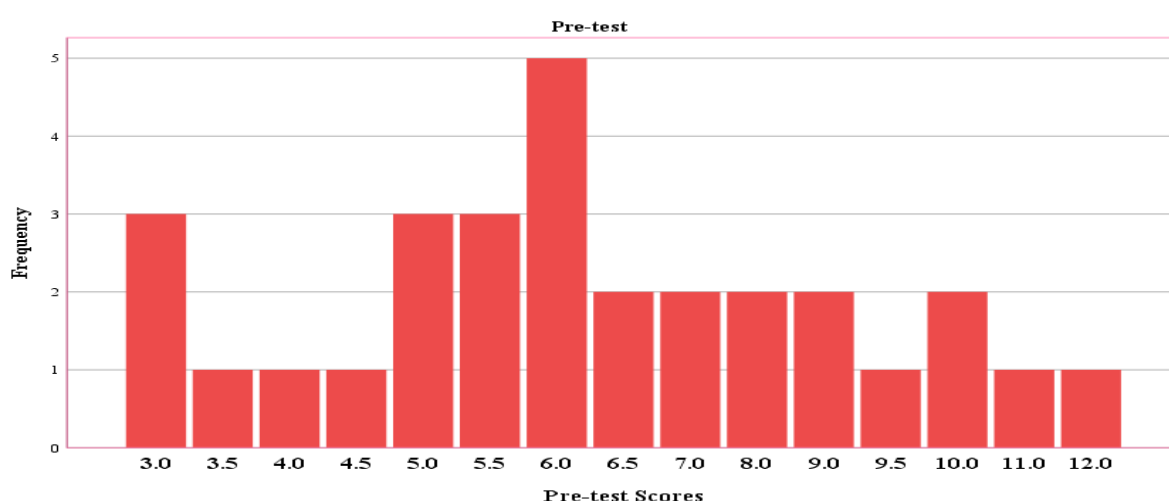
| Students | T.S. | A.D. | T.E. | G.P. | C   | Pre-test Total |
|----------|------|------|------|------|-----|----------------|
| Std1     | 0.5  | 2.5  | 1.5  | 2.5  | 1.0 | 8.0            |
| Std2     | 1.0  | 2.5  | 1.5  | 4.5  | 1.5 | 11.0           |
| Std3     | 1.0  | 2.0  | 0.5  | 2.0  | 0.5 | 6.0            |
| Std4     | 0.5  | 1.5  | 2.0  | 1.5  | 0.5 | 6.0            |
| Std5     | 0.5  | 2.0  | 1.0  | 2.0  | 1.0 | 6.5            |
| Std6     | 1.0  | 2.0  | 1.5  | 4.0  | 1.5 | 10.0           |
| Std7     | 0.5  | 3.5  | 2.0  | 4.5  | 1.5 | 12.0           |
| Std8     | 0.0  | 1.0  | 1.5  | 2.5  | 1.0 | 6.0            |
| Std9     | 0.5  | 2.5  | 1.5  | 3.5  | 1.5 | 9.5            |
| Std10    | 0.0  | 1.5  | 1.0  | 2.5  | 1.5 | 6.5            |
| Std11    | 0.0  | 1.0  | 1.0  | 1.5  | 0.0 | 3.5            |
| Std12    | 0.5  | 1.5  | 1.0  | 1.5  | 0.5 | 5.0            |
| Std13    | 0.0  | 1.0  | 0.0  | 1.0  | 1.0 | 3.0            |
| Std14    | 1.0  | 2.5  | 1.0  | 3.5  | 1.0 | 9.0            |
| Std15    | 1.0  | 2.5  | 1.5  | 3.0  | 1.0 | 9.0            |
| Std16    | 0.5  | 2.0  | 2.0  | 1.5  | 1.0 | 7.0            |
| Std17    | 0.5  | 2.5  | 1.5  | 1.5  | 0.0 | 6.0            |
| Std18    | 0.5  | 2.0  | 0.0  | 2.0  | 1.0 | 5.5            |
| Std19    | 0.0  | 1.5  | 0.0  | 1.5  | 0.0 | 3.0            |
| Std20    | 0.5  | 1.5  | 1.0  | 1.0  | 1.0 | 5.0            |
| Std21    | 0.0  | 0.5  | 0.5  | 2.5  | 1.0 | 4.5            |
| Std22    | 0.0  | 1.5  | 1.0  | 1.5  | 1.5 | 5.5            |
| Std23    | 0.5  | 2.0  | 1.0  | 1.0  | 0.5 | 5.0            |
| Std24    | 0.5  | 1.5  | 0.0  | 1.0  | 1.0 | 4.0            |
| Std25    | 0.0  | 1.5  | 1.0  | 1.5  | 1.5 | 5.5            |
| Std26    | 1.0  | 2.0  | 1.5  | 2.5  | 1.0 | 8.0            |
| Std27    | 1.0  | 2.5  | 1.0  | 3.5  | 2.0 | 10.0           |
| Std28    | 0.5  | 2.0  | 1.0  | 1.5  | 2.0 | 7.0            |
| Std29    | 1.5  | 1.5  | 0.5  | 1.5  | 1.0 | 6.0            |
| Std30    | 0.0  | 0.5  | 0.5  | 2.0  | 0.0 | 3.0            |

As indicated by Table 12 and Figure 19, the pretest scores showed variance, yet they were low compared to the past performances of the participants. The assessment

criteria helped us determine the major weaknesses of the participants and explain the reasons behind the low scores. The researcher divided the criteria into two broad categories namely ‘language and structure’ and ‘analysis’, which were subdivided into five subcategories 1) thesis statement, 2) analysis and discussion, 3) textual evidence and illustration, 4) grammar and punctuation, and 5) coherence. Subcategories 1, 4, and 5 were constitutive of the first category, while 2 and 3 composed the second category.

**Figure 19**

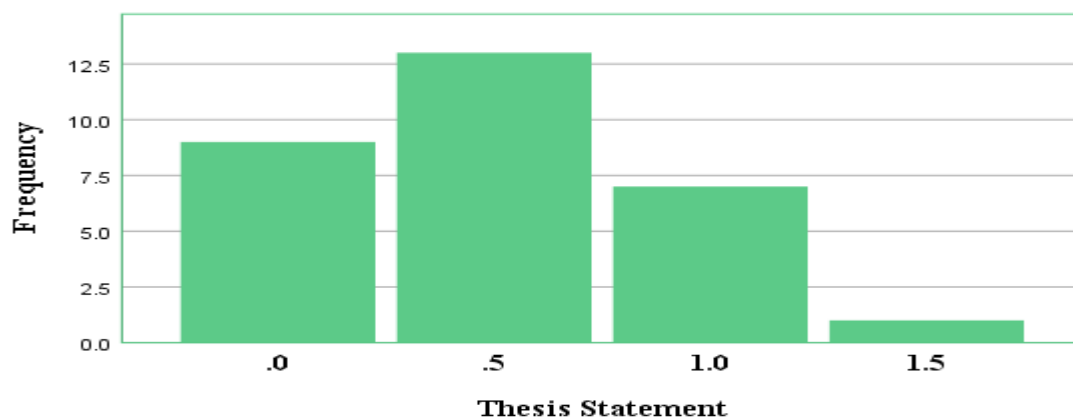
*Pre-Test Scores Frequencies*



Scores in the first category were relatively low (figure 20). First, most participants did not know how to formulate a thesis statement. Only student 29 got 1.5 out of 2. The participants demonstrated noticeable and general weakness in academic writing, which was surprising at this level. When investigated, it turned out that the participants did not have a teacher of academic writing for two years. This might have had a major impact on the students’ performances in the pre-test.

**Figure 20**

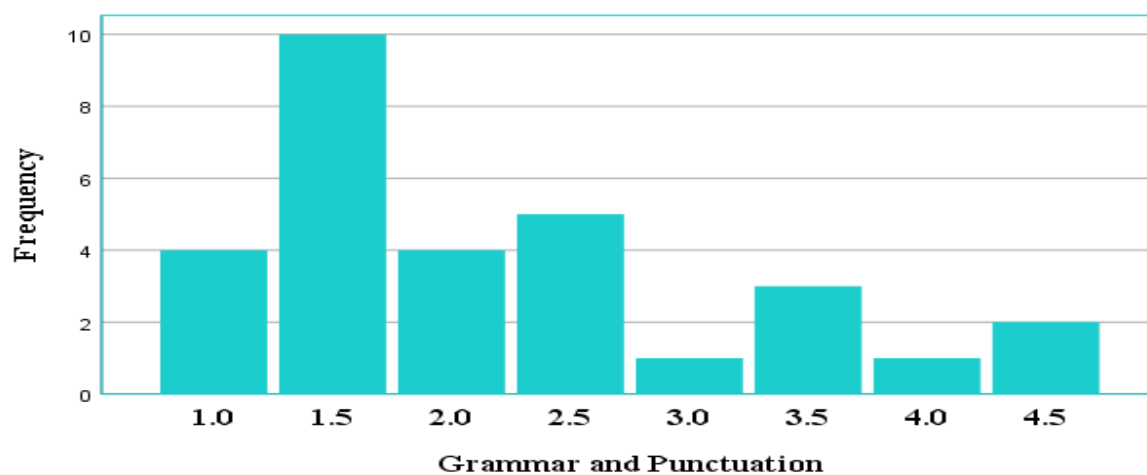
*Thesis Statement Scores Frequencies (Pre-test)*



Moreover, the participants seemed to struggle with the same linguistic areas, mainly sentence structure, and punctuation (figure 21).

**Figure 21**

*Grammar and Punctuation Scores Frequencies*



Examining the papers of the pre-test, we could summarize the following points based on the most common grammatical mistakes:

- ◆ Some papers did not contain any punctuation marks, which resulted in a large number of fragments.

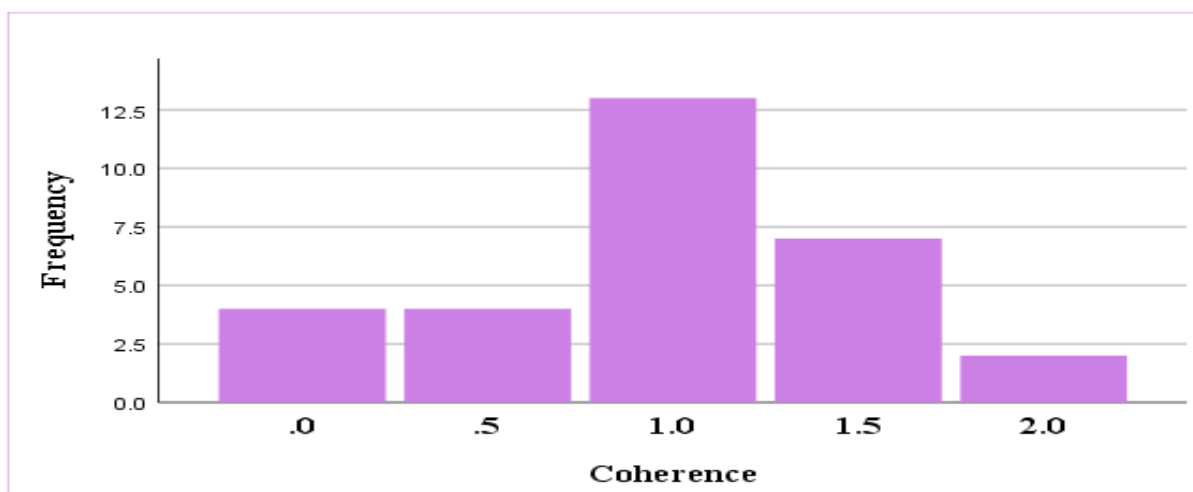
- ◆ Only students 2, 6, and 7 showed a moderate command of punctuation rules.
- ◆ Most students had subject-verb agreement, tense consistency, and article use problems.
- ◆ Most students could not differentiate between a dependent and an independent clause, which is also linked to punctuation problems.

Most subjects scored 1.5 in grammar and punctuation, which was a low score for third-year students. Only 6 students showed a mastery of grammar which called for enhancing linguistic competence during the treatment through regular written assignments and constructive, corrective feedback.

Coherence was another important element in the assessment criteria. The researcher wanted to investigate whether the participants could organize their thoughts logically and clearly. The results showed that most students scored between 0 and 1 out of 2 (figure 22). This is not surprising considering their weaknesses in grammar, punctuation, and essay outlining. In addition, most of them did not have a thesis statement to follow.

**Figure 22**

*Coherence Scores Frequencies (Pre-test)*



Concerning literary analysis and discussion, the participants seemed to have difficulty recognizing the difference between question keywords like explain, analyze, discuss, and identify. The test provided three questions, with different keywords; however, we noticed the participants approached the questions in a similar way. We could identify these patterns in the answers:

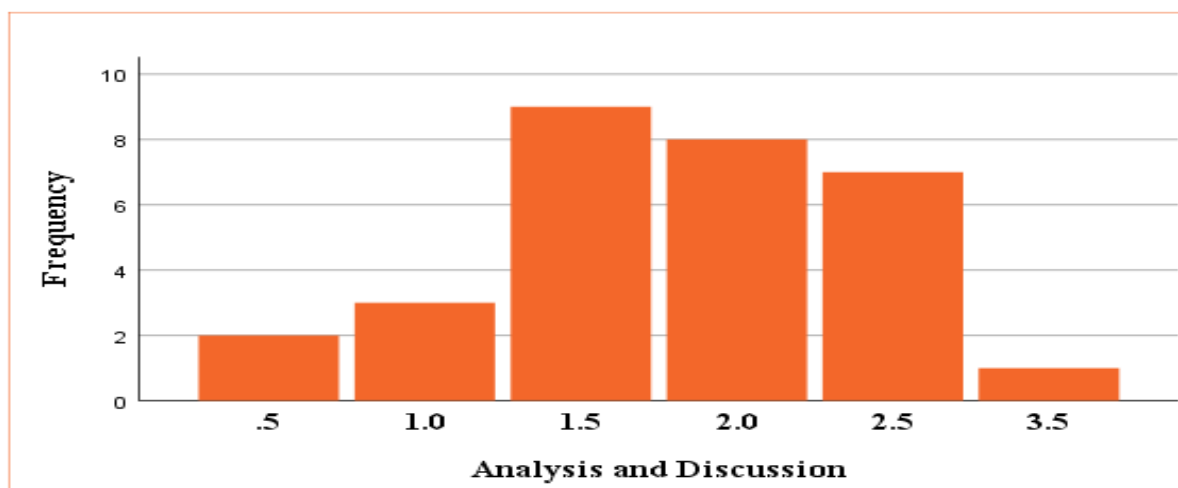
- ◆ Participants could not place the quotes given in the book;
- ◆ They could not be selective when asked to identify the themes present in the quotes. Instead most mentioned all the themes of the book and started explaining them forgetting about the quote in the question;
- ◆ 70% of the subjects started their essay with biographical information about the writer which showed a lack of creativity;
- ◆ Subjects confused explanation and analysis with the summarization of the story.

80% of the answers were merely a retelling of the story of ‘The Little Prince.’

Figure 23 below shows that 22 students scored between 0.5 and 2 out of 6 points. The results were compatible with those of textual evidence and illustration.

**Figure 23**

*Analysis and Discussion Scores Frequencies (Pre-test)*

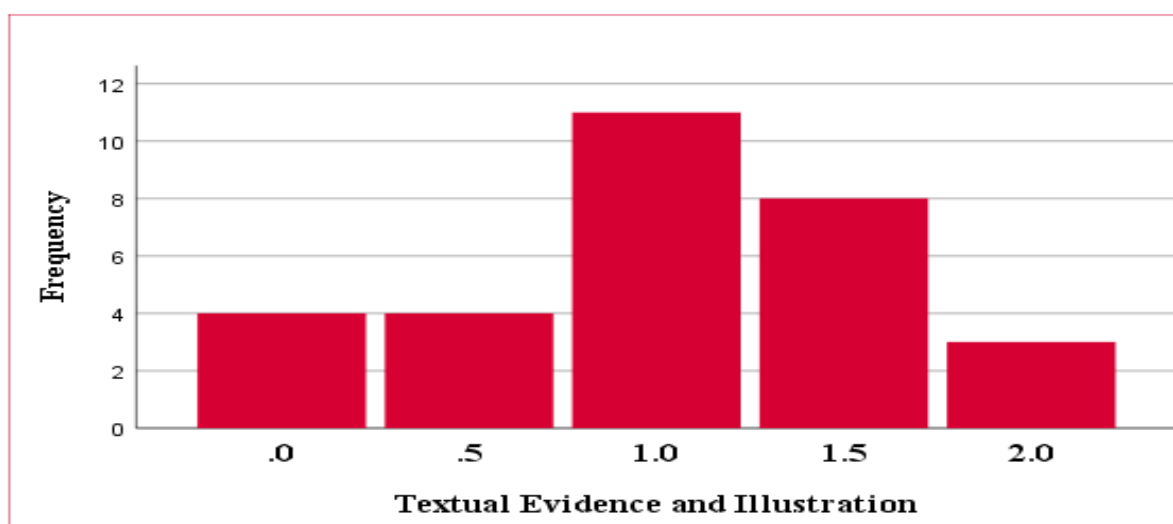


The researcher allowed the participants to bring a printed version of the book to elicit illustrations as long the books were not annotated or highlighted (quotes). The participants were also asked to use any forms of textual evidence they knew. The chart above shows that 25 students scored between 0 and 1.5 out of 5 in this area (figure 24). We noticed the following common aspects when correcting the papers:

- ◆ Most students could not identify the right quotes to use for illustration;
- ◆ They could not appropriately formulate, or place the quotes within the text. The quotes were randomly put in the middle of sentences without any reporting verbs, inverted commas, introductions, or comments.
- ◆ Some students changed the words and structures of the quotes without any indication or clarification that they were not the original words of the author.

**Figure 24**

*Chart of Textual Evidence Scores Frequencies*



#### 4.5. Analysis of the Observation

For the observation, the researcher used both a checklist and a reflexive journal. Before presenting the results of the observation, and to avoid redundancy, we provide the reader with a set of classroom routines that were fixed in each session. To build the cult of learning discussed in the previous chapters, we ensured that certain classroom practices were regular and consistent during the treatment.

- ✓ All the sessions started with a warm greeting followed by a small inquiry about the student's academic and personal week. The teacher asked about things such as their health, families, projects, assignments in other modules, etc.
- ✓ The teacher then asked if all the students received, and read the handout (the handout is sent at least 4 days before the session).
- ✓ The teacher checked whether students were advancing in their reading of the book. For instance, we asked them if they were enjoying the reading, and if they were facing any problems. Students had a few minutes to share their general impressions of the book.
- ✓ The teacher asked whether anyone had a question related to the previous lesson, if any, the teacher answered them immediately providing more examples if necessary.
- ✓ Using the board, the teacher **recapped** the major points of the last lesson together with the students, usually in the form of **mind maps**.
- ✓ The teacher clearly stated **the objectives** of the new lesson. Usually, the objectives were written on the handouts in the form of statements or questions.
- ✓ The technique of **the muddiest point** was implemented in all sessions.

- ✓ **Constructive corrective feedback** and praise were enhanced in each session.
- ✓ The technique of **picture walk** was incorporated into all class readings. In addition to the first lesson, which served as the main picture walk, the teacher asked the participants to skim and scan the handouts, the books, the chapter titles, etc. before starting the actual reading.
- ✓ **Scaffolding** was used in all sessions. The teacher always modeled any skill, task, technique, or procedure before asking the learners to work on it.
- ✓ **Lesson wrappers** were used at the beginning and end of each session.
- ✓ **Reading diaries** were recommended with each book.
- ✓ **Written assignments** were given every week.
- ✓ **Visual cues** were integrated into each handout to improve attention, focus, and retention (check Chapter 1).

We started first with the analysis of the observation checklist and then moved to the data-driven from the reflexive journal.

#### **4.5.1. Session 1: Basic Concepts in Literary Analysis**

The objectives of the first lesson were to:

- 1)** Familiarize the participants with the basic concepts of literary analysis (definitions and relevant examples of literary devices);
- 2)** Use the first handout as a map for our course outline (picture walk);
- 3)** Establish the first and basic link between the students' experiences and our literary course (use of examples from the first questionnaire).

For this session, the teacher used a lesson handout that contained definitions and examples of the basic literary devices namely plot, setting, themes, character types,

point of view, symbols, motifs, mood, tone, and style. The examples were a combination of students' preferences elicited from the first questionnaire, and the teacher's own. This was done as a part of exhibiting '**similarity of interests**', which is a principle of CRT.

The teacher made sure that the participants knew which titles were her favorites, and which were the students'. Each time we discussed an example, the teacher inquired about the student who mentioned that specific title in the questionnaire. This helped the students know more about each other, and served as a discussion opener among them. The teacher guided these discussions by asking the students to tell us more about the plots, characters, and themes of the books, movies, or animations they mentioned. The techniques used during this session are:

- 1) **Picture Walk:** The handout consisted of all the main elements the participants will encounter during the treatment.
- 2) **Chunking:** The researcher chunked the information into 8 titles. For the ninth title (style), the researcher informed the participants that it is a general term that includes specific uses of all the literary devices. This way the brain would not consider it as new information, but connect it to the previously learned ones.
- 3) **Active Recall:** Participants were asked to write down questions while taking notes and ask them at the end of the lesson.
- 4) **Schema Activation questions (metacognition):** The researcher asked the participants questions that link their experiences to the content and examples of the handout.
- 5) **Visual Cues:** The handout included pictures of the characters, movies, animations, etc. used for illustration.

The observation checklist indicated the results below. For the first session, we presented the detailed results in the tables to remind the reader of the areas and skills we observed. However, starting from the second session onward, we reported the main results of each part of the checklist, providing the number of constructs (skills) so the reader can always go back to the checklist to verify. (note that NA = No opportunity to observe skill; 0 = Skill not demonstrated at all; 1 = Demonstrated skill appropriately but not consistently; 2= Demonstrated skill but used inappropriately; 3 = Demonstrated skill and used appropriately)

**A) Comprehension:** Since it was the first session, we did not have the opportunity to observe elements 5, 8, 12, and 14. We noticed that students could not infer meaning or compare works, or even simple literary aspects like characters. For instance, they struggled when trying to compare characters in terms of role and quality, and comparing the plot of ‘The Lord of the Rings’ to other works they analyzed the year before. The results also showed inconsistency in some skills like answering questions, explaining concepts, and summarizing information. We detected that students struggled with the part on character types, and could not easily sum up or mind map the classification.

Skills 11 and 15 were consistent, yet not appropriately used. When explaining themes, symbols, mood, tone, and character types, the teacher tried to incorporate the participants’ personal experiences by asking things like “Think of people you know of similar character type, think of what this animal, idea, color, sound, or smell symbolize to you and compare it to your peers, think of the way you felt through the events of your favorite movie, and try to identify the tone linked to each feeling, etc.” We noticed that although students knew the answers to such questions, they hesitated when asked

to share. Similarly, students had difficulties formulating their questions and often needed the teacher to reformulate it for them.

**Table 13**

*Results of First Session Observation Checklist: Comprehension*

| Element Observed                                                                                       | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
|  <b>Comprehension</b> |    |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Students can easily understand task instructions                                                    |    |   |   |   | X |
| 2. Students can follow along with instructions                                                         |    |   |   |   | X |
| 4. Students can understand the language in the handouts                                                |    |   |   |   | X |
| 5. Students can understand the language of the books                                                   | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 6. Students can understand questions                                                                   |    |   | X |   |   |
| 7. Students can explain concepts when asked                                                            |    |   | X |   |   |
| 8. Students can recall previously learned information                                                  | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 10. Students can infer meaning (demonstrate inferential comprehension)                                 |    | X |   |   |   |
| 11. Students can link information to their experiences                                                 |    |   |   | X |   |
| 12. Students understand links between literary works and types of context                              | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 13. Students can compare works                                                                         |    | X |   |   |   |
| 14. Students can debate issues and viewpoints                                                          | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 15. Students can formulate questions                                                                   |    |   |   | X |   |
| 16. Students can summarize information                                                                 |    |   | X |   |   |

**b) Cultural Awareness:** The nature of the first lesson did not allow us to observe most of the elements in this part. However, it was shown that students could not appropriately explain cultural elements such as symbols and motifs, easily identify their own cultural frames of reference, or compare their culture to the target culture (or maybe just could not communicate effectively).

**Table 14***Results of the First Session Observation Checklist: Cultural Awareness*

| Element Observed                                                                                            | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
|  <b>Cultural Awareness</b> |    |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Students can identify cultural elements                                                                  | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 2. Students can explain cultural elements                                                                   |    |   |   | X |   |
| 3. Students can tolerate unfamiliar cultural aspects                                                        | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 4. Students can tolerate unfamiliar character actions (culture-specific)                                    |    | X |   |   |   |
| 5. Students can tolerate sensitive/taboo issues                                                             | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 6. Students know their cultural frames of reference                                                         |    | X |   |   |   |
| 7. Students can compare their culture and the target culture                                                |    | X |   |   |   |
| 8. Students can recognize cultural differences across various books, movies, animation, etc.                | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 9. Students understand the link between culture and literary discourse                                      | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 10. Students can identify with 'the other'                                                                  | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 11. Students can infer meaning from unfamiliar cultural ideas                                               | X  |   |   |   |   |

For example, when asked to reflect on sisterhood in Algeria and compare it to that manifested in the animation movie 'Frozen' (which turned out to be a favorite among most participants), the subjects could not draw links, or find similarities or differences. Moreover, the teacher asked the participants to compare the representation of stock characters in American literature and TV to that in Arabic. Although the participants named a few stock characters in both cultures, they couldn't proceed with the comparison.

**c) Interaction:** Overall, students displayed high interaction in the first session; we attributed this to the inclusion of students' preferences and favorite movies in the handouts. It could also be linked to the degree of familiarity they had with some of the

concepts in the handout like plot elements and themes. As we can see in the table below, the subjects were engaged with the material, showing enthusiasm about the content. They significantly contributed to the class, yet displayed some inconsistencies with elements 6, 8, and 12. As noted above, participants found some parts more challenging (character types, point of view); therefore, displayed lower interaction when dealing with them.

**Table 15**

*Results of the first session Observation Checklist: Interaction*

| Element Observed                                                                                     | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
|  <b>Interaction</b> |    |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Students constructively contribute to the class                                                   |    |   |   |   | X |
| 2. Students prepare the handouts as asked (read at home before class)                                |    |   |   | X |   |
| 3. Students complete tasks assigned                                                                  |    |   |   | X |   |
| 4. Students interact appropriately                                                                   |    |   |   |   | X |
| 5. Students answer questions                                                                         |    |   | X |   |   |
| 6. Students ask questions                                                                            |    |   | X |   |   |
| 7. Students appreciate feedback                                                                      |    |   |   |   | X |
| 8. Students share their ideas with the teacher and peers                                             |    |   | X |   |   |
| 9. Students argue about their viewpoints                                                             |    | X |   |   |   |
| 10. Students are engaged with the material at hand                                                   |    |   |   |   | X |
| 11. Students show enthusiasm about the material                                                      |    |   |   |   | X |
| 12. Students engage in class discussions                                                             |    |   | X |   |   |
| 13. Students listen to each other when participating                                                 |    |   |   | X |   |
| 14. Students respect class rules and routines                                                        | X  |   |   |   |   |

Moreover, students did not read all the information in the handout at home, or else they read it without paying attention. When given a task in class, they did not complete all the parts of the task maybe because they did not possess the necessary skills

to complete it (just like in the aforementioned comparison task). In addition, we noticed that sometimes they didn't attend to what a peer was saying; the teacher had to repeat the comment or answer of students to the class in different instances.

**d) Community Building:** The last part of learning we observed was cooperative learning and community building. Unfortunately, we did not have the chance to observe most aspects. This is justified, given that this was the earliest stage of the treatment. We were able to observe students' general attitudes towards the teacher and each other. They showed high respect for both. We further observed that when asked to work on tasks in pairs or groups, the participants opted for individual work. For the first session, the checklist was sufficient.

**Table 16**

*Results of the First Session Observation Checklist: Community Building*

| Elements Observed                                                                                                                    | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
|  <b>Community building (Cooperative Learning)</b> |    |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Students show respect to each other                                                                                               |    |   |   |   | X |
| 2. Students show respect to the teacher                                                                                              |    |   |   |   | X |
| 3. Students work in pairs or groups to solve problems and answer questions                                                           |    | X |   |   |   |
| 4. Students work in groups on projects                                                                                               | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 5. Students communicate their concerns as a group to the teacher                                                                     | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 6. Students help each other complete tasks                                                                                           |    | X |   |   |   |
| 7. Students appreciate the efforts of each other                                                                                     | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 8. Students are happy when one student gets good feedback                                                                            | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 9. Students acknowledge the efforts of their peers when working on tasks or projects                                                 | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 10. Students acknowledge the efforts of their delegate                                                                               | X  |   |   |   |   |
| 11. Students acknowledge the effort of the teacher                                                                                   | X  |   |   |   |   |

By the end of the session, participants were asked about the muddiest point. There was a sort of general agreement that character types were the most challenging elements which aligned with our observation. Lastly, they were given an assignment (check appendix). Through this assignment, the researcher tried to focus on the main weaknesses observed during the session.

#### **4.5.2. Session 2: Theme Analysis (Writing A theme Analysis Essay)**

The second lesson focused on theme analysis. Building on the first lesson, the teacher reviewed the definition of themes and explained how to identify them in a book and how they relate to the rest of the literary aspects. Then, the teacher proceeded to teach writing a theme analysis essay, the various types of textual evidence we could use to support our analysis, and how to properly cite them in the essay. The objectives were to improve students' abilities to:

- 1) Recognize and name themes in a literary text;
- 2) Identify main and sub-themes;
- 3) Identify the link between the themes;
- 4) Outline and write a theme analysis essay;
- 5) Use textual evidence and examples effectively.

The handout started with a general review of essay structure and then provided three examples of theme analysis essays, where distinct colors were used for each part of the essay and each type of illustration to help students process the information (see appendix). The essays sampled three of the most common ways of organizing literary analysis essays, three distinct forms of writing the thesis statement, and all the various

forms of illustration we could use to support our analysis (quotes from the text itself, quotes from other books, in-text citations, story events, views of literary critics, etc.).

The books used were ‘Hard Time’, ‘Things Fall Apart’, ‘Lord of the Rings’, and ‘The Hobbit’. We chose the first two books because the students were familiar with their content and general plot lines (as per the teachers’ interview and students’ first questionnaire), whereas the last two were chosen since they are among the teachers’ favorites (which was already communicated to the students in the previous session).

The techniques used in this session were:

- 1) **Spaced Repetition:** The teacher based the new learning about theme analysis on the basic information provided in the first lesson.
- 2) **Schema Activation activities:** The teacher used sample analysis of familiar books to help activate the students’ background knowledge.
- 3) **Active Recall:** With the help of the teacher, the participants were asked to work in pairs or groups and try recalling and outlining the plotlines and themes of the books mentioned in the handout.
- 4) **Bloom’s Taxonomy:** The teacher planned the lesson to move (inductively) from knowing (what is a theme, how to identify, how to write an essay, etc.) to identifying (identifying themes in the books they already read), to comprehending (understanding the role of themes, their link to other devices, the structure of theme analysis essays, etc.), to analyzing (analyzing themes, analyzing structure of an essay), to creating (try and write a theme analysis essay at home using the learned knowledge).

**5) Visual Cues:** The handout uses color coding to signal the different parts of the essays. The background of every essay is themed according to the book analyzed.

**a) Comprehension:** Participants demonstrated low comprehension. Although they showed a fair level of understanding of the main points of the lesson, they struggled with the sample essays. The participants faced more than one difficulty; not only they did not know how to write essays, but they did not recall the plot lines of ‘Hard Times’ and ‘Things Fall Apart.’ The teacher had planned a classroom discussion around the themes of the books, and the cultural references in each, but it was not possible. The teacher had to change the instructional tool on the spot, replacing the classroom discussion with the activity of active recall described above. While the students worked on the plotlines of ‘Hard Times’ and ‘Things Fall Apart’, the teacher summarized the main idea of ‘The Lord of the Ring’ and explained the cultural and religious references mentioned in the essay. Recalling the storylines together, somehow restored the pace of the lesson.

The general observation was that participants seemed frustrated with the information load, although the lesson was based heavily on ‘supposedly’ background knowledge (essay writing, books they analyzed). The teacher had to enquire about it. It turned out that not having a teacher of academic writing for two years, and not being asked to write essays in the previous academic tests, had a major impact on their confidence level. They claimed that they feared writing essays, let alone writing literary analysis essays. To make them feel comfortable, the teacher advised that each participant write down the most challenging aspects of academic writing in her copybook, promising that by the end of the academic year, we would be able to cross

out as many aspects as possible. I was surprised that the participants rushed to do this task. Students had difficulties in areas 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, and 13 which was justified given the details we just shared about the session. Students still could not formulate their questions properly.

**b) Cultural Awareness:** When examining their cultural awareness, we noticed that the participants did not demonstrate skills 1,2,3,4,6,7,9, and 11 which relate to the ability to understand, elicit, and speak about cultural aspects in literary texts. Since CRT advocates the explicit teaching of culture, we chose sample essays that explicitly discuss social, cultural, and religious themes. However, the participant could not identify these cultural elements. It could be because they were more concerned with their issues in essay writing, or because they lacked an adequate understanding of the link between culture and literature.

**c) Interaction:** This session recorded a fair level of interaction. However, the subjects could not answer most questions. They completed the tasks, but clumsily (which might be due to the reasons foretasted). We observed a slight change in areas 8, and 13 (compared to the first session). The subjects shared the difficulties they were having with ease. They communicated their concerns about essay writing and asked for advice and academic books that might help them improve. Additionally, they seemed more attentive when their peers spoke. This might be related to the fact that they had a common concern. This lines with the CRT principle that the more personal teaching is, the more students are engaged.

**d) Cooperative Learning:** Last but not least, when examining cooperation, we remarked that some participants worked in pairs on the task, but with difficulty. It

seemed like since they were all facing a similar (difficult) problem, they preferred cooperation. This action, though might seem trivial, was essential and significant for community building.

By the end of the session, the learners identified structuring the essay and using illustrations properly as the muddiest points. The teacher then gave them the task of writing a theme analysis essay at home about their favorite book, movie, or animation following one of the samples on the handout and using similar color codes. The teacher used written, detailed feedback to help them identify their mistakes, and provided them with a list of their most common grammar and structure mistakes, and ways to overcome them.

#### **4.5.3. Sessions 3 and 4: ‘The Little Prince’ Study Guide**

The main objectives of these sessions were to:

- 1)** Highlight the importance of contextual information (biography, history, science, philosophy, etc.) in literary text comprehension and interpretation;
- 2)** Review the main concepts of the first handout (plot, setting, theme, symbols, motifs, etc.), and clarify how they interact to create the essence of the literary work;
- 3)** Introduce different question keywords to prepare learners for an upcoming session (session 7: types of questions and how to answer them);
- 4)** Establish the knowledge necessary for intertextuality and comparison activities in sessions 5 and 6 (Peter Pan Analysis).

The first Study Guide started by asking the learners to research and find information about **a)** the writer (try finding any information from the biography of the writer that is relevant to the book’s themes, characters, events, etc.), **b)** the historical

context of the book, and **c)** existentialism (definition, principles, and main philosophers). That was followed by a set of questions of multiple forms discussing themes, symbols, settings, and characters (check appendix). The second study guide focused on point of view, textual evidence, and the link between context and text. Both guides extracted the most relevant quotes to the themes of the books to enhance learners' comprehension of the previous lesson (note: the reader needs to verify the handouts in the appendices to check the questions asked during the sessions and understand their link to the techniques below).

The techniques used in these sessions were:

- 1) Chunking:** The teacher made sure not to exceed 8 items, activities, or questions per handout. Both handouts consisted of 6 activities.
- 2) Spaced Repetition:** The handouts reviewed concepts from the first handout (themes, symbols, setting, motifs, character types, and POV)
- 3) Active Recall:** The participants were asked to write down questions, while we discussed the content of the handout and share them at the end of the session.
- 4) Classroom Discussion:** As clarified in the previous chapter, all study guide sessions started with a discussion, where participants shared their opinions and impressions about the book.
- 5) Visual Cues:** The handouts were 'The Little Prince' themed. Pictures relevant to the points discussed in the handout were used to help learners mentally place the information and link their reading to the new learning.
- 6) Reflective Questions (Schema activation):** The handout consisted of reflective questions that link students' experiences to the journey of 'The Little Prince.'

**7) Bloom's Taxonomy:** The handouts covered a variety of question types (identify, explain, comment, analyze, discuss, and compare) that were meant to trigger the different levels of the taxonomy.

**8) Intertextuality Activities:** The study guide explicitly emphasized the effect of the philosophy of existentialism on the writer, writing style, themes, and structure of 'The Little Prince.'

Before answering the questions in the study guides, the teacher collected the information gathered by the students about the author, the context of the book, and the philosophy of existentialism. Although the participants contributed to the two first aspects, they did not research the philosophy claiming that it was complicated. Using the board, the teacher explained and identified the premise of the philosophy, its principles, thoughts, and scholars highlighting its effect on literature, and giving examples of the most famous existentialist authors and works. We also listed all the relevant historical and biographical information. Below, we provide the main results of the observation from sessions 3 and 4.

**a) Comprehension:** The participants demonstrated a fair level of comprehension during both sessions. There was a general agreement that the book was interesting, fun, and easy to read. The instructions in the handouts were also easily followed. Skills 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, and 14 were demonstrated but not consistently. For example, students could not understand all the questions since they could not differentiate between the requirements for each type of question. Skills 10 and 11 were moderately present since the subjects were still learning about context and its importance in literary interpretation. However, after linking existentialism to the book, the students seemed to have a better

understanding of the meaning behind the characters, actions, and setting of the book. Finally, skills 1, 2, and 3 were demonstrated appropriately and consistently.

**b) Cultural Awareness:** Unlike the previous session, these two allowed us to examine students in some of the areas of cultural awareness. While we couldn't observe skills 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, and 11, the results of the checklist indicated that the participants could neither identify nor explain the cultural aspects of the literary work without the help of the teacher. Skills 6, 7, and 9 were demonstrated but with difficulty. For instance, the learners knew about their cultural frames of reference, but could not formulate sentences to express them. This was not surprising since we agreed with Hammond (2010) when she said that it is making 'the familiar strange' that is more challenging, that is recognizing and expressing our own cultural set of beliefs and values.

**c) Interaction:** The sessions marked high interaction. Most students participated, answered, and asked questions. Skills 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 were all displayed consistently and appropriately. Participants were more engaged with the sixth activity in the first study guide and the second one in the second study guide (check appendix); they interacted and argued, opposing each other's views. In the sixth activity, the teacher asked the subjects to explain how the writer used the analogies of the Little Prince, the fox, and the rose to allude to the themes of relationships, responsibility, love, loss, connection, and choice in the light of a set of quotes extracted from the text. The second activity asked them if they agreed with the Pilot's representation of grownups.

**d) Cooperative Learning:** Although we couldn't observe most of the skills in this part, what is worth noting is that by the fourth session, participants started leaning more toward pair and group work. When given tasks, they worked in pairs and groups without

the teacher asking them to. Lastly, the learners claimed they could not yet grasp the differences between the various question keywords, which was the muddiest point of the two sessions. For the assignment, the learners were given the task of writing a short analysis of one of the themes of the book.

#### **4.5.4. Sessions 5 and 6: ‘Peter Pan’ Study Guides**

The objectives of the two sessions were:

- 1) Emphasizing the importance of biographical information in literary text interpretation;
- 2) Enhancing the learners’ understanding of intertextuality (comparing ‘Peter Pan’ to ‘The Little Prince’);
- 3) Highlighting the cultural elements in the book;
- 4) Highlighting the role of readers’ personal experiences in text interpretation;
- 5) Explicitly teaching the three levels of culture;
- 6) Explicitly teaching the link between emotion, cognition, reading, and learning.

The techniques used were the same as in the previous two sessions. For chunking, the first study guide contained four activities, while the second consisted of 8 activities. In the intertextuality activity, the teacher designed a task of comparing ‘Peter Pan’ and ‘The Little Prince’ in terms of themes, characters, and characters’ motivations. For active recall, the participants were asked to write down their thoughts, comments, and questions as they read the handouts at home. The first handout was Peter Pan-themed, and the second one was both ‘Peter Pan’ and ‘The Little Prince’-themed since it stressed the comparison between the two.

After collecting the biographical information which the participants gathered, we initiated a discussion, where learners shared their views about the book. The results from the observation checklists are described below.

**a) Comprehension:** The participants found ‘Peter Pan’ more challenging than ‘The Little Prince’ in terms of length and language. They also expressed that the questions on these handouts were slightly more advanced than the ones before. We observed an improvement in skills 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 13. They were demonstrated consistently and effectively during both sessions. However, students still had problems with summarizing information; they could neither be selective nor concise.

**b) Cultural Awareness:** We could observe most of the skills related to cultural awareness. There was a slight improvement in skills 1, 2, 6, and 9. This might be due to the explicit teaching of context types and their effect on text production and interpretation. The constant emphasis made on the role of the socio-cultural experiences of authors in their writing may have helped in raising students’ cultural awareness. This could also be attributed to the universality of themes and issues discussed in the two books (choice, responsibility, family, love, friendship, etc.). These kinds of themes touch on everybody’s life and experience, which facilitates meaning inference and comprehension. We could also observe some aspects of tolerance. In one of the activities, the teacher asked the students to identify whether certain characters were bad or good and comment on their actions. The purpose of this question was to examine students’ judgments and tolerance. Participants had contradicting views concerning the actions of characters such as Peter Pan, Hook, Tinker Bell, Mr. Darling, The King, The Snake, the Businessman, etc. While some couldn’t decide on the righteousness of these

characters, others could easily place them as bad. Overall, there was a noticeable intolerance towards any action that did not fit the students' cultural frames of reference.

**c) Interaction:** These two sessions were the highest in terms of interaction. All aspects of the checklist were demonstrated consistently and appropriately. Learners seemed to be more engaged with activities 3 and 4 of the first study guide, and activity 2 of the second handout (check appendix). The third activity asked the students personal questions in relation to the books, while the other two were intertextuality activities that compared the two books. This relates to two principles of CRT, the first is that using personal experience makes the learning experience more meaningful to the students, and the second is that the brain is more likely to be hooked when new information is connected to background knowledge.

**d) Cooperative Learning:** What we noticed was that the participants showed appreciation for the information provided by the teacher, especially when comparing the two books and explaining the basis of intertextuality. The totality of the students was not at all familiar with the concept, its types, or how it works. Some students exclaimed that it was an interesting concept and asked if we were going to have more activities like that in the future. We considered this a positive and significant event in the treatment. Now learners were looking forward to what would come next. We detected, also, that through body language and comments, students validated each other, especially when someone got positive feedback from the teacher.

Again, the students said that they had difficulty distinguishing between the types of questions, thus prompting us to devise a session that focused on the nuances of question types and the appropriate methods for responding to them. The students were

asked to choose one question from the study guide and try writing an outline for the answer at home.

#### **4.5.5. Session 7: Types of Questions and How to Answer Them**

CRT requires teachers to investigate their students' weaknesses and work on them. Since our participants faced difficulty distinguishing the different questions' keywords, we planned a session to teach the main types of questions, and how to answer them in essays. The objectives of this lesson were:

- 1)** Review the forms of questions asked in the study guides;
- 2)** Familiarize the participants with the most common question types;
- 3)** Demonstrate how to answer each type of question;
- 4)** Review essay structure;
- 5)** Test learners' comprehension of the two books.

The techniques used in this session were:

- 1) Chunking:** Only 6 types of questions were studied (identify, explain, comment, analyze, discuss, and compare and contrast).
- 2) Spaced Repetition:** The handout used sample questions about 'The Little Prince' and 'Peter Pan.'
- 3) Active Recall:** By the end of the session, the participants were asked to close their copybooks and recall the types of questions, and the ways we outlined the answers to each.
- 4) Bloom's Taxonomy:** The session was planned to move from the lower level of the pyramid of the taxonomy to the highest (identify, comment, explain, analyze, discuss). When students grasp all these types, this information would, in turn,

reconstitute the lower level (knowing), hence students were asked to write essays following what they learned, constituting the highest level (creating).

- 5) **Self-Assessment:** When given a sample question, learners were asked to try and write down their answers, and then after the teacher gave the correct one, they were asked to correct their answers noting what they got right and what they missed.

We did not use a handout for this lesson. Using the board, we introduced the various questions and the meaning of each question keyword. We listed the steps used to answer each, gave sample questions, and provided sample essay outlines for each focusing on writing the thesis statement (see appendix for the questions used). The nature of the lesson dictated that we exclude the second part of the observation checklist and some elements in the first part. We focused mainly on comprehension, interaction, and cooperation. Here, we provide a general overview of the three areas together.

#### ➤ **Comprehension/Interaction/Cooperation**

Generally, students displayed a better understanding of essay structure. They seemed to recall all the parts, yet they still had problems with choosing the right structure for the thesis statement. When asked to generate thesis statements for the sample questions, only 7 students could complete the task. The students were highly engaged in this part and asked the teacher to help them construct thesis statements for questions from the previous study guides.

Concerning the types of questions, the participants seemed to have more difficulties understanding ‘explain’ and ‘analyze’ questions, which was confirmed in the muddiest point task, and later in the first metacognitive questionnaire. Moreover,

the students showed a moderate level of interaction. They were hesitant to answer questions, guess forms, or try on tasks. Most learners' (around 60%) did not answer questions, yet most of them asked important questions.

When asked to try and recall the information, we noticed that most learners opted for pair or group work. We could also see that they were helping each other with the explanation of concepts, which had not been recorded before. Furthermore, when students faced a problem with the task, they turned to the teacher for aid. This was a step forward in community building, especially with this kind of lesson, which might be less fun or engaging. At the end of the session, the students were given the task of writing an essay based on one of the sample outlines we created in class.

#### **4.5.6. Session 8: Plot Types**

The lesson was based on Booker's classification of the basic plots. Luckily, there are 7 basic types of plots, each having up to 5 stages, which was in tune with the chunking technique. The handout contained texts from Booker's book 'The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories' covering the definitions, characteristics, and storylines of each plot type. The handout used a variety of examples from the first questionnaire, classics, the teacher's favorite books, movies, and animations. The objectives of this lesson were to:

- 1) Familiarize the readers with plot types;**
- 2) Highlight the importance of plot in storytelling;**
- 3) Emphasize the role of storytelling in the human experience;**
- 4) Highlight the link between plot types, themes, and character motivation.**

The techniques followed in this session were:

- 1) **Spaced Repetition:** The teacher started with a review of the plot definition and elements from the first handout, and linked the plot to the various literary devices studied earlier. The participants were also asked to identify the types of the plot of ‘The Little Prince’ and ‘Peter Pan’.
  - 2) **Active Recall:** Since the handout was loaded with details of each plot, the teacher used a **diagnostic quiz** at the end of the session to check if learners could recall the information.
  - 3) **Visual Cues:** The handouts contained pictures of movies, book covers, and characters, and different color codes for each plot type to aid memorization and recall.
  - 4) **Intertextuality Activities:** The students were asked to compare plots of movies and books across time, cultures, and genres (check appendix).
- a) **Comprehension:** Right at the start of the session, when the teacher asked if the students read the handout and had any questions, the participants communicated that they could not understand the content of the handout. This soon changed once we explained the first type of plot using the examples elicited from the first questionnaire. Each time an example came up, the teacher enquired about the participant whose choice it was, asking her to summarize the plot for the class. If the students did not know the story of the book, movie, or animation mentioned, the teacher would give a general overview of it. Each time we moved to a new plot the learners displayed a higher level of understanding. What we observed during this session was that the familiar examples played a key role in learners’ comprehension.

**b) Cultural Awareness:** Through the intertextuality activity, we could observe skills 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, and 9. When discussing the plot types, we came across a variety of examples leading to strike-up conversations about Western storytelling, Hollywood movies, and ideologies behind fairytales. We discussed things like the clichés ‘rags to riches’ Hollywood plots, Shakespearean vs. modern tragedies, Hollywood’s take on the plot of overcoming a monster, etc. Culture lay at the heart of these discussions, and we noticed that learners demonstrated a better understanding of cultural elements. They could identify cultural differences between books and movies, and compare their own culture to the target one with more efficiency.

**c) Interaction:** Although the pace of the session was slow at the beginning, after the first twenty minutes, the students showed higher interaction with the material, peers, and the teacher. Once we started the analysis of the examples, the students were absorbed in the discussion. They asked and answered questions, shared their ideas about the plots of their favorite movies, and argued about the plots of specific works that could not be placed within one specific plot type such as *The Lord of The Rings*, *Harry Potter*, *Shutter Island*, etc. By the end of the session, the teacher administered a diagnostic quiz, introducing an extra plot type ‘rebel against the one’, which is the basic plot for dystopian literature. The researcher noticed that there was a high interest in the genre, especially after providing the examples of *Hunger Games*, *The Divergent*, and *1984*. They asked several questions about dystopian literature since they had already chosen ‘*The Giver*’ as our next read. The teacher promised that they would learn more about the plot in upcoming sessions.

**d) Cooperative Learning:** The session recorded high cooperation among the peers; participants demonstrated, consistently and appropriately, all aspects of cooperative learning except for areas 4 and 11, which we did not have a chance to observe. We caught a repeated pattern of behavior; each time students faced similar issues with the material, they displayed more cooperation (2<sup>nd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> sessions).

The learners identified ‘Comedy’ as the hardest type of plot since it did not have clear stages like the rest of the plots. Therefore, the researcher listed several movies and plays that followed this type and advised the participants to watch one and try to identify the stages while watching. For the assignment, the learners were asked to identify the plot types of the ‘Little Prince’ and ‘Peter Pan.’

#### **4.5.7. Session 09: Point of View (POV)**

The handout started with a recap of the definition and types of points of view from the first lesson and then demonstrated the characteristics of each through sample texts from various literary works (mainly classics). Building on this information, the teacher introduced, defined, and illustrated the concepts of point-of-view shifts and stream of consciousness (SC) (check appendix). The handout incorporated familiar works to the students like ‘The Great Gatsby’, ‘1984’, and ‘Peter Pan’. In addition, it covered sample texts from Fahrenheit 451- a dystopian work that shares many similarities with ‘The Giver’ (the students' first choice), and others from ‘Pride and Prejudice’- the second book learners chose for our class. The main objectives of this lesson were to help learners:

- 1) Review previous information on POV;
- 2) Learn how to analyze POV;

- 3) Learn how to use texts to illustrate for POV analysis;
- 4) Differentiate between the characteristics and uses of the various types of POV;
- 5) Learn about the link between the POV and plot elements and types;
- 6) Understand tone and mood and their connection to POV.

For the techniques, we integrated chunking, spaced repetition, active recall, visual cues, and intertextuality activities similar to session 8. During this session, we were able to observe elements of the first and third areas on the checklist.

**a) Comprehension:** Learners demonstrated most skills. They could deduce the characteristics and uses of each POV type from the sample texts, summarize key points, and answer questions. However, they seemed to face difficulties comprehending the concept of stream of consciousness, and the language of the sample texts taken from ‘Mrs. Dalloway’, ‘The Sound and the Fury’, and ‘Ulysses’ due to the unfamiliar structures of SC.

**b) Interaction:** The students displayed a fair level of interaction with the material, yet they seemed to lose energy by the middle of the session. We attributed this to the number of sample texts used. We believe that we may have neglected the chunking rule when providing examples which led to a cognitive load. It might also be because most learners did not read the texts at home. Furthermore, they seemed to be more engaged with the example of ‘The Forty Rules of Love’ By Elif Shafak, in the part of POV shifts, a modern infamous best seller.

I expressed earlier in the treatment that Elif Shafak was one of my favorite modern writers and often used examples from her works. To explain the POV shifts in her book, we had to explain the general plotline of the story, which the students found

interesting. The pattern we observed here was that each time we used a personal favorite, the learners showed more interest and asked more questions. This confirmed CRT's idea that showing '**similarity of interest**' is key to the enrichment of classroom discussions.

#### **4.5.8. Sessions 10 and 12: Characterization Lesson and Practice**

We present the results of these two sessions together since we found contrasting results between the lesson and practice sessions that are worth noting. The lesson handout started with a recap of characters' types from the first handout, then it moved to introducing, defining, and illustrating characterization with its various types and techniques. The practice handout consisted of sample texts from 'The Little Prince', 'Peter Pan', and 'The Giver', where students had to identify the type of characterization in each. The handout ended with an activity that required the participants to identify what some major characters' actions from 'The Giver' say about them in an attempt to link characterization techniques to character type. The objectives of the lesson were to:

- 1) Review previously learned information on character types;
- 2) Familiarize the learners with the various techniques of characterization;
- 3) Indicate the difference and link between characters' types and characterization;
- 4) Highlight the differences between character analysis and characterization analysis essays;
- 5) Emphasize the relatedness of literary devices.

The techniques adopted in these sessions were similar to the previous session. Table 17 summarizes the contradicting observation results of the two sessions.

**Table 17***Results of the Observation Checklists of Sessions 11 and 13*

|                             | <b>Lesson Session<br/>Session11</b>                                            | <b>Practice Session<br/>Session 13</b>                                        |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Comprehension</b>        | All elements demonstrated consistently and appropriately                       | Most elements not demonstrated                                                |
| <b>Cultural Awareness</b>   | All elements demonstrated consistently and appropriately except 10 and 11 (NO) | Most elements not demonstrated                                                |
| <b>Interaction</b>          | All elements demonstrated consistently and appropriately                       | Most elements were not demonstrated at all (no participation/ no interaction) |
| <b>Cooperative Learning</b> | Elements 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8 are demonstrated consistently and appropriately  | No cooperation                                                                |

As the table shows; session 11 recorded the highest levels of all four areas of the checklist. Students were highly responsive to the material; they seemed more attentive and absorbed than at any other time. It could be because they often had problems with character types that they were especially hooked on the material to work on their issues. The students asked and answered more questions during this session than in any other one. They manifested a remarkable improvement in inferring meaning, linking new knowledge to the pre-learned, and summarizing information. Each time we learned a new type of characterization, they started reflecting on books, movies, animations, and series they knew, or the ones we read. Likewise, they could argue and oppose each other's and the teacher's opinions, still showing respect.

Concerning cultural awareness, there was an apparent change in attitude towards 'the other.' They seemed more tolerant and understanding of characters' actions than before (Smeagol in The Lord of the Rings, Usher in The Fall of the House of Usher, Eliza in Pygmalion, Rip in Rip Van Winkle, Eveline in Dubliners, etc.). We got the

chance to discuss characters' traits, personalities, actions, and motivations in relation to our cultural frames of reference. It was revealed that the participants could both identify and express their cultural frames of reference clearly, and efficiently- something they struggled with in the previous sessions. Additionally, it was noted that they still leaned towards cooperation to complete tasks. When asked about the muddiest point, most agreed that it was planning the essay for the analysis of characterization.

Contrastingly, the practice session of characterization recorded the lowest levels in all four areas. Students did not prepare the handouts, did not show any enthusiasm about the material, and did not participate. They could barely answer questions. Note that this session was not successive to the lesson; it was preceded by the analysis of 'The Giver'- another class that exhibited high interaction. The teacher did most of the work and answered most questions. It was surprising that the participants could not identify or recall aspects they easily recalled from the last two sessions. When asked about their attitude, the learners explained that they had an exhausting week since they had to complete the presentation in four modules.

This takes us back to one of the basic threats to internal validity, which is history. History involves any external events that might affect learners' performances other than the treatment. We claimed in this study that such aspects are inevitable in education settings, hence we need to work around them. We could not find any other solution, but to redo the same task after the analysis of 'Pride and Prejudice.'

#### **4.5.9. Sessions 11: 'The Giver' Study Guide**

As promised in session (08), we started the class with a recap of plot types focusing on 'rebel against the one.' We answered the students' questions, explained the

characteristics of dystopian literature, and provided more examples. Then, we proceeded to a discussion about the plot types of ‘Peter Pan’ and ‘The Little Prince.’ The Analysis of ‘The Giver’ took a distinct form. The teacher did not use a handout, instead, we used handwritten mind maps that we re-drew on the board. The first one mapped the themes of ‘The Giver’, generating a set of questions for each. The second one organized the themes of the book around one that the teacher thought was the most interesting. After explaining all the themes, the students were asked to create their own version of the mind map putting the theme that appeals to them most at the center. Through this lesson, we wanted to teach learners how to:

- 1) Map their thoughts;
- 2) Generate questions about the content of literary works;
- 3) Identify cultural and ideological facets of literary texts;
- 4) Question the ideologies presented in literary works;
- 5) Compare works of similar genre;
- 6) Introduce Allusion (as a form of intertextuality);
- 7) Review the three levels of culture.

The session relied mainly on Bloom’s Taxonomy (moving from comprehension to creation), spaced repetition (review of plot types and POV), and intertextuality and context activities. The session started with a general overview of dystopian literature, its characteristics, most common themes, and basic plot type (rebel against the one). We reminded the participants of some of the dystopian novels (1984, The Hunger Games, Fahrenheit 451, The Divergent, etc.) aiding them to extract similar features among them. We then moved to list the relevant contextual information. The analysis of the book

followed the mind map guided by the formulated questions; these questions were discussion openers. Globally, students manifested fair levels in all four areas; we could summarize the most important results as follows:

- Students developed a better understanding of the three levels of culture, although they seemed to find difficulties placing some aspects (between the shallow and deep culture).
- Once we explained the content of the mind map, the learners showed more enthusiasm towards the book.
- They seemed to have a problem tolerating sensitive and taboo issues. They refrained from the discussion of sexuality and sexual needs that come with puberty which were essential in understanding the themes of censorship and totalitarianism in the book.
- They seemed to be more interactive when analyzing the theme of language control since it led to striking up a conversation about the chapter on language, thought, and identity in linguistics. Most students showed interest in linguistics and philosophy and were more immersed in this conversation.
- However, the highest interaction was recorded once they were asked to compare our modern world to the world of sameness in 'The Giver.' There was a progressive change in their abilities to compare, draw links, and infer meaning. Finally, the learners were still consistent in sharing their viewpoints and debating them.

For the assignment, the participants had to choose one of the questions we formulated and answer in the form of a paragraph.

#### **4.5.10. Session 13: The Metacognitive Questionnaire and the Diagnostic Quiz**

The purpose of this session was to take a break to avoid cognitive load. The metacognitive questionnaire was used both as an instructional tool and a data collection tool. The approach adopted in the treatment recommends the use of metacognitive questions and activities to help students reflect on their thinking and learning and pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses. The data elicited from such questionnaires could be utilized by teachers to improve future instructional tools and course design. Moreover, the teacher directed a diagnostic quiz as an activity of active recall. We incorporated peer assessment into the quiz, where learners corrected each other answers before turning to the teacher for the final answer (see the description of the quiz in the previous chapter). The session was organized as follows:

- We reviewed the main points of the last session,
- administered the quiz,
- distributed the questionnaire,
- and finally, shared the feedback for the first video projects received two weeks earlier.

Given the plan above-mentioned, we used a customized observation checklist to verify the skills connected to the content, tasks, and material of the session. The results are shown in Table 18 below. As the table indicates, the participants demonstrated skills 1, 2, 6, 8, 10,11, 12, 13, 14, 16, and 17 consistently and effectively, while the rest were demonstrated appropriately, but not consistently. The learners understood the quiz format and the questionnaire instructions were highly engaged with both tasks, and shared their ideas and answers with ease. Another main observation was that learners

recalled, explained, and summarized all the information, except for the stream of consciousness, stock and tertiary characters, and style. These were the elements the least reiterated through spaced repetition and active recall, which proved the effectiveness of these techniques. Moreover, most students seemed to have problems understanding questions 21, 24, and 25 from the first part of the questionnaire, and 13 and 14 of the second part (check questionnaire analysis). In addition, learners could easily identify cultural differences between the four books.

Our last observation was that learners turned to their peers first and then to the teacher whenever they faced an issue or had questions. There was a notable change in the sense of community; learners seemed to give more value to cooperation as time passed. When the teacher shared her thoughts and feedback about the first video project, learners appreciated the positive and corrective feedback, and more importantly acknowledged the efforts of their peers, especially those who worked on editing. Furthermore, they thanked the teacher for giving them the opportunity to work on the projects together. This was significant to the area of community building since it marked a denotive shift in the general attitude toward group work. When first asked to work in pairs and groups, learners claimed that they preferred individual work, yet during this session, they stated that they would like to work on similar group projects in the future. It is worth noting here that the students also acknowledged the effort of their delegate who helped those having internet problems with editing and submitting their work.

**Table 18***Results of the observation checklist of session 13*

| Element Observed                                                                      | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Students can easily understand task instructions                                   |    |   |   |   | X |
| 2. Students can follow along with instructions                                        |    |   |   |   | X |
| 3. Students can recall previously learned information                                 |    |   | X |   |   |
| 4. Students can summarize information                                                 |    |   | X |   |   |
| 5. Students can explain concepts when asked                                           |    |   | X |   |   |
| 6. Students are engaged with the material (quiz/ questionnaire)                       |    |   |   |   | X |
| 7. Students can understand the questions of the questionnaire                         |    |   | X |   |   |
| 8. Students can share their ideas with the class                                      |    |   |   |   | X |
| 9. Students ask the teacher when they don't understand a question                     |    |   | X |   |   |
| 10. Students ask their peers when they don't understand a question                    |    |   |   |   | X |
| 11. Students Appreciate Feedback                                                      |    |   |   |   | X |
| 12. Students are happy when one student gets good feedback                            |    |   |   |   | X |
| 13. Students acknowledge the efforts of their peers when working on tasks or projects |    |   |   |   | X |
| 14. Students acknowledge the efforts of their delegate                                |    |   |   |   | X |
| 15. Students acknowledge the effort of the teacher                                    |    |   |   |   | X |
| 14. Students acknowledge the efforts of their delegate                                |    |   |   |   | X |
| 15. Students acknowledge the effort of the teacher                                    |    |   |   |   | X |
| 16. Students can identify cultural differences between the four books                 |    |   |   |   | X |
| 17. Students understand the value of culture in learning literature                   |    |   |   |   | X |

**4.5.11. Sessions 14 and 15: Pride and Prejudice Study Guide**

Session 14 was used for the analysis of 'Pride and Prejudice', while 15 was a session devoted to practicing POV and characterization using sample texts from the book. We tried to work on the students' difficulties elicited from the metacognitive questionnaire (explain and analyze questions, characterization, finding illustration, etc.)

by answering sample questions using the technique of self-assessment as described in session 7.

When the students chose ‘Pride and Prejudice’, we decided to keep it last as to be able to:

- 1) Review the levels of culture (the book demonstrates a higher number of cultural facets);
- 2) Compare it to the other books in terms of cultural representation;
- 3) Review all the literary devices we studied. The book contains all types of characterization techniques including reinforcement by analogy, most types of characters, an interesting form of POV (indirect discourse), the most common themes in literature (which happened to be the students’ favorites), and a unique writing style (a unique take on romanticism, and an early shift to realism).
- 4) Introduce style. ‘Pride and Prejudice’ was used as a course wrapper since style was the last element in the first handout.
- 5) Revisit literary movements (Romanticism, the Regency era, and Realism).

We incorporated the same techniques used in the study guides of ‘The Little Prince’ and ‘Peter Pan’, except for chunking, which we sacrificed for the sake of coverage. The lesson handout contained questions about all the aspects previously learned and ended with some personal questions (what students liked or disliked, the character with whom they identified most, etc.). The practice handout consisted of sample texts from the book that illustrate characterization types and POV techniques. Before we started the analysis, we provided the learners with the most important dates and events that surrounded the career of Jane Austen and the writing of the book. After

listing the most relevant biographical information to the book, we initiated a discussion, where the participants shared their views on the book.

There seemed to be a general agreement that the book was overrated and that it was '*just a simple love story*' which soon changed after completing the study guide, highlighting Austen's unique style, explaining the theme of social criticism, and identifying the cultural representations in the book. Students 6 and 7 exclaimed that only then they could understand why Jan Austen is a much-celebrated author; the whole class seemed to agree that there was a change of mind about the book. This only further emphasized the importance of context and culture in text production and interpretation.

The session was the second most interactive after the one on characterization. What was notable was the improvement in the area of cultural awareness. Students were directly linking the analysis of the book to their own cultural frames of reference without being asked or guided by the teacher's questions. There was progress in the skill of tolerance. Students showed more sympathy, understanding, and respect for 'the other.' They seemed to be less judgmental of characters like Mr. Collins, Mrs. Bennet, Lydia, Mr. Wickham, Charlotte, and Lady Catherine, especially when we compare this to their previous attitudes towards Peter Pan, Mr. Darling, or Tinker Bell.

Overall, most skills were manifested effectively however students had some difficulties;

- They found the questions more challenging especially the ones on POV;
- They struggled with the length and language of the book;
- They had difficulty recalling all the details and events of the story, which were sometimes vital for comprehension.

When asked about the most difficult part of the lesson, students claimed that it would be hard to be selective when choosing textual evidence for their POV and characterization essays. They had a chance to work on this during the practice session.

#### **4.5.12. The Extra Session: Presentations**

Since some students asked to present their projects in class, we added this session; this way we got the chance to share our feedback about the second project. What was noted in this session was 1) the great respect and appreciation the students showed to those who presented their work, 2) their appreciation for the feedback, 3) and the impressive quality of presentations. This further indicated the establishment of a community of learning. Next, we present the analysis of the reflexive journal, giving some general observations about the video projects, the reading diaries, and written assignments.

### **4.6. Analysis of The Reflexive Journal**

The researcher relied on the reflexive journal to observe the assignments, the reading diaries, and the projects and to compensate for any shortcomings of the checklist. We used customized criteria as displayed in Table 19 below (1= weak, 2=moderate, 3=strong).

#### **4.6.1. The Written Assignments**

We could summarize the following points from the evaluation of the written assignments:

➤ What was intriguing was that all the participants did all their homework. However, it was observed that during the first three weeks, they relied heavily on internet sources; they used readily made summaries from websites like Spark Notes,

Cliff Notes, Course Hero, etc. The teacher explained to the participants how to use internet sources and references properly, and encouraged them to write their answers to improve their language and analysis. It was only after we finished ‘The Little Prince’ Study Guide that the researcher started receiving original work.

➤ The researcher could barely see any improvement in language skills during the first seven weeks. If there was any progress, it was slow and inconsiderable. This might be directly linked to the fact that up to that point, they still had issues with the teacher of academic writing.

➤ When given the choice, learners often chose opinion questions or those which link to their experiences. This was in line with our observation of interaction along the treatment, where we recorded more interaction when the discussion involved their points of view or personal experiences. Students seemed to lean more toward tasks that gave them the chance to be ‘heard and seen.’

➤ Students often discussed the written feedback on their assignments with the teacher. They enquired about their mistakes, especially those concerning language and structure.

➤ Students 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 14, 17, and 19 always did extra work at home and asked the teacher to correct it. They also sent essays via email and asked for feedback.

➤ When given the assignment of ‘The Giver’, all participants with no exception answered up to three questions, even though the task required answering one question only. When asked about it, they said they found all the questions interesting. We believe this has a link with the fact that this book was their choice and dystopian works were among their favorites as per the first questionnaire.

**Table 19***Results of the Observation of the Assignments and Projects*

| Skills Observed                                             | The Assignments |   |   | The Video Projects |   |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|--------------------|---|---|
|                                                             | 1               | 2 | 3 | 1                  | 2 | 3 |
| The participants understood the task and the instructions.  |                 |   | X |                    |   | X |
| The participants demonstrated command of the topic chosen.  |                 | X |   |                    |   | X |
| The participants demonstrated imagination and creativity;   |                 | X |   |                    |   | X |
| The participants used their cultural frames of reference;   |                 |   | X |                    |   | X |
| The language is used effectively;                           |                 | X |   |                    |   | X |
| The form and content were clear;                            |                 | X |   |                    |   | X |
| The participants utilized the information learned in class; |                 |   | X |                    |   | X |
| The participants further researched the topics chosen       | X               |   |   |                    |   | X |

#### 4.6.2. The Video Projects

When assessing the video projects, we were thrilled with the quality of work and effort put into them. This proved CRT's claim that students' performances are enhanced if we base our teaching on their most powerful skills, besides, it confirmed the usefulness of researching the background of our learners before making our instructional decisions. We could summarize the points in the reflexive journal as follows:

- The video projects were the students' most enjoyable task. Students showed their appreciation of the task both through the quality of their work, and verbally to the teacher.
- It is noteworthy that I was humbled by the trust and faith those girls put in me. Some girls filmed the videos inside their houses, sometimes not wearing their Hijabs, which was a sign of the establishment of learning partnership and community of learning discussed in Chapter 2 and adopted in our study.

- Students displayed high levels of creativity and imagination, which could not have been discovered if it wasn't for the video projects.
- Most students chose group work (something they refused at the beginning of the treatment as per the observation); only 4 students did the work individually, which is another sign of cooperative learning and community building.
- There was a significant discrepancy between the learners' speaking and writing skills. The participants had better oral skills (using better grammar and syntax).

#### **4.6.3. The Reading Diaries**

The students were asked to keep diaries while reading the books, journaling their experiences, annotating, and formulating questions. They had the freedom to share what they wrote with the class, with the teacher only, or keep them private. The purpose of these diaries was to help students express the emotions, questions, and thoughts evoked by their reading. We asked them to document their thoughts and feelings explaining why they think they had those feelings, thoughts, or questions. This we believe could raise their awareness about their own cultural frames of reference. It was a form of reporting their reactions and responses to the literary work. To push this habit, we often shared some ideas from our reading journal. To help their journal, we provided them with some ideas, but they had the freedom to customize their diaries. For instance, they were required to track their mood throughout the reading, signal the saddest, happiest, funniest, etc. moments in the book, signal a shocking idea or action, formulate questions, etc.

We observed that the participants were the least interactive with this technique during the first five sessions, especially when compared to other techniques like

classroom discussions, the muddiest point, or intertextuality activities. We inquired about this during one of the classroom discussions; the participants claimed that they were not used to expressing their feelings about what they read, especially in writing. This draws our attention to the gap in education, where we don't address the emotional side of learning enough to make our students capable of expressing themselves. The students were not comfortable when asked about their feelings, and often refrained from answering any questions concerning emotions. This is why, we explicitly taught the link between cognition, literature, and emotions during the sixth session.

Since we were on the topics of childhood, memories, family, relationships, and responsibility (Peter Pan and The Little Prince), we seized the opportunity to explain the reciprocal effect of literature, cognition, and emotions, emphasizing the role of journaling in awareness, memory, and retention. After this session, we observed a better uptake of the technique, still only around 66% of the subjects shared their content with the teacher (students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16,17, 22, 23, 25, 26 and 30). It was not until the session on characterization, that participants started discussing their journaled feelings with the class. This was initiated by a discussion on the types of characterization through actions, where students indicated how they felt about the actions of characters like the Rose, Hook, Tinker Bell, and Mr. Darling (from Peter Pan and The Little Prince), Eren (from Attack on Titans), and Daisy (from The Great Gatsby). However, the use of the diaries was more efficient and constructive when analyzing "The Giver", and "Pride and Prejudice." We could attribute this to the fact that these books were the students' choices, or to community building, where students

felt more comfortable sharing their thoughts with their peers and teacher at that point, where we reported various indications of cooperation and learning partnership.

#### **4.6.4. General Notes from the Reflexive Journal**

We used the reflexive journal to compare the overall results of the observation checklists from the various sessions, linking them to the framework of ‘Ready for Rigor.’ We compared the general outcome of each session to the preceding one regularly, keeping notes in our journal about the students’ improvement in the four areas of ‘The Ready for Rigor’ framework, namely awareness, learning partnership, information processing, and community of learning. We wanted to assess the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary approach on each of these tenets of learning.

As described in Chapter 3, we incorporated specific techniques to enhance each of these areas. The results of the reflexive journal demonstrated the following:

- Although we observed significant improvement in all four areas, the interdisciplinary approach seemed to have a faster, stronger effect on community building and learning partnership. We remind the reader that we used self and peer assessment, classroom routine, project-based learning, feedback (validation and affirmation), and peer and group work to enhance this area.
- Chunking, spaced repetition, active recall, and visual cues had a significant impact on information processing, still, it seemed like visual cues and spaced repetition had more apparent effects on recall and retention.
- The use of the students’ favorite movies, books, and animations collected from the first questionnaire, and incorporating their personal experiences were the key factors contributing to classroom interaction and discussions.

- As per students' verbal and non-verbal behaviors, intertextuality activities were the most enjoyable types of classroom activities.
- The explicit teaching of culture, context, emotions, and cognition had almost instant effects on various areas of cultural awareness.
- Lessons and activities based on Bloom's Taxonomy seemed to induce and stimulate smooth, structured, and 'well-transitioned' learning.
- Contrary to what my colleagues said in the interview, our experiment proved that scaffolding and providing students with handouts can lead to independent learning (check the discussion in Chapter 6).

## **Part Two: The Analysis of the Metacognitive Questionnaire and the Post-test**

This part analyzes the data gathered from the metacognitive questionnaire, gives the descriptive diagnostics of the post-test, and explains the results of the paired samples *t*-test. Through quantitative data mainly, this section cross-checks the results of the various research tools.

### **4.7. The Analysis of the Metacognitive Questionnaire**

The results of the first part of the questionnaire (the four-point Likert Scale) are indicated in the tables below. The 'mean' is used to interpret the overall average results of the Likert Scale, the mode gives the most frequent answer, while the percentage is used to specify the total responses of each point in the scale. The students were asked to fill in the questionnaire expressing the degree of difficulty they had in each area. The scale included four points (1= no difficulty, 2= slight difficulty, 3=moderate difficulty, 5=great difficulty). If the 'mean' is between 0.99 and 1.00 it means most students said they have no difficulty in that specific area, if it is between 1.00 and 1.99, it means most

have slight difficulty, if it is between 2.00 and 2.99, it means most students have moderate difficulty, and if it is between 3 and 4, it translates that most students have great difficulty in that area. However, for more accurate analysis we needed to look at the mode, which provides us with the most frequent choice made by the students, and the percentage (sometimes the sum of the percentage does not correspond to 100% because we show only one decimal in the table).

The areas of learning are organized and ordered according to the four main skills in the observation checklist. Areas from 1 to 20 are linked to comprehension, including the correct use of language and structure; those from 21 to 28 are linked to cultural awareness, while elements from 29 to 40 relate to interaction, community building, and cooperative learning.

**Table 20**

*Descriptive Statistics of the First Likert Scale: The Metacognitive Questionnaire*

| <b>Areas of Learning</b>                                | <b>N</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Mode</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Understanding the language of the books              | 30       | 2.7667      | 3           |
| 2. Understanding the main idea of the books             | 30       | 2.0333      | 3           |
| 3. Identifying themes in the books                      | 30       | 2.1667      | 2           |
| 4. analyzing themes                                     | 30       | 2.9000      | 3           |
| 5. Finding and using illustration                       | 30       | 3.0000      | 3           |
| 6. Doing the homework                                   | 30       | 1.4333      | 1           |
| 7. Understanding homework questions                     | 30       | 1.4667      | 1           |
| 8. Understanding the context of writing the book        | 30       | 2.0667      | 2           |
| 9. Analyzing plot elements                              | 30       | 2.2667      | 2           |
| 10. identifying plot types                              | 30       | 2.7333      | 2           |
| 11. Identifying characters' types                       | 30       | 2.5667      | 2           |
| 12. Recognizing characterization types in the books     | 30       | 2.9333      | 3           |
| 13. preparing for the exams                             | 30       | 2.7333      | 3           |
| 14. outlining the essay                                 | 30       | 2.8333      | 3           |
| 15. writing the essay                                   | 30       | 3.1667      | 4           |
| 16. Forming the thesis statement                        | 30       | 2.8667      | 3           |
| 17. linking my ideas (cohesion and coherence)           | 30       | 3.0000      | 3           |
| 18. Using correct grammar                               | 30       | 2.7667      | 3           |
| 19. Using correct syntactic forms                       | 30       | 2.8333      | 3           |
| 20. dealing with unfamiliar structures (form and style) | 30       | 2.9000      | 2           |
| 21. making inferences                                   | 30       | 2.5000      | 3           |

| <b>Areas of Learning</b>                                              | <b>N</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Mode</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| 22. Understanding cultural references in the book                     | 30       | 2.6333      | 3           |
| 23. reflecting on my experience while reading the book                | 30       | 1.9000      | 1           |
| 24. linking the content to my previous readings                       | 30       | 2.3667      | 2           |
| 25. Dealing with unfamiliar ideas (cultural, social, religious, etc.) | 30       | 2.3667      | 3           |
| 26. understanding characters' motivations                             | 30       | 2.5000      | 3           |
| 27. sympathizing and identifying with characters                      | 30       | 1.8667      | 1           |
| 28. Tolerating unfamiliar attitudes and actions of characters         | 30       | 2.3333      | 2           |
| 29. discussing the book with classmates                               | 30       | 1.5000      | 1           |
| 30. discussing the book with my teacher in the classroom              | 30       | 2.1333      | 1           |
| 31. participating                                                     | 30       | 2.3333      | 1           |
| 32. Asking questions in the classroom                                 | 30       | 2.4000      | 1           |
| 33. Communicating my thoughts and opinions clearly                    | 30       | 2.7000      | 3           |
| 34. Expressing my thoughts in speech                                  | 30       | 2.5000      | 2           |
| 35. Expressing my thoughts in writing                                 | 30       | 2.6000      | 2           |
| 36. Working on projects individually                                  | 30       | 1.9667      | 1           |
| 37. Working on projects in groups                                     | 30       | 2.0000      | 2           |
| 38. Communicating my struggles to my classmates                       | 30       | 1.7333      | 1           |
| 39. Communicating my struggles to my literature teacher               | 30       | 2.2333      | 1           |
| 40. Communicating my struggles to other teachers                      | 30       | 3.1333      | 4           |

Table 20 displays that most means were between 1 and 2.99, which indicated that most students had slight to moderate difficulty with most of these areas at that point in time (by the end of the treatment), while they still had difficulties with areas 4, 15, 17, 40. The most frequent points were 1 and 2 (no difficulty and slight difficulty), right behind these was the 3<sup>rd</sup> point (moderate difficulty), and the least frequent point was 4 (great difficulty). This aligned to a great extent with our observations, where we noticed an improvement in the same areas with which they claimed to have slight to no difficulty. At the same time, we noticed a slow, or inconsequential improvement in the areas they claimed were difficult.

**Table 21***Percentage of Likert Points for the Metacognitive Questionnaire (Part One)*

| Learning Areas                                                        | Likert Points (N%) |      |      |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------|------|------|
|                                                                       | 1                  | 2    | 3    | 4    |
| 1. Understanding the language of the books                            | 0                  | 40   | 43.3 | 16.7 |
| 2. Understanding the main idea of the books                           | 33.3               | 30   | 36.7 | 0    |
| 3. Identifying themes in the books                                    | 16.7               | 56   | 20   | 7.3  |
| 4. analyzing themes                                                   | 6.7                | 20   | 50   | 23.3 |
| 5. Finding and using illustration                                     | 10                 | 10   | 50   | 30   |
| 6. Doing the homework                                                 | 63.3               | 30   | 6.7  | 0    |
| 7. Understanding homework questions                                   | 56.7               | 40   | 3.3  | 0    |
| 8. Understanding the context of writing the book                      | 26.7               | 50   | 13.3 | 10   |
| 9. Analyzing plot elements                                            | 34                 | 36.7 | 13   | 16.3 |
| 10. identifying plot types                                            | 10                 | 34   | 30   | 26   |
| 11. Identifying characters' types                                     | 13.3               | 43.3 | 16.7 | 26.7 |
| 12. Recognizing characterization types in the books                   | 6.7                | 10   | 66.7 | 16.6 |
| 13. Preparing for the exams                                           | 13.3               | 26.7 | 33.3 | 26.7 |
| 14. Outlining the essay                                               | 6.7                | 23.3 | 50   | 20   |
| 15. Writing the essay                                                 | 6.7                | 13.3 | 36.7 | 43.3 |
| 16. Forming a thesis statement                                        | 6.7                | 26.7 | 40   | 26.6 |
| 17. Linking my ideas (cohesion and coherence)                         | 3.3                | 26.7 | 36.7 | 33.3 |
| 18. Using correct grammar                                             | 0                  | 36.7 | 50   | 13.3 |
| 19. Using correct syntactic forms                                     | 6.7                | 26.7 | 43.3 | 23.3 |
| 20. Dealing with unfamiliar structures (form and style)               | 3.3                | 36.7 | 26.7 | 33.3 |
| 21. Making inferences                                                 | 23.3               | 23.4 | 33.3 | 20   |
| 22. Understanding cultural references in the book                     | 16.7               | 20   | 46.7 | 16.6 |
| 23. Reflecting on my experience while reading the book                | 40                 | 33.4 | 23.3 | 3.3  |
| 24. Linking the content to my previous readings                       | 20                 | 36.7 | 30   | 13.3 |
| 25. Dealing with unfamiliar ideas (cultural, social, religious, etc.) | 30                 | 16.7 | 40   | 13.3 |
| 26. Understanding characters' motivations                             | 16.7               | 26.7 | 46.6 | 10   |
| 27. Sympathizing and identifying with characters                      | 43.3               | 36.7 | 10   | 10   |
| 28. Tolerating unfamiliar attitudes and actions of characters         | 23.3               | 40   | 16.7 | 20   |
| 29. Discussing the book with classmates                               | 56.7               | 36.7 | 6.6  | 0    |
| 30. Discussing the book with my teacher in the classroom              | 36.7               | 23.3 | 30   | 10   |
| 31. Participating                                                     | 30                 | 30   | 16.7 | 23.3 |
| 32. Asking questions in the classroom                                 | 36.7               | 13.3 | 23.3 | 26.7 |
| 33. Communicating my thoughts and opinions clearly                    | 13.3               | 26.7 | 36.7 | 23.3 |
| 34. Expressing my thoughts in speech                                  | 16.7               | 33.3 | 33.3 | 16.7 |
| 35. Expressing my thoughts in writing                                 | 16.7               | 30   | 30   | 23.3 |

| Learning Areas                                          | Likert Points (N%) |      |      |      |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------|------|------|
|                                                         | 1                  | 2    | 3    | 4    |
| 36. Working on projects individually                    | 50                 | 16.7 | 20   | 13.3 |
| 37. Working on projects in groups                       | 33.3               | 46.7 | 6.7  | 13.3 |
| 38. Communicating my struggles to my classmates         | 46.7               | 36.7 | 13.3 | 3.3  |
| 39. Communicating my struggles to my literature teacher | 36.7               | 26.7 | 13.3 | 23.3 |
| 40. Communicating my struggles to other teachers        | 10                 | 16.7 | 23.3 | 50   |

The results of the first part of the questionnaire were in line with most observations made. Starting from session 8, we started remarking notable improvements in all four areas of the checklist which was confirmed by the findings above. For instance, the ‘means’ and modes of areas 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 20 supported our claims about enhanced comprehension, with students having slight difficulty with areas 1, 2, 4, 5, 13, 14, 16,17, 18, and 19. These aspects concern language and structure comprehension and use. This was in agreement with our reflexive journal results as well. Although there was a positive change in students’ abilities to write thesis statements, they still had many grammar, syntax, and punctuation problems. We have stated in the previous chapter that there was no noticeable change in structure and writing skills. In addition, the learners signaled writing the essay as the most difficult area of learning, which confirmed the results of the pre-test results.

Similarly, the means and modes of areas from 21 to 28 were harmonious with our claim that there was a noticeable amelioration in students’ cultural awareness and tolerance. Moreover, the results of areas from 29 to 40 supported our remark that the approach used seemed to be effective in community building and establishing the cult of cooperation and contributive interaction. The findings of the observation together with the questionnaire sustained that the fourth area of the checklist marked the highest

improvement. This was mostly demonstrated in the group discussions, pair and group work in class, and the video projects.

Note that the areas with which students had slight to great difficulty were either the ones signaled in the previous chapter as the muddiest points of the learners (illustration, analysis, characterization, etc.) or the ones we established (through our observation) as the least or slowest skills to develop.

The second part of the questionnaire started with a five-point Likert Scale, wherein students had to express the degree of their agreement with 17 statements regarding their general attitude toward literature and the links between literature, culture, cognition, identity, and learning. Through this Likert Scale, we wanted to test our assumption that the interdisciplinary approach we integrated develops learners' awareness about these aspects and helps teachers establish interaction between those elements to facilitate the teaching-learning process.

The points were 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neutral, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree. If the mean is between 1 and 1.88, it means most people strongly disagree; if it is between 1.91 and 2.60, it indicates that most learners disagree; if it is between 2.61 and 3.40, it means most students went for the neutral option; if it is between 3.41 to 4.20 it means most people agree, and finally if it is between 4.21 and 5 it means most participants strongly agree with the statement.

As we can see in Table 22 below most means were between 3 and 4.50, and the most frequent mode was 4 (agree). This means that most students agreed or strongly agreed with the statements. The means and modes of areas 3, 6, 11, and 13 showed that most students disagreed with the statements. Note that many students picked up the

neutral option with areas 10, 11 (43.3%), and 14 (36.7%) which connected back to our observation in session 13 that students had issues understanding these questions. The results above suggested that despite the teacher's clarifications, students were still not sure about these statements.

**Table 22**

*Descriptive Statistics of the Second Likert Scale Questionnaire*

| Statements                                                                      | N  | Mean   | Mode |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|--------|------|
| 1. Reading the novels helped me with my language                                | 30 | 4.5667 | 5.00 |
| 2. Reading the novels was hard                                                  | 30 | 3.1333 | 4.00 |
| 3. Reading the novels was boring                                                | 30 | 2.4000 | 2.00 |
| 4. Reading the novels was fun                                                   | 30 | 3.8667 | 4.00 |
| 5. Reading the novels was hard but fun                                          | 30 | 3.6000 | 4.00 |
| 6. Reading the novels was easy but boring                                       | 30 | 2.2000 | 1.00 |
| 7. Literature is important in language classrooms                               | 30 | 4.5000 | 5.00 |
| 8. Literature helped me learn about other cultures                              | 30 | 4.2000 | 4.00 |
| 9. Literature helped me become a better person                                  | 30 | 4.0000 | 4.00 |
| 10. My self-esteem improves when I read about other cultures                    | 30 | 3.1667 | 3.00 |
| 11. My self-esteem is threatened when I read about other cultures               | 30 | 2.5000 | 3.00 |
| 12. I feel comfortable reading about sensitive cultural issues                  | 30 | 3.3333 | 4.00 |
| 13. I identify with my Algerian Heritage the most                               | 30 | 2.9667 | 4.00 |
| 14. I identify with the American or British Cultures the most                   | 30 | 3.1333 | 3.00 |
| 15. Tolerating the discussion of sensitive (taboo) issues is good for learning  | 30 | 3.4667 | 4.00 |
| 16. I developed a sense of respect toward other cultures through literary texts | 30 | 3.9667 | 4.00 |
| 17. Reading literature helped me develop intercultural competence               | 30 | 4.1333 | 4.00 |

Table 23 below revealed that 50% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that reading the novels was hard, and more than 60% of students agreed or strongly agreed that reading the novels was hard but fun, which cohered with language problems examined in the results of the previous Likert Scale. More than 92% agreed or strongly agreed that literature is important in the language classroom and 83% said that it helped

them improve their language. This can be seen in the results of the post-test where they had better scores in language and structure (however, we are aware that the improvement in language can relate to other external factors as well).

**Table 23**

*Percentage for the Second Likert Scale Questionnaire*

| Learning Areas                                                                  | Likert Points (N%) |      |      |      |      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------|------|------|------|
|                                                                                 | 1                  | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| 1. Reading the novels helped me with my language                                | 3.3                | 0.0  | 3.3  | 23.3 | 70   |
| 2. Reading the novels was hard                                                  | 10.0               | 30.0 | 10.0 | 36.7 | 13.3 |
| 3. Reading the novels was boring                                                | 16.7               | 46.7 | 23.3 | 6.7  | 6.7  |
| 4. Reading the novels was fun                                                   | 3.3                | 3.3  | 23.3 | 43.3 | 26.7 |
| 5. Reading the novels was hard but fun                                          | 16.                | 0.0  | 10   | 53.3 | 20.0 |
| 6. Reading the novels was easy but boring                                       | 40.                | 33.3 | 3.3  | 13.3 | 10.0 |
| 7. Literature is important in language classrooms                               | 0.0                | 0.0  | 6.7  | 36.7 | 56.7 |
| 8. Literature helped me learn about other cultures                              | 0.0                | 0.0  | 10   | 60   | 30.0 |
| 9. Literature helped me become a better person                                  | 0.0                | 3.3  | 26.7 | 36.7 | 33.3 |
| 10. My self-esteem improves when I read about other cultures                    | 3.3                | 20.0 | 43.3 | 23.3 | 10.0 |
| 11. My self-esteem is threatened when I read about other cultures               | 26.7               | 16.7 | 43.3 | 6.7  | 6.7  |
| 12. I feel comfortable reading about sensitive cultural issues                  | 0.0                | 26.7 | 23.3 | 40   | 10   |
| 13. I identify with my Algerian Heritage the most                               | 13.3               | 26.7 | 16.7 | 36.7 | 6.7  |
| 14. I identify with the American or British Cultures the most                   | 6.7                | 16.7 | 36.7 | 36.7 | 3.3  |
| 15. Tolerating the discussion of sensitive (taboo) issues is good for learning  | 10                 | 0.0  | 30   | 53.3 | 6.7  |
| 16. I developed a sense of respect toward other cultures through literary texts | 0.0                | 6.7  | 10   | 63.3 | 20   |
| 17. Reading literature helps me develop intercultural competence                | 0.0                | 6.7  | 3.3  | 60   | 30   |

Moreover, more than 80% agreed or strongly agreed that literature helped them learn about other cultures, develop a sense of respect towards other cultures, and improve their intercultural competence. Besides, 70% believed that literature had helped them become better persons, and around 60% agreed that tolerating the discussion of

sensitive cultural issues is good for learning. All this links to the skill of cultural awareness. The results of the observation and both Likert Scales confirmed the cultivation and improvement of the students' awareness of the value of literature and culture in both academic and personal experiences. By the end of treatment, students demonstrated a better understanding of the connection between literature, culture, personal experience, and language.

Next, students had to answer nine Yes/No questions to crosscheck some of the results from the two Likert Scales. The results in the table below indicate that most students (96.7%) believed that through literature, they could appreciate their own culture, history, customs, and traditions which are the attributes of cultural identity. We asked this question to verify our assumption that the approach we used helps us raise students' awareness about the interconnectedness and interdependence of cultural identity and literature.

The second question was meant to further highlight the role of students' culture and cultural identity in learning. We argued through the integration of CRT that learning is more meaningful when it is based on familiar cultural frames of reference. We could see in the table that 90% of the students agreed that it was easier when the literary texts contained familiar cultural elements. This is maybe why they were more responsive to 'Peter Pan' and 'Pride and Prejudice.' The two books were later described by the students as the books that contain the most cultural elements.

**Table 24**

*The Percentage of Yes/No Questions in the Metacognitive Questionnaire*

| Statement                                                                                                         | Yes /No | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------|
| 1. I get to appreciate my culture, history, customs, and traditions through reading literary texts                | Yes     | 96.7%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 3.3%       |
| 2. It helps me when the literary texts contain cultural elements which are familiar to me                         | yes     | 90.0%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 10.0%      |
| 3. I am interested in reading more about the target culture (s) after reading the literary texts                  | yes     | 60.0%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 40.0%      |
| 4. I am interested in learning more about the authors after reading their works                                   | yes     | 63.3%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 36.7%      |
| 5. I accept literary texts that introduce topics and cultural elements that differ from my own values and culture | yes     | 76.7%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 23.3%      |
| 6. The cultural elements are easy to elicit from literary texts                                                   | yes     | 63.3%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 36.7%      |
| 7. I can compare the cultural elements in the book and those in my society                                        | yes     | 93.3%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 6.7%       |
| 8. I can recognize how the themes of the books I read appeal to my modern experience                              | yes     | 93.3%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 6.7%       |
| 9. I can recognize the cultural differences between the books we read so far                                      | yes     | 93.3%      |
|                                                                                                                   | No      | 6.7%       |

The next two questions were asked to see whether the approach was effective in making learners curious about the authors and cultures of the books. Teaching context and culture explicitly was supposed to augment students' interest in those aspects. Around 60% of the sample claimed that after reading a literary text they were interested to know more about the culture and author of that specific book. The next five questions concerned cultural awareness and tolerance; we could see that most students claimed that they could recognize, elicit, tolerate, and compare the cultural elements in the books to other books and their own culture and society. This was completely in harmony with their previous answers in both Likert Scales.

Finally, the students had to answer six multiple-choice questions regarding the books we read. We wanted to check if students appreciated the books and understood

the value of each. The results are displayed in Table 25. We see that there was a variety of answers to the first question, with ‘Pride and Prejudice’ having the highest percentage. This might be because it was the students’ choice, or because it had more relevant themes. Still, this was surprising given that most learners stated that classics were their least favorite reads in the first questionnaire. In addition, they expressed their fear of reading lengthy works. This result might suggest a change in attitude.

**Table 25**

*Frequencies for the MCQ in the Metacognitive Questionnaire*

| <b>The book I prefer</b>                                |                        | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
|                                                         | 1. The Little Prince   | 8                | 26.7           |
|                                                         | 2. Peter Pan           | 8                | 26.7           |
|                                                         | 3. The Giver           | 5                | 16.7           |
|                                                         | 4. Pride and Prejudice | 9                | 30.0           |
|                                                         | Total                  | 30               | 100.0          |
| <b>The book that relates to my experience the most</b>  |                        | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|                                                         | 1. The Little Prince   | 11               | 36.7           |
|                                                         | 2. Peter Pan           | 6                | 20.0           |
|                                                         | 3. The Giver           | 3                | 10.0           |
|                                                         | 4. Pride and Prejudice | 10               | 33.3           |
|                                                         | Total                  | 30               | 100.0          |
| <b>The book that contains most cultural elements</b>    |                        | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|                                                         | 2. Peter Pan           | 13               | 43.3           |
|                                                         | 4. Pride and Prejudice | 17               | 56.7           |
|                                                         | Total                  | 30               | 100.0          |
| <b>The book that relates to my society the most</b>     |                        | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| Valid                                                   | 1. The Little Prince   | 1                | 3.3            |
|                                                         | 3. The Giver           | 6                | 20.0           |
|                                                         | 4. Pride and Prejudice | 23               | 76.7           |
|                                                         | Total                  | 30               | 100.0          |
| <b>The book that reflects our modern world the most</b> |                        | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|                                                         | 3. The Giver           | 25               | 83.3           |
|                                                         | 4. Pride and Prejudice | 5                | 16.7           |
|                                                         | Total                  | 30               | 100.0          |
| <b>The book that taught me lessons the most</b>         |                        | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| Valid                                                   | 1. The Little Prince   | 19               | 63.3           |
|                                                         | 2. Peter Pan           | 11               | 36.7           |
|                                                         | Total                  | 30               | 100.0          |

Only 5 students chose 'The Giver' as their favorite book, although they were highly responsive and interactive during the analysis of the book, and as described in the reflexive journal, they all did extra homework answering more than one question from the mind map. For the second question, 11 students said 'The Little Prince' was the book that related most to their personal experience, 10 said it was 'Pride and Prejudice,' while only a few chose 'The Giver', and 'Peter Pan.'

When asked which book contained more cultural elements, the sample was divided between 'Peter Pan' (43.3%) and 'Pride and Prejudice' (56.7%), which was another manifestation of students' ability to identify and evaluate cultural facets in literary works. This might be a result of the explicit teaching of the three levels of culture, which we argued could help learners weigh the presence of cultural frames of reference in literature.

For the fourth question, 76.7% of the learners stated that 'Pride and Prejudice' is the book that relates to our society the most. This result was mirrored in the observation of session 14. We noted in the previous chapter that it was one of the most interactive sessions of the treatment and that students were consistently and effectively linking the analysis of the book to their own experiences and frames of reference, comparing the characters' traits and actions to those of Algerians.

83.3% of the participants specified that 'The Giver' is the book that reflects our modern world the most. This pinpointed the level of comprehension of the learners' and their ability to make inferences and link the textual world to the real world. It supported our claim in Chapter 3 that adopting a discourse analysis perspective (literature as discourse) in our research and using context and intertextuality activities would enhance

the learners' ability to understand the connection between '*background knowledge-textual world- the real world.*'

Participants were divided between 'Peter Pan', and 'The Little Prince,' when asked about the book that taught them most lessons. This might be directly linked to the philosophical and didactic tones of the two books, which present similar themes of choice, responsibility, youth, growing up, friendship, love, family, imagination, etc. Both books tell inspirational adult stories coated in children's literature style, which appeals to children, young adults, and adults alike.

The results of this last part of the questionnaire helped us confirm that students understood the messages and themes of the books which cohered with their answers to questions 2, 3, 8, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, and 28 of the first Likert Scale, and 9, 16, and 17 of the second Likert Scale, and 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of the Yes/No questions. These questions examined their abilities to understand, identify, elicit, compare, tolerate, and infer meaning from the themes and cultural elements of the books, and project them into their personal experiences and world.

Next, the analysis of the questionnaire and observation is triangulated with the analysis of the post-test scores.

#### **4.8. The Diagnostic Analysis of the Post-test**

Before we move to the comparison between the pre and post-test, we first present a detailed analysis of the results of the post-test based on the assessment criteria described in Chapter 3. The findings of the test are linked to the analysis of the pre-test, the observation, and the metacognitive questionnaire.

**Table 26***Detailed Scores of the Post-test*

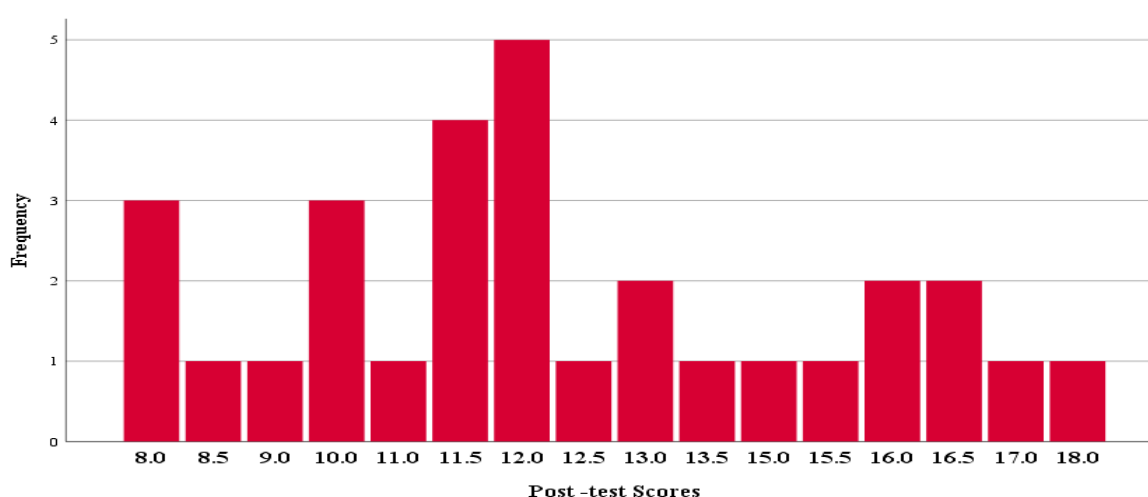
| <b>Subjects</b> | <b>T.S.</b> | <b>A.D.</b> | <b>T. E</b> | <b>G. P</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>Total Score</b> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|--------------------|
| <b>Std1</b>     | 1.0         | 4.5         | 3.5         | 2.5         | 2.0      | 13.5               |
| <b>Std2</b>     | 2.0         | 5.0         | 3.5         | 4.5         | 2.0      | 17.0               |
| <b>Std3</b>     | 1.5         | 3.5         | 2.0         | 2.0         | 2.0      | 11.0               |
| <b>Std4</b>     | 2.0         | 4.0         | 2.5         | 2.0         | 1.0      | 11.5               |
| <b>Std5</b>     | 1.0         | 3.5         | 3.0         | 2.5         | 2.0      | 12.0               |
| <b>Std6</b>     | 2.0         | 5.0         | 3.0         | 4.5         | 2.0      | 16.5               |
| <b>Std7</b>     | 2.0         | 5.5         | 4.0         | 4.5         | 2.0      | 18.0               |
| <b>Std8</b>     | 1.0         | 4.5         | 3.0         | 2.5         | 2.0      | 13.0               |
| <b>Std9</b>     | 2.0         | 4.5         | 3.5         | 4.0         | 2.0      | 16.0               |
| <b>Std10</b>    | 1.0         | 4.0         | 3.0         | 3.0         | 1.5      | 12.5               |
| <b>Std11</b>    | 0.5         | 2.5         | 2.5         | 2.0         | 1.0      | 8.5                |
| <b>Std12</b>    | 1.5         | 3.5         | 3.0         | 2.5         | 1.5      | 12.0               |
| <b>Std13</b>    | 0.5         | 3.0         | 1.5         | 2.0         | 1.0      | 8.0                |
| <b>Std14</b>    | 2.0         | 5.0         | 3.5         | 4.0         | 1.5      | 16.0               |
| <b>Std15</b>    | 2.0         | 4.0         | 3.5         | 3.5         | 2.0      | 15.0               |
| <b>Std16</b>    | 1.5         | 3.0         | 3.5         | 3.0         | 1.0      | 12.0               |
| <b>Std17</b>    | 1.5         | 4.0         | 3.0         | 2.5         | 1.0      | 12.0               |
| <b>Std18</b>    | 1.5         | 3.5         | 2.5         | 2.5         | 1.5      | 11.5               |
| <b>Std19</b>    | 1.5         | 2.5         | 2.0         | 1.5         | 0.5      | 8.0                |
| <b>Std20</b>    | 1.0         | 2.5         | 2.5         | 2.0         | 2.0      | 10.0               |
| <b>Std21</b>    | 2.0         | 2.0         | 2.5         | 2.5         | 1.0      | 10.0               |
| <b>Std22</b>    | 1.5         | 3.0         | 3.0         | 2.5         | 1.5      | 11.5               |
| <b>Std23</b>    | 1.0         | 3.5         | 2.5         | 2.0         | 1.0      | 10.0               |
| <b>Std24</b>    | 1.0         | 2.5         | 2.5         | 1.0         | 1.0      | 8.0                |
| <b>Std25</b>    | 1.0         | 3.5         | 2.5         | 2.5         | 2.0      | 11.5               |
| <b>Std26</b>    | 2.0         | 4.0         | 4.5         | 3.5         | 1.5      | 15.5               |
| <b>Std27</b>    | 2.0         | 5.0         | 3.5         | 4.0         | 2.0      | 16.5               |
| <b>Std28</b>    | 1.5         | 4.0         | 3.0         | 2.5         | 2.0      | 13.0               |
| <b>Std29</b>    | 2.0         | 3.0         | 3.0         | 2.5         | 1.5      | 12.0               |
| <b>Std30</b>    | 0.5         | 2.5         | 2.0         | 2.5         | 1.5      | 9.0                |

From the first look at the table above and Figure 25 below, we could see that the scores of the post-test were higher than those of the pre-test. Five students scored between 8 and 9, fifteen students scored between 10 and 12, and ten of them scored between 13 and 18. However, it was critical to examine the scores of the five

components of the assessment criteria for two main reasons. First to identify the aspects of literary analysis that had improved from those that had not (in comparison to the pre-test), and second to crosscheck the results of the observation and metacognitive questionnaire. We start with the three components of language and structure (the thesis statement, grammar and punctuation, and coherence), which seemed immutable during the observation, and then move to analysis, discussion, textual evidence, and illustration.

**Figure 25**

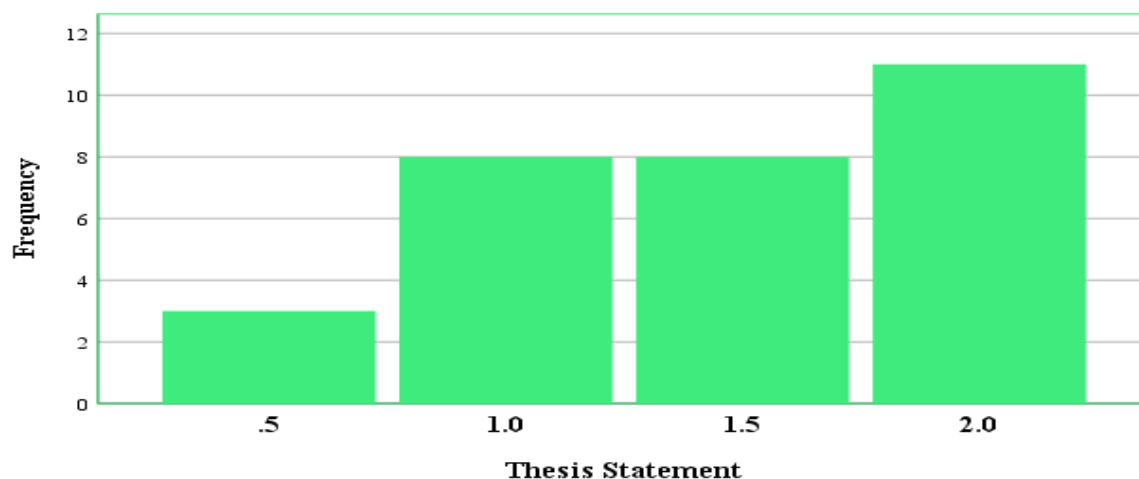
*Frequencies of Post-test Scores*



We can see in Figure 26 below that 11 (36.67%) students scored 2 out of 2; this improvement attested to their claim in the first Likert Scale, where 33.4% of them said they had no or slight difficulty writing the thesis statement. 16 students (53.3%) scored between 1 and 1.5, while in the pre-test most scored between 0 and 0.5, which also validated the results of the Likert Scale, where 40% of them indicated that they had moderate difficulty in this area. 3 (10%) students got 0.5, whereas around 8 students (26.67%) of them said they had great difficulty forming it.

**Figure 26**

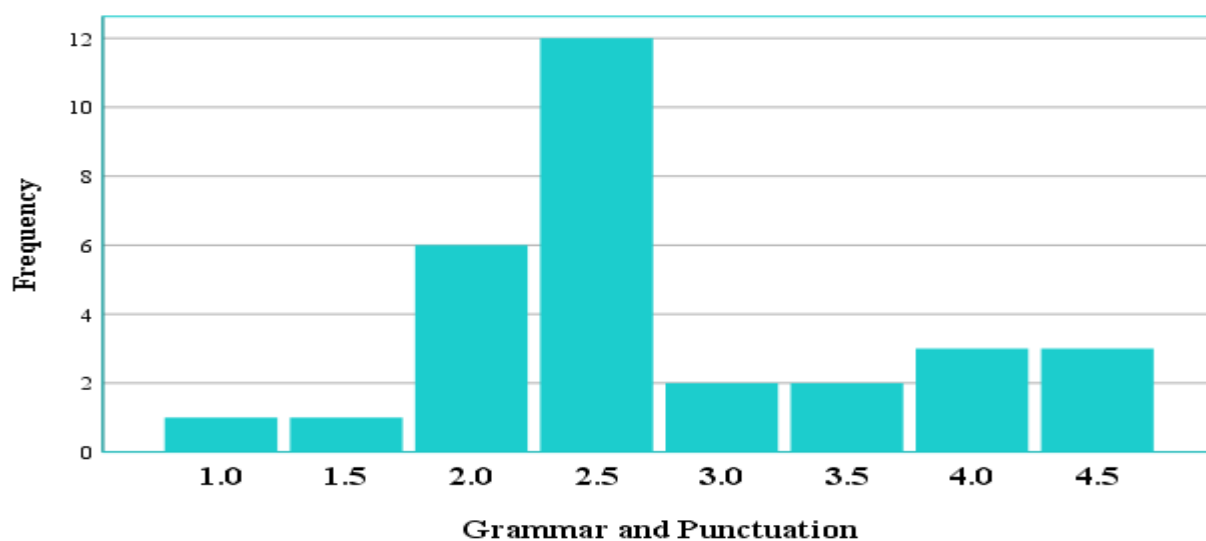
*Thesis Statement Scores Frequencies (Post-test)*



For grammar and punctuation, we can see that in both the pre and post-test around 66.66% scored between 1 and 2.5 out of 5 (21 students in the pre-test and 20 in the post-test). There was a slight mundane change, while in the pre-test 4 students scored between 3 and 3.5 and 3 students scored between 4 and 4.5, in the post-test 6 learners scored between 4 and 4.5. These results ratified our observation that there was tacit to no improvement in language skills. It also harmonized with the participants' answers to questions 18, 19, and 20 where 63.333% of the subjects claimed they had moderate to great difficulty using the correct grammar, 66.667% said the same about using correct syntactic forms, and 60% claimed the same thing about dealing with unfamiliar linguistic structures.

**Figure 27**

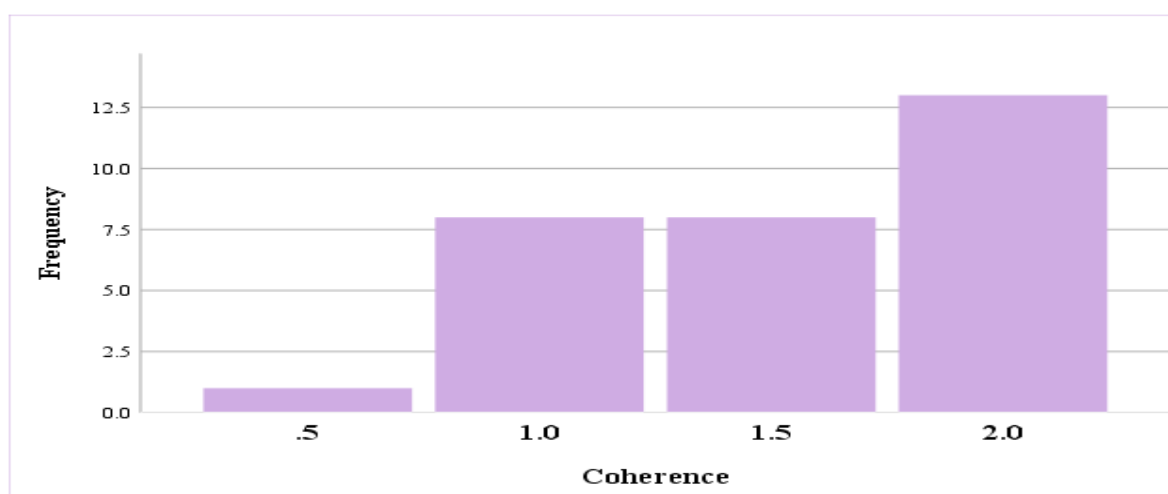
*Grammar and Punctuation Scores Frequencies (Post-test)*



Coherence is the last element in the first category. When comparing the pre and post-test results, we noticed that while 17 students scored between 0 and 1 in the pre-test, in the post-test 21 subjects got between 1.5 and 2.

**Figure 28**

*Coherence Scores Frequencies (Post-test)*

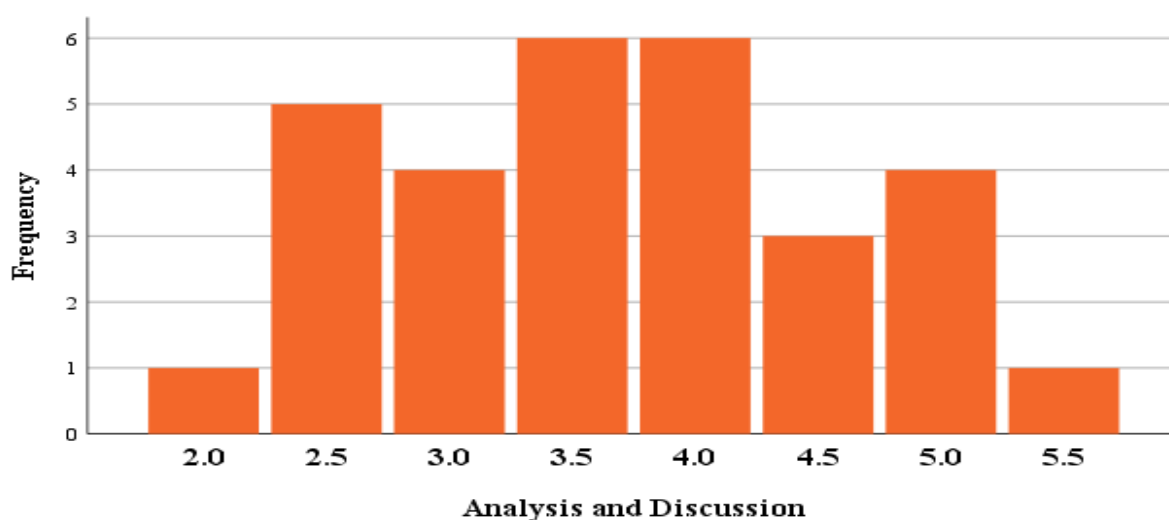


This was significant progress, although most learners (70%) claimed that they had difficulties linking their ideas, and the teacher observed that there was a slow, non-apparent advancement in learners' writing skills. We may attribute this progress to the learners' enhanced ability to write thesis statements since we emphasized how to follow the controlling ideas for a better structure.

We now move to the analysis of the second category of the assessment criteria- the literary analysis. By examining the findings of the observation and metacognitive questionnaire, we could deduce that skills related to analysis and discussion were the most malleable (comprehension, making inferences, identifying cultural elements, etc.). Figure 28 complements this remark. 20 students scored between 3.5 and 5.5 out of 6 in analysis and discussion, whereas in the pre-test 29 students got between 0.5 and 2.5.

**Figure 29**

*Analysis and Discussion Scores Frequencies (Post-test)*



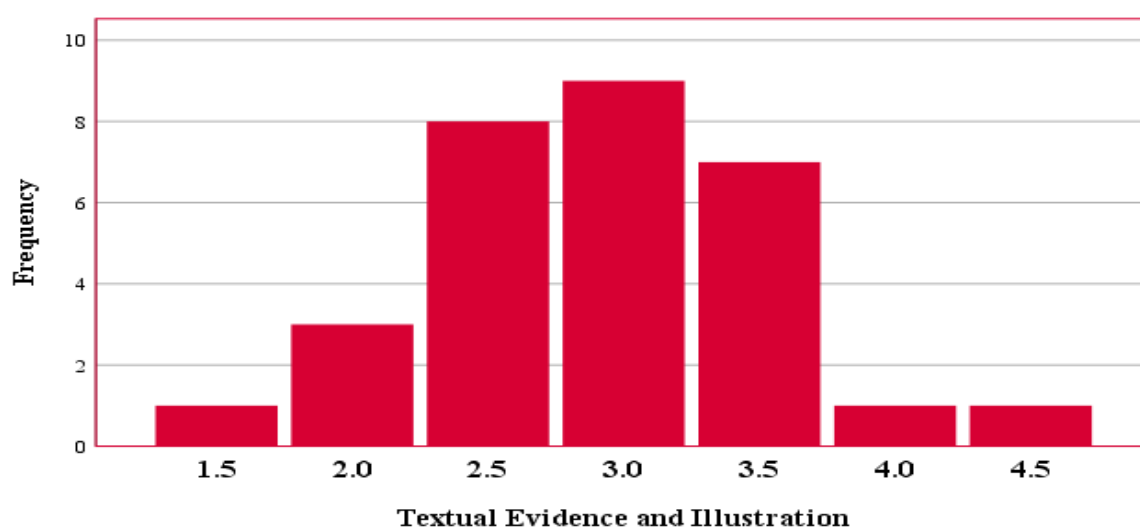
These results emulated the observations of the last 6 sessions, wherein gradual and notable progress was detected. Equivalently, they were in tune with the participants'

responses to the questions concerning comprehension and cultural awareness in the metacognitive questionnaire. There seemed to be a positive outcome of the approach used on participants' general performance in literary analysis and discussion which was substantiated by the adequate and dynamic carrying-out of the classroom discussions in the aforementioned sessions.

The second component of this category is textual evidence and illustration. Since we focused in the second session, particularly, and throughout the treatment, on modeling the identification, recognition, elicitation, and correct use of textual evidence and illustration to support our analysis, we wanted to check whether the activities and techniques used empowered these skills. Note that 70% of the learners expressed that they had moderate to great difficulty finding and using illustrations. However, Figure 29 revealed that 18 students scored between 3 and 4.5 out of 5, which signaled a considerable disparity with the pre-test, where all learners scored between 0 and 2.

**Figure 30**

*Textual Evidence Scores Frequencies Chart (Post-test)*



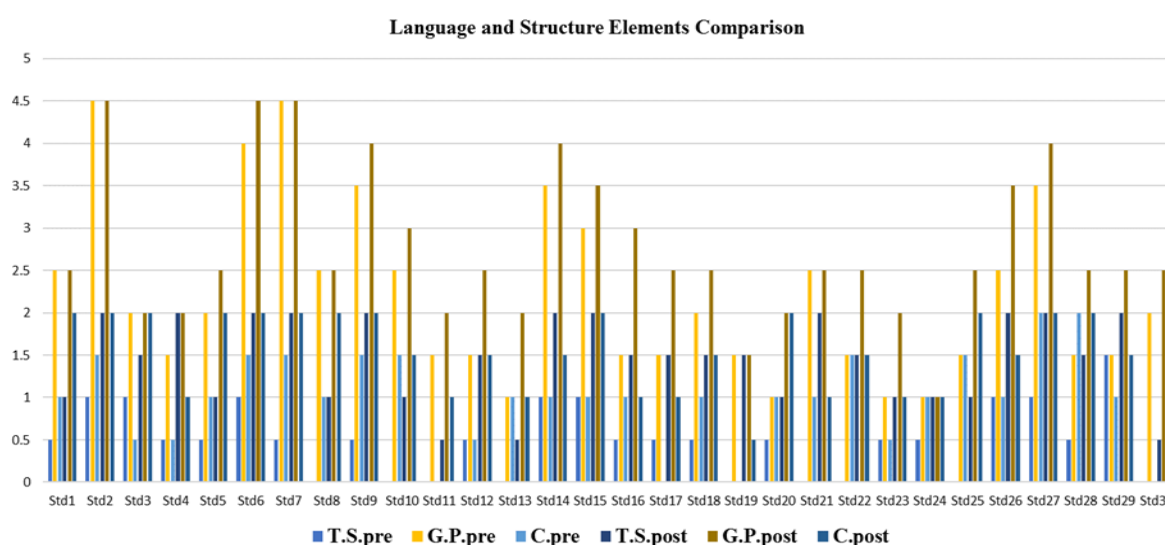
Despite this, it is imperative to say that learners still had some problems with the appropriate usage of illustrations and quotes; we could summarize the following notes:

- Although finding the correct quote to use was not the main issue anymore, learners seemed to flout the rules of in-text citations and quotations. Most did not use reporting verbs and quotation marks;
- Some students paraphrased the quotes, but still used quotation marks;
- Some students could not use the ellipsis dots correctly, excluding the most relevant parts of the quote;
- Most students relied mainly on one type of illustration- quotations from the book- overlooking the other types.

By looking at these initial results, we could notice a general amelioration of the skills tested (Figures 31 and 32 below). Yet, this was not adequate enough to negate the null hypothesis; therefore, we conducted a **paired samples *t*-test** (check Chapter 3) to support our findings with more efficient statistical evidence.

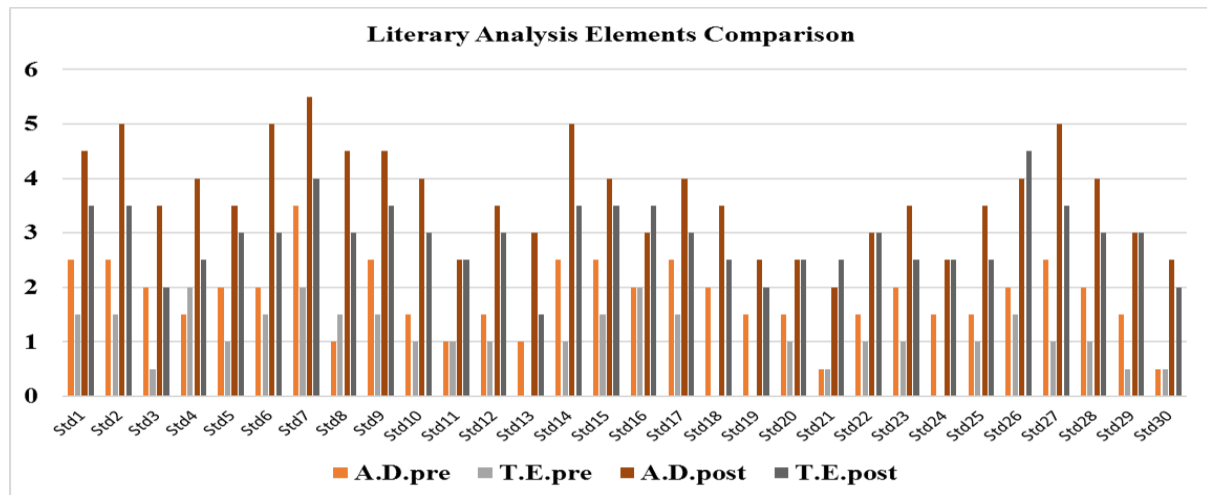
**Figure 31**

*Comparison of Language and Structure Components (Pre and Post-test)*



**Figure 32**

*Comparison of Analysis Components (Pre and Post-Test).*



#### 4. 9. Analysis of the Paired Samples *T*-Test

As explicated in Chapter 3, the **paired samples *t*-test** is a statistical procedure used to measure the significance of the experimental tests' results. It is used to see whether there is a statistically significant difference between two sets of measures derived from the same participants, i.e. if the mean difference between two sets of observations is zero. The null hypothesis assumes that the mean difference equals zero, while the alternative hypothesis assumes that the mean difference does not equal zero. Our main objective in running this test was to see if we could invalidate the null hypothesis. The results of the **paired samples *t*-test** are represented in the tables and chart below.

**Table 27**

*Mean and Standard Deviation of the Pre and Post-test*

|        |           | Mean   | N  | Std. Deviation |
|--------|-----------|--------|----|----------------|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test  | 6.533  | 30 | 2.4102         |
|        | Post-Test | 12.367 | 30 | 2.8676         |

The first results of the **paired samples *t*-test** included the mean and standard deviation results. The table revealed a major difference between the mean and standard deviation of the pre-test and the post-test. The bigger mean of the post-test entailed, initially, better results. The higher standard deviation indicated data were more spread out from the mean, signifying higher variability of scores in the data set.

The second element the test showed is **correlation**. Correlations lie between -1 and +1; a positive value means that large values (scores in our case) of the first test are more likely to be correlated with the large values of the second test, and conversely, small values of the first test are more likely to be observed with small values of the second test. In the case of a negative correlation, the opposite is true; large values of the first test are more likely to be related to small values of the second test, and conversely, small values of the first variable are more likely to be linked to large values of the second test.

**Table 28**

*Paired Samples Correlations*

|                             | N  | Correlation | Sig.      |
|-----------------------------|----|-------------|-----------|
| Pair 1 Pre-test & Post-test | 30 | .972        | .00000000 |

The table displayed a positive and high **correlation**, which signaled that high scores on the pre-test were associated with high scores on the post-test. This was important since it annotated that no extreme cases were detected, making the results more logical given the observations made and the findings of the questionnaire.

**Table 29***Paired Samples Test*

|                           |                        | <b>Pair 1</b>               |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                           |                        | <b>Pre-test – Post-test</b> |
| <b>Paired Differences</b> | <b>Mean</b>            | <b>-5.8333-</b>             |
|                           | <b>Std. Deviation</b>  | <b>.7694</b>                |
|                           | <b>Std. Error Mean</b> | <b>.1405</b>                |
|                           | <b>95% Confidence</b>  | <b>Lower</b>                |
|                           | <b>Interval of the</b> | <b>Upper</b>                |
|                           | <b>Difference</b>      | <b>-6.1206-</b>             |
|                           |                        | <b>-5.5460-</b>             |
| <b>T</b>                  |                        | <b>-41.527-</b>             |
| <b>Df</b>                 |                        | <b>29</b>                   |
| <b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>    |                        | <b>.0000000000000000</b>    |

The last table summarizes the key points that could enable the negation of the null hypothesis. First, the mean indicated was calculated by subtracting the mean of the post-test from that of the pre-test. Since it was a negative value, it meant the second test got a higher mean (as displayed in Table 27). Next, the output indicated a standard deviation of **0.7694**. To prove that we have two positively correlated variables, the standard deviation of the paired samples (the two tests) should be smaller than those of each test, which was the case here.

The confidence interval estimated that the actual population difference between the pretest and post-test was likely between **-6.1206** and **-5.5460** excluding the zero (no difference between the paired samples) as a likely value, so we could conclude that the population difference did not equal zero. This was a step closer to rejecting the null hypothesis. The *t-statistic* (**-41.527**) is calculated by dividing the mean difference by its standard error. It is a ratio of the difference between the mean of the two sample sets and the variation that exists within the sample sets. The number was small and negative,

which correlates to a small **p-value** (significance value), which, in turn, would lead to the nullification of the null hypothesis.

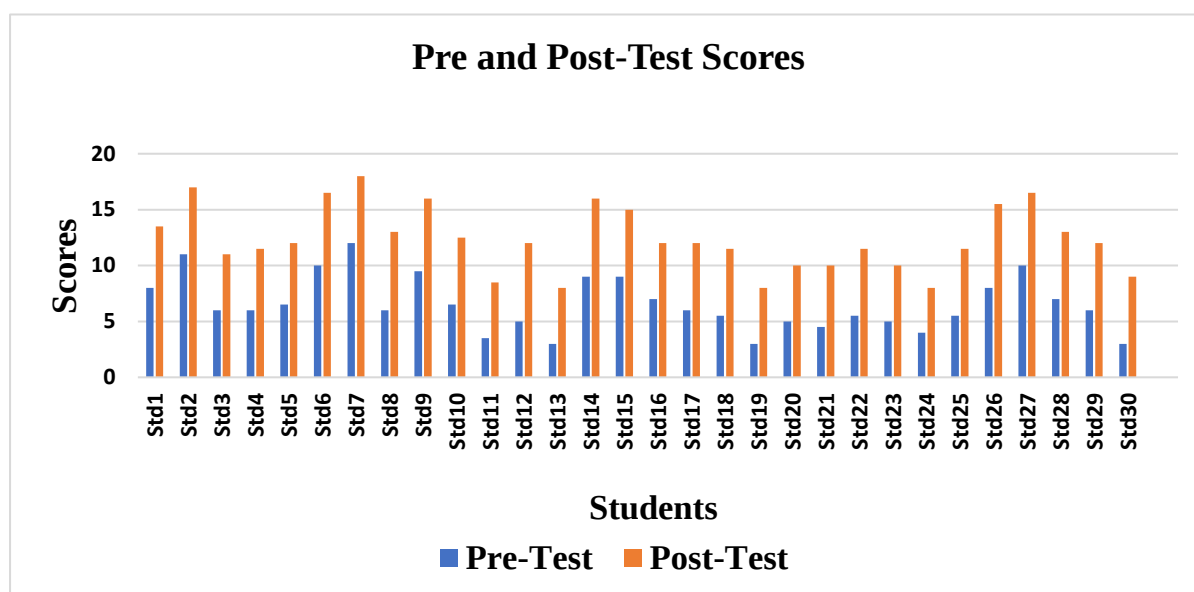
To prove a significant difference between tests' scores the **p-value** needs to be less than 0.05 (the difference does not equal 0). The **p-value**, or probability value, tells us how likely it is that our data could have occurred under the null hypothesis; a small **p-value** means that there is stronger evidence in favor of the alternative hypothesis. Our **p-value** was **0.0000000000000000**; which was sufficient enough to reject the null hypothesis and confirm that the results obtained in the post-test were a direct outcome of the treatment, and not due to chance.

#### **4. 10. Summary of the Paired Sample *T*-Test Results**

The goal of our study was to determine whether using the interdisciplinary approach we developed improved the teaching of literature and enhanced students' performances. According to the **paired samples *t*-test** analysis, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and post-test. The results showed a significant increase in students' marks before (M=**6.533**, S.D =**2.4102**) and after (M=**12.367**, SD=**2.8676**), with a **t-value** of **-41.527** and **p-value** of **0.0000000000**. The mean increase in the test score was with a 95 % confidence interval ranging from **-6.1206 to -5.5460**; there was no zero in between which entailed that there was a large effect size. The **p-value** being less than 0.05 automatically rejected the null hypothesis and confirmed the alternative hypothesis. The figure below demonstrates the comparison between the pre and post-test scores.

**Figure 33**

*Pre-test and Post-test Scores Comparison*



## Conclusion

The chapter was devoted to data analysis. It gave a detailed representation of the main findings elicited from the various research tools. The chapter was divided into two sections. The first one dealt with the results of the pre-experimental phase and the observation, depending mainly on qualitative analysis (thematic, typological, and descriptive diagnostics). In the second part, the researcher presented the analysis of the metacognitive questionnaire and the comparison of the pre and post-test, relying on quantitative analysis (mean, mode, *t*-test). The chapter incorporated tables, charts, and percentages when needed to give the reader direct access to the results. These results lay the foundations for the discussion in the next chapter.

# Chapter 5

## Discussion of the Results

## **Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the key findings, interpreting and explaining their meaning in relation to our research aim and context. First, it provides a general overview of the research, checking the results against the hypothesis, questions, and objectives of the study. The discussion is organized by order of the research questions, assessing how our findings compare and contrast to those of the existing research described in the first two chapters. In addition, in this chapter, the researcher highlights the potential of the suggested approach and the implications of the results of the research. Similarly, it pinpoints the shortcomings and limitations that call for further investigations in the field of literature pedagogy.

### **5. 1. General Overview of the Study**

The current study was conducted in search of an effective approach to teaching literature in EFL classrooms in higher education. It suggested an interdisciplinary approach that merges techniques and activities from cultural responsiveness, reader-response theory, the sociocultural approach, cognitive approaches, and discourse analysis to cover the complexity of literature classrooms, where storytelling, language, cognition, emotions, identity, and experience coalesce.

It was carried out through a quasi-experimental one-group-pretest-posttest-design, based on the null hypothesis (H0) that using the proposed approach does not affect the teaching of literature, nor students' performances in tests, which was formulated to answer the main research questions. The researcher asked how using the approach affects the teaching of literature in EFL classrooms in higher education (the

case of third-year students at Zian Achor University) and how it affects third year students' performances in literature tests.

The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools (students' questionnaires, teachers' interviews, observation, archival data, and experimental tests) and analysis methods (thematic-content analysis, typological analysis, analytical diagnostic analysis, statistical analysis, and descriptive narrative interpretation). In the previous chapter and the first part of this chapter, we presented and described the data analysis, triangulating and cross-checking the findings from the various tools, and providing primary interpretations of the meaning of the data. This part presents and checks the meanings of the data analysis against the research questions, hypotheses, and aims, and links them to the research detailed in the first two chapters. As explained in Chapter 3, the discussion section is organized by research questions.

Following the order of the research questions described in the introduction, we first highlight the overall key findings attached to each question, assessing how they compare to those of the existing research. Second, we provide a general evaluation of the various approaches and techniques used underlining their significance to EFL literature classrooms. Finally, we discuss the general implications of the research findings in the field of literature teaching, highlighting the limitations of the study, and suggesting some further investigations.

## **5.2. The First Main Question: *How does using the culturally responsive-interdisciplinary approach affect the teaching of literature in EFL classrooms in higher education?***

To answer this question, we depended on the observation checklist, the teacher's reflexive journal, the metacognitive questionnaire, and the descriptive diagnostic analysis of the pre and post-test. To answer such a complex question, we adopted a modified version of 'The Ready for Rigor' framework of CRT, defining four main areas of teaching, namely cultural awareness, comprehension, interaction, and community building/ cooperative learning which correspond to awareness, information processing, learning partnership, and community of learning from the framework. Since our research advocates interdisciplinarity in teaching literature, we have incorporated techniques and activities from various approaches to develop and empower each of the four areas above. The findings indicated that the suggested approach had a positive effect on teaching literature, touching on and enhancing all four domains. The results of the observation indicated gradual, consistent, and notable changes in all four facets.

### **5.2.1. Cultural awareness**

The approach used teaches to and through culture. It calls for the explicit teaching of culture to enhance students' cultural awareness about their own cultural frames of reference, and the target culture as well. Culture for us is both a means and an end of teaching literature. We started from the idea that literature is the richest source and the most effective approach to gaining insight into the culture of another speech community (Carter and Long, 1991; Delanoy, 2005). The researcher grounded the teaching of literature on students' cultural knowledge, background, and experiences. Lesson

designs, handouts, and examples were based on students' favorite books, movies, animations, genres, etc. elicited from the first questionnaire. In addition, metacognitive reflexive questions were integrated into each lesson, where students had to reflect on their own socio-cultural experiences and link them to the books we read. Additionally, intertextuality, context, and comparison activities were included to emphasize the link between culture, literature, and human experience.

Both the findings of the observation and metacognitive questionnaire signaled a positive, apparent impact of these techniques on students' cultural awareness which in turn affected their interaction and comprehension. Our purpose was to help students move 'from the familiar to the strange, and from the strange to the familiar' like Spindler and Spindler (1982, as cited in Hammond, 2015, p.55) formulate it. That is moving from identifying their cultural attributes and frames of reference, which shape their experience and learning, to identifying those of 'the other' as depicted in the literary works. Between the sixth and last session of the treatment, we observed a significant change in the participants' attitudes toward 'the other' and the target culture, as they grew more aware, tolerant, and understanding of the various cultural aspects in the literary works, character motivations, and author's intentions, perspectives, and ideologies.

This, on the one hand, aligns with what researchers like William Roche (2004) and Edmonson (2004) who posit that literature is our gateway to 'the other' and' onto the world, and that it helps us grow more compassionate and tolerant towards other cultures. Donoghue (1998) claims that it enables the reader to connect with other human beings and denotes reading relation "to sympathy, fellowship, the spirituality and

morality of being human” (p.75). On the other hand, it confirmed CRT’s claim that incorporating students’ cultural frames of reference helps build awareness and tolerance and makes learning more meaningful (Hammond, 2015).

As reported in the previous chapter, we have noticed a shift in attitude toward ‘the other’ and the actions and motivations of characters. When discussing characterization types and character motivation (session 10), ‘The Giver’ and ‘Pride and Prejudice’ (sessions 11, 14, and 15), students demonstrated a better understanding of cultural differences, less judgment of the characters and authors of the books, acceptance, and tolerance although they did not necessarily agree with the perspectives presented in these books. Researchers like Galda (1982), Hancock (1993), McGee (1992), Mellor et al. (2000), and Shine & Roser (1999) claim that both assimilation and resistance aid the readers in building their view of the world. We argued in Chapter 2 that teaching tolerance does not entail teaching our students to accept passively everything they read but to be able to feel empathy, sympathy, and respect for the other through the differences and disparities of culture, social norms, ideologies, and perspectives. This was mirrored in the results forestated.

In the questionnaire (96.7%) believed that through the books read, they could appreciate their own culture, history, customs, and traditions, and more than 80% agreed or strongly agreed that literature helped them learn about other cultures, develop a sense of respect towards other cultures, and improve their intercultural competence. Moreover, 70% believed that literature had helped them become better persons, and around 60% agreed that tolerating the discussion of sensitive cultural issues is good for learning. These results are in tune with Rogers' (1997) claim that literature not only

helps us learn about other cultures, but raises our awareness about our cultural frames of reference as well. This also corresponds to Hall's (2005) claim that literature is an effective tool to build intercultural competence. Additionally, this resonates with what Jenkins (1995), and Hall (1996) explain that 'the other' is the key to constructing, understanding, developing, and negotiating the self and identity. The process of identity construction is socially and culturally based, where reading and education play a major role, laying the ground for comparison to other individuals, collectivities, and cultures which is the central tenet of identification. In addition, it is through reading that individual readers become aware of how their identities are being constructed in the text and how those constructions compare with their initial attempts and intentions to form their identities (Bean and Moni, 2003).

Rogers (1997) among other researchers suggests that through the lives, experiences, and events in literary works, students gain access to a vehicle for personal, social, and cultural explorations. Through classroom discussions, video projects, written assignments, and the reading diaries, we were able to see how our students tried to build their views, perspectives, interpretations, and opinions based on constant comparisons of their cultural frames of reference to those presented in the literary works.

We think that we were able to achieve this mainly and initially through the explicit teaching of the levels of culture, the link between culture, literature, and cognition, context types, intertextuality, and the link emotions-cognition- literature. It was only after this that we started noticing a change in students' cultural awareness. This is one of the most significant findings in our research. Our EFL and literature pedagogies require a more explicit approach to the teaching of crucial concepts such as

culture, cognition, and emotions. There exists a high probability that these constructs may go unnoticed by our students throughout the academic year if we continue to rely on implicit teaching methods.

### **5.2.2. Comprehension**

To facilitate information processing, we incorporated brain-based research (chunking, schema activation activities, visual cues, spaced repetition, active recall, the muddiest point, metacognitive activities, and Bloom's Taxonomy). Generally, both the observation and the metacognitive questionnaire reported an improvement in all aspects of comprehension. During the treatment, we could test the effectiveness of each of the techniques mentioned above.

For instance, students seemed to struggle more with lessons that flouted the principle of chunking like 'Plot Types'. In addition, students could not recall the information the least reiterated through spaced repetition (like style) during the diagnostic quiz. Moreover, questions written during active recall activities, coupled with the technique of the muddiest point, were the most significant ones to students' comprehension; they often contributed to clarifying the participant's misunderstandings. Schema activation activities and incorporating students' cultural frames of reference, background knowledge, preferences, and social experiences have had a strong impact on comprehension. This was apparent in the analysis of the four books, where learners demonstrated higher interaction with activities and questions that relate to their personal experiences. Similarly, the use of examples from the students' first questionnaire in the lesson handouts, with the various visual cues had a direct link to students' engagement, positive attitude, interaction, and attention which all contributed to comprehension.

Furthermore, during lessons and activities based on Bloom's Taxonomy, students exhibited a higher level of structure and organization, and the sessions were marked with smooth transitions from one idea or problem to another.

The findings in the area of comprehension and information processing confirm the claims of CRT researchers like Hammond (2015), Gay (2000, 2002), and cognitive scientists such as Churches et al. (2017), Jackson (2000), Nikolajeva (2014) Zull (2002), and Resnik (1991) that designing classroom practices that are compatible with how the brain learns, processes and recalls information, emphasizing the link between culture and cognition can enhance students' brain powers and aid information processing. These researchers believe that it is culture that provides the necessary sources and tools for the brain to learn, that is why all the techniques above were intertwined with the teaching of culture as described in Chapters 3 and 4. This enabled us to maximize the effect of the brain-based activities and ensure a positive impact on students' learning habits.

Enhancing comprehension was also aided by two important principles we adopted- defining and communicating small achievable goals to the students, and scaffolding. One of the main pillars of CRT is defining clear, feasible objectives for each lesson, activity, and task. Setting these objectives guided the development of assessment, instructional methods, and content materials, enabling the teacher and the participants to work together towards a common goal. They helped us stay on task, reducing anxiety about information load, and nurturing students' organizational skills (Hammond, 2015; Kibler et al., 1974; Beach et al., 2006; Ginsberg and Wlodkowski, 2009). We often used these goals, which we shared at the beginning of each session, to

crosscheck the learning outcome with the students. Students had the opportunity to verify if they had reached all the objectives of the lessons which served as a reflective practice as well.

Scaffolding is a central tenet in the sociocultural approach in which students learn through the interaction with their sociocultural environment, where more knowledgeable individuals (teachers) model tasks, activities, and skills (Vygotsky, 1987 and 1978; Beach et al., 2006; Panwar et al., 2006). For this technique to work, and not result in dependent learning, we made sure that modeling is always followed by activities that challenged the students' current ZPD, abilities, or understanding. We recognized that to ensure that learners move from depending on the teacher's scaffolding to independent thinking we need to supplement this technique with assignments and projects and support it with other techniques such as Bloom's Taxonomy. We believe that we could reach these results only because of this interdisciplinarity philosophy. If we did not challenge the students' understanding following the taxonomy, we would not have been able to examine their creativity and critical thinking, which were illustrated in the written assignments, the video projects, and the post-test.

### **5.2.3. Interaction**

By the end of the intervention, students demonstrated all the aspects of interaction designated in the observation checklist including their reactions and attitudes toward the teacher, the feedback, the material, and their peers. The first thing we realized about this specific area is that it lies at the center of 'The Ready for Rigor' framework, simply because through it we could examine, primarily, the other three areas. The

second thing is that it has a direct correlation and was significantly impacted by the process of community building. The greater emphasis placed on fostering a sense of community and collaborative learning, the more pronounced the observed levels of interaction became. The third thing is that higher interaction was always associated with tasks, questions, activities, and examples that were relevant to students' experiences and cultural frames of reference. This underscored the importance of community building and integrating students' cultural frames of reference in teaching as described by researchers like Billings (1995, 1998, 2001, & 2010 ), Gay (2000 & 2010), Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009), Hammond (2015), Hanley and Noblit (2009), Hollie and Mora-Flores (2012), Irvin (2002), Irvin and Armento (2002), Krasnoff (2016), Ralabate and Nelson (2017), and Shade et al. (2008).

#### **5.2.4. Community Building and Cooperative Learning**

Based on CRT and cognitive research which deposit that the sense of community and cooperation is necessary for the brain to function properly and effectively (Hammond, 2005; Gopnik et al, 2000; Hanson, 2013, Zull, 2002), we used various methods and techniques to promote collectivity and endorse cooperative learning in the classroom. Through feedback, affirmation of students' persons and experiences, validation of their efforts and abilities, pair and group work, and collective projects we sought to develop a sense of learning partnership between the teachers and students, and between the students and their peers. The first step to build rapport between the researcher and the participants was researching their background and experience with literature through the first questionnaire, and then using that information in handouts and lessons design. This was supported by showing 'similarity of interest' and

competence as described in Chapters 2 and 4 and incorporating students' cultural frames of references in classroom discussions and the novels' study guides. However, the video projects and written feedback were noted to have had the strongest impact on community building.

As per the results of the observation and metacognitive questionnaire, this was the fastest area to develop, which we believe established the ground for the development of the other areas. It was clear that when students started feeling more comfortable in the classroom with the teacher and each other and leaning more toward cooperation, they displayed better interaction and comprehension. This aligned with neuroscience's claim that the brain feels safest when we feel connected to others. When we find whom we trust, the brain releases the bonding hormone, which is proven to facilitate learning (Zhuang et al. 2020). CRT researchers like Gay (2002) point out that community building helps promote students' identities and establish them as contributive members. This is achieved only through a sense of belonging (Bruner, 2001; Norton, 2013, Josselone, 1996). We could also see that the more they felt comfortable and confident to share, discuss, and argue about their ideas and thoughts, the better their cultural awareness was. This highlights the reciprocal relationship between the four domains of 'The Ready for Rigor' framework and draws our attention to the possible interactions between the various aspects of learning which we might overlook in our classrooms.

**5.3. The Second Main Question: *How does using the culturally responsive-interdisciplinary approach affect third-year EFL students' (Zian Achor University) performances in literature tests?***

As described earlier, the paired-samples *t*-test rejected the null hypothesis, confirmed the alternative one, and answered the second main question. The approach proposed proved to have a positive effect on students' performances in tests in the various areas designated by the assessment criteria (language, structure, analysis, discussion, and illustration). Both the detailed descriptive and diagnostic analytics of the pre-and post-test, and the statistical comparison between the two (the means, the standard deviations, the *p*-value, the *t*-test, and the correlation) demonstrate a substantial difference between the tests' scores. The post-test scores were significantly higher than the pre-test scores, with a small *p*-value indicating that such improvement was not due to chance, but to the implementation of the interdisciplinary approach. Through the results, we could see that students displayed better levels in all the areas indicated in the assessment criteria; however, there are some differences worth noting.

The highest improvement was documented in the areas of analysis, discussion, and illustration, followed by writing the thesis statement, then grammar and punctuation. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the participants did not have a teacher of academic writing for two years, which we believe affected the marks of language and structure in both tests. In the pre-test, it was apparent that the students lacked the necessary linguistic competencies to write and organize their essays.

The researcher tried to enhance their writing skills with weekly written assignments and tasks, providing corrective, instructive feedback (both written and

spoken) and assigning as many readings as the time allowed. Even though the results of the observation indicated a slow, less observable improvement in the participants' grammar and punctuation. The participants claimed in the metacognitive questionnaire at the end of the treatment that they could notice considerable change in some areas of language and structure like using correct grammar, punctuation, thesis statements, and syntax, while still struggling with essay structure and unfamiliar linguistic forms. Moreover, more than 92% agreed or strongly agreed that literature is important in the language classroom and 83% said that it helped them improve their language, which was backed up by the scores of the post-test. Though grammar and punctuation marks were the lowest compared to the other aspects of the assessment criteria, they remain noteworthy. However, we could not possibly attribute this change in grammar and punctuation entirely to the treatment only (being EFL students).

Our research aimed at teaching literature to fulfill its potential and value in EFL classrooms. One of the basic arguments for teaching literature in EFL classrooms is that it enhances language learning (Gilroy and Parkinson, 1997; Hall, 2005; Kramsch and Kramsch, 2000; Maley, 1990; Schultz, 2002; and Simpson, 1997). Researchers like Brumfit (1983), Brumfit and Carter (1986), Carter (1982), Carter and Long (1991), and Widdowson (1975) believe that literature is an ally of language since it can nurture students' linguistic competencies and basic skills (grammar, punctuation, syntax, vocabulary, etc.), arguing that studying literature is initially the study of language in use. The results of our research aligned with these claims.

We think that this area was the least developed during the treatment mainly due to the participants' past experience with the module of academic writing. Moreover, the

treatment addressed various elements concomitantly, including cultural awareness, cooperation, interaction, comprehension, analysis, and language among others, which might have hindered the attainment of better results in this particular domain given the circumstance forestated.

#### **5.4. The First Sub-Question: *How does incorporating students' cultural frames of reference influence students' learning of literary analysis?***

The main tool used to answer this question was the classroom participant observation. Through the checklist and the reflexive journal, we documented and reported students' responses, attitudes, reactions, and interactions with the activities, techniques, and tasks that incorporated their cultural frames of reference. This included the examples and sample texts used in the handouts (elicited from the first questionnaire), metacognitive activities, intertextuality activities, schema activation tasks, and classroom discussions. As stated above these aspects have had a major impact on students' comprehension, interaction, and cultural awareness. Students were more interactive and displayed higher levels of comprehension when the task involved familiar examples, compared their cultural frameworks to the target culture, or linked to their personal experience. In this research, literature is used to teach culture, and culture is used to teach literature. While reading literature is perceived as "a symbolic construction of a particular cultural reality" (Campbell, 1994 as cited in Rogers, 1997, p.97), culture is seen as ways of "being, doing, and sense-making" (Hanley and Noblit, 2009, p.5); it informs and shapes cognition, identity, and learning. Our experiences and memories are organized in the form of stories and narratives, and will eventually take the form of the narrative through which we communicate them (Bruner, 1991); these

narratives are culturally and socially bound. This is why linking literature to students' personal experiences and cultural background, using the latter as lenses through which they understand, appreciate, and accept the target culture was the central and most effective technique in the experiment.

We believe that the interdisciplinary approach was effective because it had culture at its core, it glued all the other activities and approaches together. The culture-based activities fostered information processing, interaction, awareness, and tolerance, and promoted students' identities. These findings were apparent in the observation checklist and backed up by the metacognitive questionnaire, where over 90% of the sample claimed that they could identify, elicit, understand, explain, compare, and tolerate cultural aspects in the various literary works studied.

#### **5.5. The Second and Third Sub-Questions: *Which techniques and practices are more effective?***

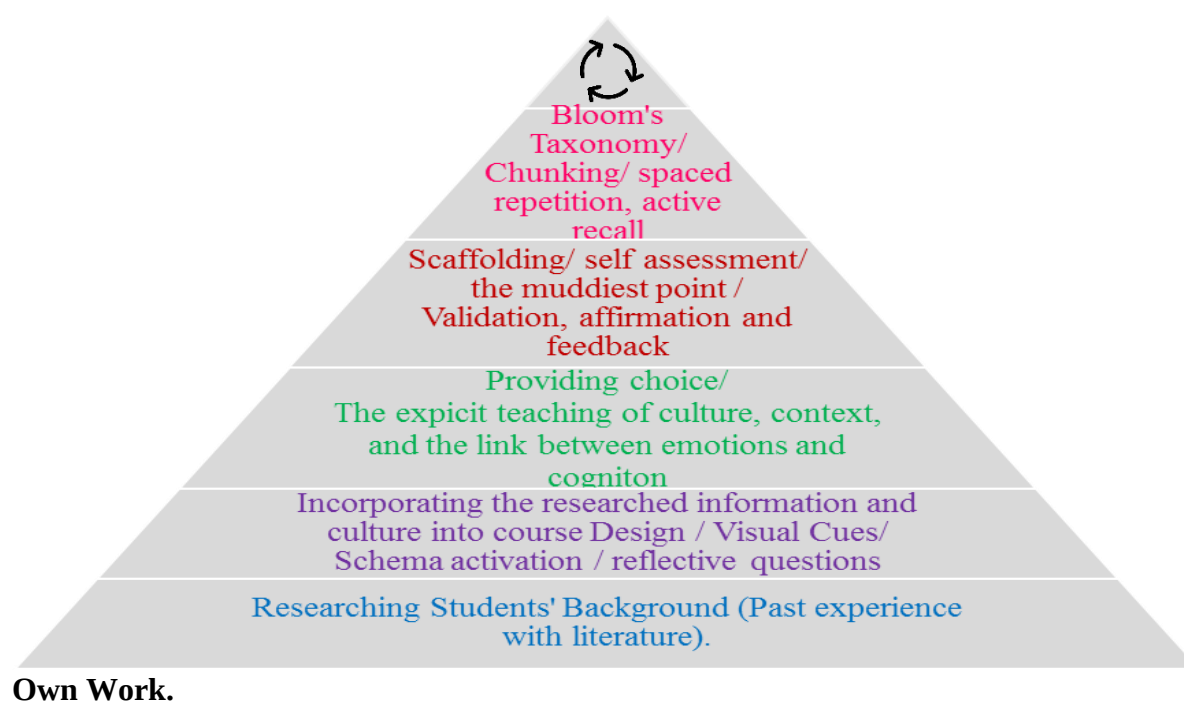
To answer these questions, we needed to keep a close and weekly examination of students' interaction with the material and tasks given using the observation checklist and the reflexive journal. By the end of the treatment, we came to understand that we could not order the techniques from the most effective to the least simply because they functioned cooperatively and complementarily. Each technique depended on others to work properly and ensure a positive impact. In addition, each set of techniques was used to develop one of the areas in the framework adopted. However, some techniques seemed to have a bigger influence on the progress of the intervention, namely researching students' backgrounds prior to course design and incorporating their cultural frames of reference into course design and classroom practices. The first being

the earliest step in the intervention, laid the foundation for the development of the other techniques, and the second being the centerpiece of the approach connected them, strengthening their effect.

We synthesized Figure 34 to illustrate the relation between these techniques and practices. The further down we move the stronger the link between the strategy or practice mentioned with the two forgoing techniques. The circular arrows at the top of the pyramid suggest the reciprocity of influence and correspondence between all of them.

**Figure 34**

*The Dynamics of the Techniques and Practices of The Intervention*



#### 5.6. The Fourth Sub-Question: *Which activities are more engaging and relevant to the students and what is the effect of each?*

Before designing our course, we made sure we had the necessary tools to assess every student's weaknesses and strengths in various areas of learning; therefore, we

incorporated different forms of activities. According to the findings of the observation and metacognitive questionnaire, we could order the classroom activities from the most engaging and relevant to the least, highlighting the effect of each on the students and the progress of the treatment.

**1) Video Projects:** The students showed the highest interest, enthusiasm, and engagement with the video projects, both verbally, through body language, and through the quality of the projects and presentations they carried out. These projects were assigned as a strategy of Project-Based Learning (PBL), which is a form of Active Learning (AL). AL is seen by Hanson and Moser (2003) as a way to enhance creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. As stated in the analysis of the observation, if it was not for these projects, we would never have had the chance to examine those skills, especially creativity. Following CRT educators like Banks (2001), Hammond (2015), and Gay (2001), we can argue that making use of students' existing abilities and giving them opportunities to excel at them leads to independent learning and promotes learners' identities. We have observed that the participants appreciated the chances given to them to work on something, through which they exhibit and share their understandings, points of view, skills, and voices. The video projects helped us with the following:

**a) Discovering the students' hidden potential:** Through these projects, we could know more about those girls and what they were capable of doing and achieving if given the time and space. This resonated with the idea of CRT educators like Billings (1994, 1995), Gay (2000, 2010), and Irvin (2002) among many others,

that teachers should assume the success of every single student and hold higher expectations about each, and then work toward meeting those expectations. For instance, students 6, 8, 10, 14, and 25 did not participate much in the classroom and stated in the questionnaire that they had great difficulty with it, yet they were very comfortable working on the video projects, reflecting good reasoning, critical thinking, and creativity. In addition, students 3, 4, 10, 13, and 19 had several problems with academic writing, conversely, they had good speaking skills. Moreover, students 5, 6, 5, 10, 14, 27, and 30 had advanced editing skills.

***b) Building the Learning Partnership and the Community:*** These projects being mostly group projects have had a strong impact on community building, and the establishment of cooperation as a classroom routine and habit. Working on these videos together boosted the learners' readiness for collaboration. There was a noticeable shift in the attitudes of students once they started working on the projects. We often discussed the progress of their work in the classroom and could see their appreciation for each other's efforts, especially for those responsible for the editing. When asked about the details of the projects (whose ideas was it, who chose the topic, who did the editing, who chose the setting, etc.), we were surprised that students shared all these details with the teacher with ease. This was a huge step in building the learning partnership. We believe that this form of attitude and the trust relationship was achieved by the teachers' constant affirmation, validation, feedback, and exhibition of 'similarity of interest', which are the keys to building rapport with the students and creating a suitable environment for community building (Hammond, 2015).

## ***2) Intertextuality activities, Classroom Discussions, and Reflective Activities:***

The second most enjoyable set of tasks were intertextuality activities, classroom discussions, and reflective activities. We have noted in the observation analysis that students have always displayed more interaction with intertextuality activities. Ever since we first introduced the concept, its types, and its effect on our understanding and interpretation of literary texts, students have shown special enthusiasm about it. We might attribute this to the fact that these activities had often initiated discussions about various topics that triggered the students like philosophy, history, linguistics, etc., or to the freshness of this construct since the totality of participants did not know anything about it before. It could also be linked to the fact that through these activities, students had the chance to compare works of various authors, genres, disciplines, or cultures, or works of the same authors enriching their knowledge. We say this because the participants communicated that they felt they lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to read and understand the literature in the first questionnaire. The students' attitudes toward intertextuality supported our decision to view literature as discourse as described in Chapter 1, and underscored the importance of this standard of textuality in text production and comprehension as explained by De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) and Kristeva (1986).

Classroom discussions had a similar effect on students. As the main strategy in RRT, classroom discussions were used to elicit students' responses to literature. Researchers like Galda (1982), Jewel and Pratt (1999), Kim (2004), and Rosenblatt (1974) assert that these discussions, if well-directed, can have a

positive effect on reading motivation, language, emotional involvement, articulation of opinions, and construction of meaning. We reported in Chapter 4 that students seemed to enjoy and appreciate our classroom discussions, which might be because the latter took the form of a book club (as described in Chapters 3 and 4), where students had a platform to share their honest views, opinions, perspectives, and even feelings about the books we read. Akin to this we stated in Chapter 4 that these discussions contributed much to classroom interaction. They aided the sharpening and betterment of students' abilities to form and ask questions, debate, argue, and communicate.

We were aware of the pitfall of RRT's classroom discussions, which were criticized for not adequately addressing the role of the author and his social and cultural intentions and influences on text creation and interpretation and focusing solely on students' responses. Therefore, we accompanied these discussions with the explicit teaching of culture, context, and intertextuality; and the use of context activities, where we start our discussions by highlighting the most relevant biographical, historical, social, and cultural information to the books we read. We believe that we were able to amplify the effect of these discussions only because we adopted the view of literature as discourse, which dictated respecting the various standards of textuality including authors' intentionality, readers' acceptability, situationality (context), and intertextuality. In fact, De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) indicate that the achievement of communicative purposes by writers and speakers, as well as the comprehension of texts by readers and

listeners, is heavily reliant on the holistic consideration of all aspects of textuality during text processing.

Reflective activities were also equally relevant and engaging to the participants. These activities consisted of any task that linked students' cultural frames of reference and personal experiences to the books, the content, and the material. We noted in the observation analysis that the subjects were always more engaged and interested in tasks that required them to explain certain aspects drawing on and comparing to their cultural identifications, or personal experiences (check Chapter 4). When asked to choose a question in the written assignments or the video projects, most students leaned towards questions that linked to their personal or socio-cultural experience. It cannot be emphasized enough that the approach rests on the integration of students' cultural frames of reference, personal experience, and background knowledge into course design and classroom practices. Students' reception, reactions, and preference of this type of activity are in favor of CRT and cognitive sciences' claim that the more personalized the teaching, the greater the significance it holds for the learners, and the more potent their information processing capabilities become (Anderson et al., 1977; Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000; Hammond, 2015; Hacker, 1980; Hudson, 2007; Oakley and Sejnowski, 2018; Pearson, 1982; Quartz and Sejnowski, 2002; Rogers, 1997). We note here that these last activities assisted both classroom discussions and intertextuality activities including the relevant examples, questions, and works to the students' based on the information elicited from the first questionnaire.

**3) Metacognitive activities:** The next most engaging type of activities was metacognitive activities (diagnostic quizzes, the muddiest point task, the first questionnaire, and the metacognitive questionnaire). Given the intricate nature of metacognition which requires students to think about their own thinking, reflecting on their learning, experiences, weaknesses, and strengths, it was surmised that the tasks presented may potentially pose a challenge or lack engagement for the students. However, contrary to our expectations, participants enjoyed these activities, especially the ‘Know You’ questionnaire, and the first and last part of the metacognitive questionnaire. As described in Chapter 4, the participants never hesitated to share the muddiest points of each lesson, participated in the quizzes, and answered all the questions in the questionnaire despite their length. Each time we started one of these activities, we made sure the students understood the purpose behind it, which was mainly to find out about their challenges and struggles and work on them. Maybe this is why they were often excited to do such tasks.

CRT and the Sociocultural approach advise that teachers show care about students’ struggles and, at the same time, demonstrate competence to solve those problems together with the learners. We think that working on the areas the students identified as the muddiest points, and using their favorite books, movies, animations, and series elicited from the first questionnaire in the lesson handouts, has encouraged them to engage more in these activities. On the one hand, this supports what researchers like Brookfield (2006), Gay (2000), Gopnik et al, (2000), Hammond (2015), Hanson (2013), and Zull (2002) say that building a

relationship of trust and cooperation, where students know they could depend on their teacher is the key to students involvement, participation, and contribution to the classroom practices. On the other hand, it underlines the role of metacognitive practices as described by researchers like Hudson (2007) and Donker et al (2014).

**4) Reading Diaries:** As a way to implement SEL in the classroom, and enhance the link between emotions, cognition, and literature, we asked the participants to keep reading diaries, where they journal and document the thoughts, questions, and emotions evoked by the book at hand. Dolan (2002) notes that literature and emotions are intertwined and that stories that stimulate the reader's affective side, are the most likely to be remembered and understood. Ghosn (2001, p.1) adds that storytelling had the potential of fostering emotional intelligence (Knowing one's feelings and using that to make good decisions) by providing "vicarious individual experiences" which prepares the brain for empathy, and enables readers to understand human behavior. Through the diaries, we wanted our participants to pay attention to how the books made them feel and think, which could raise their awareness about their cultural frames of reference. We encouraged them to try explaining why they felt in a certain way or had a specific thought or question.

We have noticed that the participants were less engaged with this task during the first six to seven sessions. While some did not keep the diaries, those who kept them faced difficulties expressing and sharing the content in the classroom, or with the teacher. It was not until we explicitly taught the link between

cognition, emotions, and storytelling in the sixth session, that we started noticing a shift in attitude toward the use of diaries. This spotlights two main ideas. The first is that explicit teaching of aspects like culture, cognition, and emotions has had a positive effect on students' attitudes toward the material. The second is the gap in our educational system, where emotions are overlooked. This only calls attention to the fact that we do not address these aspects enough in our pedagogies that students find it difficult to engage in them. Additionally, it accentuates the difficulty of incorporating SEL in our classrooms which do not seem responsive enough to such practices. This activity took more time to be fully embraced by the students. Nevertheless, it is vital to note here that this content enriched the classroom discussions and debates, and contributed to their comprehension and cultural awareness.

An intriguing result of this strategy was the similarities between the students' responses to the same books. Students shared so many common questions, thoughts, and feelings towards the same characters, events, authors, etc. Even when their tolerance and judgment attitudes changed by the end of the treatment, they changed in similar ways. This was noted several times in the classroom observation, and later in the last part of the metacognitive questionnaire, where the results exhibited parallels in their attitudes and understanding of the four books. This takes us back to Winas' (2012, p.150) idea that emotions are "not private individual experiences", but rather embodied phenomena that are profoundly social and cultural in nature." The effect of the collective sociocultural experience of the students on their responses to literature was lucid.

Collective, sociocultural frames of reference were more apparent and often used to explain the students' emotions and thoughts. This further highlights the relevance of the collective sociocultural experience to learning and cognition, supporting and linking claims from neuroscience, discourse analysis, and CRT that culture surrounds, shapes, and guides cognition, learning, identity, and reading (Zull, 2002; Hammond, 2015; Hall, 1996; Quartz and Sejnowski, 2002; Keith, 2011). This technique gave us more insights into the role of social and cultural contexts in reader response and interpretation as put forward by researchers like Rogers (1997).

**5. Written Assignments:** The participants had weekly written assignments, which were meant to help them develop their writing skills and assess and challenge their understanding. Although all students did all the homework, with students 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 14, 17, and 19 always doing extra work and asking the teacher for feedback, these assignments were the least enjoyable and agreeable. However, these assignments were of great importance to the researcher. They helped track the students' weekly progress in various areas of learning like comprehension, cultural awareness, writing, and organization which supported our observations.

### **5.7 The Fifth Sub-Question: *Does the approach work equally with the various literary works and genres?***

To answer this question, we made sure we read as many books as time allows, and that the books belong to different genres. What we have concluded is that the approach worked equally with all the books. Similar methods, techniques, and strategies were used to teach, read, and interpret the literary works. The results of the

post-test, the observation (assignments, discussions, video-projects), and the metacognitive questionnaire prove the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary approach we used on all four areas of learning we tested, the five assessment criteria, and the understanding of four books.

However, we remarked that different books can help us teach different aspects of literary analysis, and the same technique can be used differently to meet the specifications of each book. For instance, intertextuality activities were used to teach the effect of philosophy on literature with ‘The Little Prince’, the similarities between literary works of different genres and literary eras with ‘Peter Pan’ and ‘The Little Prince’, similarities between books of the same genre and the effect of the political and economic view on the creation of Dystopian literature with ‘The Giver’, and the universal cultural aspects influencing literature across time and space with ‘Pride and Prejudice.’

Moreover, classroom discussions, though took similar forms, stressed different aspects of literary analysis in each book. While all the literary aspects studied were analyzed in all four books (themes, symbols, motifs, tone, setting, character types, characterization, POV, plot elements and types, and style), and themes were central in each discussion, with each book we placed more emphasis on one or two of the aspects above. For example, we focused on symbolism when studying ‘The Little Prince’, character types and motivations and tone in ‘Peter Pan’, allusions and plot types in ‘The Giver, and POV, tone, and characterizations in ‘Pride and Prejudice.’

We believe that merging a variety of techniques (culturally responsive, sociocultural, cognitive, etc.) helped us account for the complexities of such works.

These strategies complemented one another to enable us to close as many comprehension gaps as possible. This was assisted and endorsed by the principle of ‘providing choice.’ We think that allowing the students to choose the third and fourth books has had a major role in the effectiveness of this approach. It has influenced their interaction, comprehension, and cultural awareness. CRT and the sociocultural approach advocates argue that including students in classroom instructional decisions and giving them a chance to voice their views and make suggestions substantially influence their learning outcome (Hammond, 2015; Gay, 2000 & 2010; Ralabate and Nelson, 2017; Shade et al., 2008). Through this, students assume ownership of their learning, increasing their sense of responsibility, commitment, and contribution. This was in line with the results of our observation as detailed in Chapter 4.

### **5.8. Final Notes on the Adopted Interdisciplinary Approach**

Literary texts being texts of culture in the first place- the products of authors’ cognition, languages, personal and socio-cultural experiences, identities, emotions, and perspectives- represent world views and ideologies of a specific speech community through the imaginary lives, events and characters. These views will in turn be perceived, evaluated, and interpreted according to readers’ identities, experiences, etc. EFL literature classes are intricate and complex, where these various aspects intertwine and interconnect; therefore, to cover them we designed an interdisciplinary approach to teaching literature amalgamating five distinct approaches, culturally responsive teaching, the sociocultural approach, reader-response theory, the cognitive approach, and discourse analysis.

In this approach, the philosophy of cultural responsiveness constitutes the foundation upon which the other methods stand and interact, and discourse analysis informs the kind of relationship that holds between them. It is based on the idea that incorporating students' cultural frames of reference into course design and practices, promotes their identities and enhances their learning. To lead our students to meaningful independent learning, we need to consider the roles of culture, identity, and cognition in the process, hence the use of RRT, the cognitive approach, and the socio-cultural approach.

Adopting the view of literature as discourse facilitated the choice of relevant techniques to teach and cover the distinct facets of literature. Literature as discourse is a verbal representation of the culture, language, beliefs, identities, and experiences of a specific speech community. Sarangi (1999, p.293) states that discourse is a concrete expression of the language-culture relationship since "it creates, recreates, modifies, and transmits both culture and their interaction." This, we argue, is the most relevant to the EFL literature classroom, where the relationship between language and culture is at the core of its pedagogy. Perceiving literature as discourse ties it with elements like language, culture, identity, history, social norms, beliefs, relationships, and social conduct, which shape and are in turn shaped by discourse (Brown and Yule, 1983; Gee 2011, 2001, and 2015; Fairclough, 1992, Foucault, 1969; Johnstone, 2009). This idea best fits the context of the EFL literature classroom; it informed our classroom decisions and assisted the choice of the techniques, strategies, and activities we borrowed from each approach.

In this section, we clarify how these techniques and methods helped us reach some instructional and research objectives other than those described above, namely equity, resilience, and independent learning.

#### **5.8.1. Equity**

A culturally-responsive teaching builds and promotes equity, which is defined as providing every individual student with what he/she needs for success, reducing the predictability of who succeeds and who fails. Accommodating the distinct strategies from the five approaches enabled us to establish an equitable classroom by:

- a)** Making the content culturally relevant to students by integrating both their socio-cultural and individual preferences, experiences, and interests;
- b)** using various forms of instructional and assessment tools to account for students' differences;
- c)** giving the participants the opportunity to contribute both individually and collectively to the classroom (participation, discussion, assignments, projects, diaries)
- d)** using constant feedback, affirmation, and validation to reduce judgment in the classroom, build trust, and showcase care;
- e)** addressing students' struggles and weaknesses both collectively and individually (questionnaires, diagnostic quizzes, written assignments);
- f)** giving students choice (projects, assignments, books);
- g)** using scaffolding to model learning for all students.

The findings of the classroom observation, the questionnaire, and the post-test indicated improved comprehension, awareness, and performance of each and every participant.

Following CRT principles, we assumed the success of every student and tried to act upon that to reach significant results. We could argue that adopting the interdisciplinary approach could give every student a voice and a chance to excel at their strongest abilities since it offered a variety of tasks and activities, among which students could choose what best fits their potential, skills, knowledge, and preferences. For instance, students who could not comfortably participate in class could use the video projects, the written assignments, the questionnaire, or the diaries to express themselves. In like manner, students who had difficulties expressing their thoughts in writing could use classroom discussions or video projects to do so.

In addition, the teacher made sure each lesson contained examples elicited from the student's responses to the first questionnaire, gave students the right to choose the books for our class, and always left room for creativity in the video projects, assignments, and diaries which, we believe, empowered the students' sense of being represented in the classroom. This was coupled with feedback, affirmation, validation, and display of 'similarity of interests.' The general findings of the research tools and attitudes of the students elicited from the metacognitive questionnaire suggest that the strategies used were effective in establishing equitable classrooms, which highly corresponded to equity research in CRT by Baldanza (2016) Jagers et al. (2019), and Krasnoff, (2016).

### **5.8.2. Resilience**

Although resilience is not an easy skill to observe or assess in a short time since it concerns the students' long-term attitude toward learning, the treatment demonstrated a few aspects of resilience described by Benard (2004). He identifies *social competence*

(the skills of communication, intercultural competence, tolerance, empathy, the capacity to connect and establish ties with others, etc.), *problem-solving* (critical thinking, reflecting, observing, resourcefulness, planning, and mind mapping), *autonomy* (the students' beliefs in their capacities to succeed and their abilities to act upon those beliefs), and *sense of purpose* (the intention to accomplish) as the main competencies for resiliency. Although we could not observe the last one, the students demonstrated various skills regarding the first three.

As denoted in Chapter 4 and the first section of this Chapter, the students displayed higher tolerance, cooperation inside and outside the classroom, good relationship with the teacher, better interaction skills (asking and answering questions, respecting others' views, arguing, discussing, etc.), and a mature cultural understanding that could contribute to their intercultural competence. This may have been achieved by the explicit teaching of culture, classroom discussions, reflective activities, and community-building strategies. This again indicated that various approaches contributed to building this aspect of resilience (RRT, cognitive approaches, and CRT). Moreover, the findings highlighted advancement in skills of problem-solving especially creativity, resourcefulness, critical thinking, and reflexivity which were particularly showcased in the video projects and assignments.

However, although the impact of the approach on certain facets such as reflexivity was observable, we maintain that it was not solely responsible for the development of all problem-solving abilities. Our contention is that students were already in possession of said skills and that classroom instruction and practices afforded them the opportunity to show them. Finally, the findings signaled some aspects of

autonomy which we will be discussing under the forthcoming title. Through a look at the general progress of the intervention and outcomes, we could posit that the approach has the potential to enhance students' resiliency and aptly equip students for future educational pursuits. However, not all facets of resilience are readily assessable or perceptible via observation.

### **5.8.3. Independent Learning**

CRT, the sociocultural approach, cognitive sciences, discourse analysis, and RRT offer various ways for students to achieve independence and autonomy and assume ownership of their learning. CRT educators advise incorporating students' cultural frames of reference in course design, and relying on validation and affirmation to promote their individuality, while the sociocultural approach offers providing choice, and scaffolding as strategies to empower students' autonomy (Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000; Hammond, 2015). Cognitive scientists necessitate the implementation of brain-based research, metacognitive activities, and SEL to empower students' learning based on existing knowledge and schema (Nikolajeva, 2014; Gretter, 2012; Churches et al. 2017, Ghosn, 2001; Pinsent, 1996).

RRT advocates call for the focus on students' individual responses to literature to validate their experience and make learning more meaningful (Galda, 1982, Hancock, 1993; Mellor et al., 2000; Shine & Roser, 1999), and discourse analysts emphasize the role of readers' identities, experience, culture, beliefs, language, and history in text processing and interpretation (De Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981; Fairclough, 1992; Gee, 2001; Van Dijk, 2014). Through the strategies and practices derived from these

approaches, we could delve into several aspects of independent learning, the most prominent of which are:

- a) **Reflective thinking:** As stated previously, students showed enthusiasm, interest, and mastery of metacognitive activities and reflective questions.
- b) **Decision Making:** We had the chance to see the students making decisions that relate to their learning and performance in tasks. They made decisions about the books they read, the questions to answer in the assignments and projects, the form and content of their projects, to work individually or cooperatively, etc.
- c) **Self-Assessment:** We implemented self-assessment as described in Chapters 3 and 4 in different sessions. The results of the metacognitive questionnaire illustrated the students' enhanced capacity to evaluate their learning.
- d) **Resilience:** As described earlier students demonstrated skills of problem-solving and social skills that relate to resiliency.
- e) **Effective Communication:** Students contributed significantly to the progress of the treatment. As noted in Chapter 4, their aptitude for interaction and communication displayed an incessant progression. Around the end of the treatment, they seemed to communicate their thoughts, struggles, feelings, and opinions clearly and efficiently.
- f) **Commitment:** The participants read all books, and completed all tasks, projects, and assignments. Just like the aspects of resilience mentioned earlier, we do not ascribe this particular skill to the approach employed. Instead, we maintain that the participants were among the most dedicated students we have ever had the privilege of instructing. We assert that the approach, which was predicated on

their cultural frames of reference, may have played a role in highlighting their exceptional abilities only.

Examining the interaction between the components of the approach we used, we could conclude that they functioned complementarily and interdependently. The efficacy of each technique, strategy, or practice relied on the co-existence of other constituents. For example, context and intertextuality activities compensated for the inadequacies of RRT's classroom discussions addressed by researchers like Rabinowitz (1987) and Hall (2005), assignments and projects assessed and supported and challenged scaffolding, reading diaries enriched classroom discussions, reflective activities supported self-assessment and vice versa, chunking assisted spaced repetition, which facilitated active recall, etc.

Moreover, interdisciplinarity allowed flexibility in course design, content form, and classroom instructions. We described various instances where we had to change the technique on the spot to solve a specific problem in the classroom like replacing classroom discussion with an active recall activity in session 2 or adding specific content to the course outline, like the explicit teaching of the link between cognition, literature and emotions in session 6. We were able to make such decisions because we had a comprehensive list of techniques, strategies, and tasks. This highlights the importance of creating a defined course design which enables teachers to act faster and more effectively when facing any issue.

## **5.9. Pedagogical Implications**

The findings described above have both theoretical and practical implications in the fields of EFL teaching, literature pedagogy, and higher education. First, regarding the theory of literature teaching, the current study merged five different approaches highlighting the place and role of each in teaching literature in EFL classrooms. It described a different take on each of these approaches based on our understanding of the potential of each of them in improving the pedagogy of literature and suggesting specific patterns of linking them as presented in Figures 3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16. It reviewed research from literary criticism and theory, EFL and ESL education, linguistics, discourse analysis, cognitive sciences, anthropology, sociology, cultural and multicultural studies, assessment theories, etc. to collect the necessary information and tools to develop this approach. Researchers in the field could examine, evaluate, or assimilate this view based on empirical data supporting its theoretical perspective.

For the practical implications, the findings are significant to teachers, researchers, and curriculum designers. The results are relevant to EFL pedagogy and higher education since the target population and sample represent these two fields. The findings inform teachers about the effectiveness of a variety of techniques, strategies, classroom practices, and tasks underlining the specific impact of each on particular areas of learning. The study details the students' reactions, interactions, responses, engagement, and use of each of these aspects. It evaluates the outcome of these methods and techniques on students' performances in various tasks both separately and as part of a holistic approach, using both descriptive-interpretive and statistical data. This enables the teachers to choose what best fits their objectives and classrooms. Moreover,

teachers, especially novice ones, can borrow, accommodate, or modify the content of the handouts which were designed based on neuroscientific and culturally-responsive principles. The latter's practicality and efficiency are supported by significant empirical data as presented in Chapters 1 and 2.

Furthermore, the findings accentuate the interrelatedness of literature, cognition, emotions, and culture which draws the teachers' attention to several crucial ideas. First, by elucidating the reciprocal relationship between these concepts, it spotlights the gap in our educational systems, where emotions are disregarded. Second, it raises their awareness about the cognitive and neuroscientific potential of literature and storytelling, where the latter has the power to shape memory, emotions, responses, attitudes, and beliefs. Third, and most importantly, it brings to the fore the centrality of culture, which constitutes the environment, stimuli, source, and tools for the brain to learn, create, understand, and interpret stories.

Additionally, the research findings demonstrated the effect of incorporating students' frames of reference in classroom practices on their comprehension, cultural awareness, comprehension, and consequently on their test performances. Not only does the research confirm the usefulness of this strategy, it provides the teachers with ways to implement it in lesson content, classroom discussions, projects, and assignments.

The results could also be valuable for curriculum designers. Our investigation endeavors to furnish insight into the advancement of curriculum design in EFL higher education, an area that appears to be falling behind. By showcasing what a pre-determined studied course design could achieve, we hope to italicize the necessity and

criticality of curriculum and course design and initiate the development of pertinent EFL pedagogies.

Last but not least, via the adopted methodology, which is the closest form to action research, and the philosophy behind cultural responsiveness which stands on researching one's classroom prior to instruction, we seek to promote these forms of inquiries among young and novice teachers. If teachers assume the role of researchers within their classrooms to innovate their teaching, solve their problems, or enrich their knowledge, our educational system can no longer depend on reforms that result in little, and often insignificant changes. Instead, it could be informed by these investigations carried out in Algerian EFL contexts, accounting for their sociocultural specifications, which would make future reforms well-founded and impactful.

### **5.10. Limitations**

Any research is deemed limited. To start with, the methodology used may be prone to a variety of threats to internal validity due to the absence of randomization and the control group. Although we argued against using true experiments in educational settings for ethical reasons and used various methods to minimize these threats, scientifically this design remains limited. Second, the issues of students' attendance discussed in Chapter 3 dictated the number of participants, which though significant to the overall number of students who attended regularly, was small with regard to the whole population of EFL students.

Another limitation of the study stemmed from the students' past experience with academic writing. Not having a teacher of academic writing for two years had affected their writing skills, leading us to consider the problems of grammar, syntax, and

punctuation in the intervention. We agree with James Paul Gee when he says that teaching any module or domain is, basically, the teaching of its specific language (jargon, vocabulary, structures, semantics, pragmatics, etc.). Due to the issue forestated, we were concerned with basic grammar and punctuation problems, instead of checking the effect of the approach on the students' mastery of 'the language of literature.'

There is more to literature, literary theory, and literary analysis than the aspects we have addressed in the intervention; at the same time, there is a long list of genres and subgenres that we could not tackle. Unfortunately, the time span did not allow the inclusion of any other element. In addition, due to reasons discussed in the previous two chapters, we could not examine some aspects of SEL and resilience. Similarly, as explained in the delimitations, we focused only on some identity attributes regarding identification, representation, and negotiation; we did not provide a holistic complete examination of identity as a construct.

### **5.11. Suggestions for Further Research**

According to the limitations of this study, we could suggest several ideas for further research as follows:

**1)** All the participants in this study were females; it would be interesting to check if gender is a contributing factor to the success of the approach. Researchers can examine the interaction of the two genders with the techniques in relation to the various studies in neuroscience and cognitive psychology that point out major differences in learning styles and cognitive abilities between males and females. It would be beneficial to check whether males and females have the same responses to the strategies and tasks used.

- 2) The approach could be tested in the first and second years, with larger samples, with different contents, literary genres, or modules. Researchers could test the effectiveness of teaching to and through culture on the teaching of other modules like civilization, discourse analysis, linguistics, and academic writing.
- 3) Other techniques from the approaches used can be incorporated to further examine the interaction between the components of the interdisciplinary approach.
- 4) Researchers can use the approach, or a modified version to emphasize the aspects we identified as the most challenging or time-consuming like language and SEL.
- 5) Academics can delve more into the relationship between literature and cognition, which seems a promising area of research especially in EFL contexts.
- 6) The link between culture, emotions, and learning seems to be overlooked in our academic settings. Further investigations into it are needed.
- 7) The pedagogy of literature and curriculum design in higher education seems to be underdeveloped. If researchers designed and tested more course outlines, approaches, and classroom practices, we could contribute to the advancement of these fields.

## **Conclusion**

Following the order of the research questions, this chapter presented the major findings of the research and illustrated how they answered each research question, linking them to the existing research. It provided an evaluation of the approaches, techniques, and classroom activities used, highlighting the effect of each, always in comparison to the reviewed research. The chapter ended with a set of pedagogical implications of these findings in the related fields. The limitations of this research were listed along with recommendations for future research.

## **General Conclusion**

Literature has been argued in various research to have a central role in EFL classrooms and higher education due to its potential to represent the target culture, raise students' cultural awareness, enhance their tolerance toward 'the other', promote their identities, and improve their language skills. Unfortunately, literature pedagogy in higher education EFL contexts does not receive the necessary attention to help it achieve this potential. Our research suggested an interdisciplinary approach to teaching literature merging techniques from five distinct approaches and theories-cultural responsiveness, reader-response theory, cognitive sciences, the sociocultural approach, and discourse analysis to account for the intricate nature of literature in EFL classrooms, where aspects like language, culture, storytelling, identity, emotions, and cognition intertwine. The approach adopted tried to address as many facets of literature as possible to demonstrate its inherent value.

The research adopted a quasi-experimental one group-pretest-posttest-design, under a mixed research paradigm between positivism and constructivism, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools and analysis methods, to investigate the causal relationship between using the interdisciplinary approach (independent variable) and teaching literature (dependent variable). The study had two defined phases. In the pre-experimental phase, the teacher used a questionnaire, archival data (test scores of previous academic years), and a teacher's interview to collect the necessary information about the participants and their past experiences with reading and studying literature, checking their results against students' performance in the pretest. In the experimental phase, the teacher used a participant observation (checklist and a

reflexive journal), a metacognitive questionnaire, and a post-test to examine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, again crosschecked against the results of the pre-test.

We incorporated qualitative analysis methods to analyze the data elicited from the first questionnaire and teacher's interview (thematic content analysis), observation (typological analysis), and the archival data and the pre-and posttests (descriptive diagnostic analysis); simple percentage, graphs, and tabulations were used to back up some of these methods. Moreover, we used statistical tests to analyze the metacognitive questionnaire (mean and mode) and compare the pre-and post-test (paired samples *t-test*). We relied on triangulation, piloting, and interrater reliability among other techniques to ensure higher reliability and validity of these tools and methods and minimize the threats that may emerge from the limitations of the research design.

Through a defined course outline based on the approaches aforementioned, we carried out a 14-week experiment to test the effectiveness of the set of techniques, strategies, tasks, and classroom practices in various areas of learning literature (comprehension, cultural awareness, tolerance, interaction, engagement, cooperation, etc.). Through the research tools described above, we documented, explained, and interpreted the effect of each instructional tool and practice on the areas forestated. Our analysis and discussion were guided by two main research questions and four sub-questions. The first two enquired about the effect of the intervention on teaching literature and students' test performances, while the other four enquired about the impact of the various techniques used on students, and asked if the interdisciplinary

approach functioned similarly with the different books and genres tackled during the treatment.

The general results of the various research tools indicated an improvement in all learning areas addressed, with a significant difference between the pre and post-test results (0.00000000000000 *p*-value). However, we observed that the fastest area to develop under this approach was community building and cooperation, the most noticeable improvement was detected in the area of interaction, and the most substantial change was linked to cultural awareness, tolerance, and comprehension. The findings indicated that the least enhanced facet was language skills, particularly grammar and punctuation. Moreover, the hardest domain to work on was SEL.

The findings underscored the importance of incorporating students' cultural frames of reference in course design and classroom practices. Students demonstrated higher interaction and better comprehension when the content, tasks, and questions related to their background knowledge or socio-cultural experiences. They also highlighted the necessity of integrating brain-compatible strategies like chunking, spaced repetition, visual cues, and active recall to facilitate information processing, comprehension, and retention. Moreover, the results supported the claim that perceiving literature as discourse can simplify the task of elucidating the links between storytelling, language, culture, identity, emotions, and cognition. One important conclusion was that the explicit teaching of culture and the links above have a direct and positive impact on students' cultural awareness and comprehension.

Furthermore, the approach seemed to have the potential of spotlighting students' existing competencies such as problem-solving, creativity, and resourcefulness,

allowing them to exhibit and excel at them through a variety of activities (assignments, presentations, video projects, reading diaries, discussions, metacognitive activities, etc.). Last but not least, researching the background of students and their past experiences with literature through the first questionnaire and giving them ‘choice’ (choosing books, tasks, questions, etc.) have had a central role in the progress of the intervention.

The current research provided empirical data that supported our claims concerning the effect of the interdisciplinary approach we merged on the teaching of literature and students’ performances in tests and answered our main and sub-questions. The approach adopted facilitated the achievement of our research goals, thereby propelling us further toward our ultimate aim- improving the pedagogy of literature.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 01: The ‘Know You’ Questionnaire

Know You

Dear Students!

I would appreciate it if you could take some time to answer this questionnaire so that I can get to know you better.

1. Name a book you love .....
2. Name a movie you love .....
3. Name a character you identify with. ....
4. What was your favorite animation as a kid? Why?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. Which cartoon character impacted you the most? How?

.....  
.....  
.....

6. Name an Animation movie you think is worth watching. ....

7. What is your favorite literary Quote?

.....  
.....  
.....

8. What is the story ending you love the most?

.....  
.....  
.....

9. What do you enjoy reading the most? Mark only one oval

- |                                     |                                             |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Novels        | <input type="radio"/> Fairytales            |
| <input type="radio"/> Short stories | <input type="radio"/> Mythology             |
| <input type="radio"/> Plays         | <input type="radio"/> Comic books           |
| <input type="radio"/> Manga         | <input type="radio"/> Others? Specify ..... |

10. What is your favorite genre? Mark only one oval

- |                                          |                                       |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Sci-Fi             | <input type="radio"/> Thriller        |
| <input type="radio"/> Fantasy            | <input type="radio"/> Mystery         |
| <input type="radio"/> Historical Fiction | <input type="radio"/> Romance         |
| <input type="radio"/> Detective          | <input type="radio"/> Others? Specify |

11. Name a character you despise. ....
12. Name a book you didn't like .....
13. Name a movie or series you didn't like .....
14. What is the ending you would like to change  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
15. What is the event you wish did not happen in a story?  
.....  
.....
16. Fiction or non-fiction? .....
17. Reading in Arabic or English? .....
18. Original work or Arabic Translation? .....
19. Book or movie adaptation? .....
20. American or British TV .....
21. Local, Egyptian, Syrian, American, British, Korean, or Turkish tv?.....
22. Classics or Modern literature .....
23. African, American, or English literature? .....
24. Period drama or modern- drama? .....
25. Disney or Studio Ghibli? .....
26. What is the easiest thing in literary analysis? .....
- .....  
.....
27. What is the hardest thing in literary analysis?  
.....  
.....
28. In our opinion, what is the purpose of teaching literature?  
.....  
.....
29. what is the most challenging part of reading a book for your literature class?  
.....  
.....
30. You are a teacher, what is the book you choose for your students?  
.....

## Appendix 02: The Pre-Test

Literature / 3<sup>rd</sup> Year  
Teacher: Mahammed Belkias  
Full Name: .....  
Group: .....

2022/2023  
Time allowed 90 mins

### WRITE AN ESSAY ABOUT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS.

#### 1. Analyze the theme present in the following quote.

"she is more important than all the hundreds of you other roses: because it is she that I have watered; because it is she that I have put under the glass globe; because it is she that I have sheltered behind the screen; because it is for her that I have killed the caterpillars (except the two or three that we saved to become butterflies); because it is she that I have listened to, when she grumbled, or boasted, or even sometimes when she said nothing. Because she is my rose."



2. "Existence precedes and rules essence." Explain this in relation to the themes of the book.

#### 3. Identify the theme (s) related to the quote below and **discuss** it.

The pilot said, "In the course of this life I have had a great many encounters with a great many people who have been concerned with matters of consequence. I have lived a great deal among grown-ups. I have seen them intimately, close at hand. And that hasn't much improved my opinion of them."



Topic Number:

Answer:

**Mark** /20

TS (2 pts) /2

Analysis (6 pts) /6

Textual Evidence (5 pts) /5

Grammar, p (5 pts) /5

Coherence (2 pts) /2

[illegible]

## Appendix 04: The Observation Checklist

*Literature Class 2022/2023*  
*Researcher: Mahammed Belkis*

*Session N°:*  
*Lesson:*

### Observation Checklist

NA = Not opportunity to observe skill; 0 = Demonstrated skill and used appropriately; 1 = Demonstrated skill appropriately but not consistently; 2 = Demonstrated skill but used inappropriately; 3 = Skill not demonstrated at all.

| Element Observed                                                                                       | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
|  <b>Comprehension</b> |    |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Students can easily understand task instructions                                                    |    |   |   |   |   |
| 2. Students can follow along with instructions                                                         |    |   |   |   |   |
| 4. Students can understand the language in the handouts                                                |    |   |   |   |   |
| 5. Students can understand the language of the books                                                   |    |   |   |   |   |
| 6. Students can understand questions                                                                   |    |   |   |   |   |
| 7. Students can explain concepts when asked                                                            |    |   |   |   |   |
| 8. Students can recall previously learned information                                                  |    |   |   |   |   |
| 10. Students can infer meaning (demonstrate inferential comprehension)                                 |    |   |   |   |   |
| 11. Students can link information to their experiences                                                 |    |   |   |   |   |
| 12. Students understand links between literary works and types of context                              |    |   |   |   |   |
| 13. Students can compare works                                                                         |    |   |   |   |   |
| 14. Students can debate issues and viewpoints                                                          |    |   |   |   |   |
| 15. Students can formulate questions                                                                   |    |   |   |   |   |
| 16. Students can summarize information                                                                 |    |   |   |   |   |

*Overall  
Comprehension*

.....

| Element Observed                                                                                              | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
|  <b>Cultural Awareness</b> |    |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Students can identify cultural elements                                                                    |    |   |   |   |   |
| 2. Students can explain cultural elements                                                                     |    |   |   |   |   |
| 3. Students can tolerate unfamiliar cultural aspects                                                          |    |   |   |   |   |
| 4. Students can tolerate unfamiliar character actions (culture-specific)                                      |    |   |   |   |   |
| 5. Students can tolerate sensitive/taboo issues                                                               |    |   |   |   |   |
| 6. Students know their cultural frames of reference                                                           |    |   |   |   |   |
| 7. Students can compare their culture and the target culture                                                  |    |   |   |   |   |
| 8. Students can recognize cultural differences across various books, movies, animation, etc.                  |    |   |   |   |   |
| 9. Students understand the link between culture and literary discourse                                        |    |   |   |   |   |
| 10. Students can identify with 'the other'                                                                    |    |   |   |   |   |
| 11. Students can infer meaning from unfamiliar cultural ideas                                                 |    |   |   |   |   |

*Overall  
Awareness*

.....

| Element Observed                                                                                     | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Overall Interaction |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
|  <b>Interaction</b> |    |   |   |   |   | .....               |
| 1. Students constructively contribute to the class                                                   |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 2. Students prepare the handouts as asked (read at home before class)                                |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 3. Students complete tasks assigned                                                                  |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 4. Students interact appropriately                                                                   |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 5. Students answer questions                                                                         |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 6. Students ask questions                                                                            |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 7. Students appreciate feedback                                                                      |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 8. Students share their ideas with the teacher and peers                                             |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 9. Students argue about their viewpoints                                                             |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 10. Students are engaged with the material at hand                                                   |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 11. Students show enthusiasm about the material                                                      |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 12. Students engage in class discussions                                                             |    |   |   |   |   |                     |
| 13. Students listen to each other when participating                                                 |    |   |   |   |   |                     |

**Overall  
Cooperation**

.....

| Elements Observed                                                                                                                    | NA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
|  <b>Community building (Cooperative Learning)</b> |    |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Students show respect to each other                                                                                               |    |   |   |   |   |
| 2. Students show respect to the teacher                                                                                              |    |   |   |   |   |
| 3. Students work in pairs or groups to solve problems and answer questions                                                           |    |   |   |   |   |
| 4. Students work in groups on projects                                                                                               |    |   |   |   |   |
| 5. Students communicate their concerns as a group to the teacher                                                                     |    |   |   |   |   |
| 6. Students help each other complete tasks                                                                                           |    |   |   |   |   |
| 7. Students appreciate the efforts of each other                                                                                     |    |   |   |   |   |
| 8. Students are happy when one student gets good feedback                                                                            |    |   |   |   |   |
| 9. Students acknowledge the efforts of their peers when working on tasks or projects                                                 |    |   |   |   |   |
| 10. Students acknowledge the efforts of their delegate                                                                               |    |   |   |   |   |
| 11. Students acknowledge the effort of the teacher                                                                                   |    |   |   |   |   |

## Appendix 06: The Metacognitive Questionnaire

### Mahamed Belkis/ Literature Class (2022/2023) A Metacognitive- Reflexive Questionnaire

*Dear students, we need to take a break and reflect on our experiences with literature so far. This questionnaire will help us identify the areas of struggle with literature. It can help us recognize the difficulties we have faced earlier and, Hopefully, we will be able to communicate these difficulties and work on them together.*

*You have already come a long way 'Masha'allah', reading 4 books. Your performance in classroom discussions, test, and assignments have reflected a significant improvement. Your video projects are clear evidence of this. Not only do your projects reflect your dedication and hard work, but also a mature perception of important issues and themes related to the books we have read.*

*This being said, there is always room for improvement; therefore, we need to answer these questions to move forward with our learning.*

★ Please indicate how much difficulty you experience in each of the areas below.

Use the following 1 to 5 scale:

1= no difficulty

2=slight difficulty

3=moderate difficulty

4=great difficulty

|                                                         |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Understanding the language of the books              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Understanding the main idea of the books             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Identifying themes in the books                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. analyzing themes                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Finding and using illustration                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Doing the homework                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Understanding homework questions                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Understanding the context of writing the book        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Analyzing plot elements                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. identifying plot types                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. Identifying characters' types                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. Recognizing characterization types in the books     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. preparing for the exams                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. outlining the essay                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. writing the essay                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. Forming the thesis statement                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. linking my ideas (cohesion and coherence)           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. Using correct grammar                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. Using correct syntactic forms                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. dealing with unfamiliar structures (form and style) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21. making inferences                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 22. Understanding cultural references in the book       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 23. reflecting on my experience while reading the book  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 24. linking the content to my previous readings         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

|                                                                       |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 25. Dealing with unfamiliar ideas (cultural, social, religious, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 26. understanding characters' motivations                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 27. sympathizing and identifying with characters                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 28. Tolerating unfamiliar attitudes and actions of characters         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 29. discussing the book with classmates                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 30. discussing the book with my teacher in the classroom              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 31. participating                                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 32. Asking questions in the classroom                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 33. Communicating my thoughts and opinions clearly                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 34. Expressing my thoughts in speech                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 35. Expressing my thoughts in writing                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 36. Working on projects individually                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 37. Working on projects in groups                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 38. Communicating my struggles to my classmates                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 39. Communicating my struggles to my literature teacher               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 40. Communicating my struggles to other teachers                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

★ Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

Use this "1 to 5" scale:

1= Totally disagree

2= disagree

3= neutral

4= agree

5= Totally agree

|                                                                                 |   |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Reading the novels helped me with my language                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Reading the novels was hard                                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Reading the novels was boring                                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Reading the novels was fun                                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Reading the novels was hard but fun                                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Reading the novels was easy but boring                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Literature is important in language classrooms                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Literature helped me learn about other cultures                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Literature helped me become a better person                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. My self-esteem improves when I read about other cultures                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. My self-esteem is threatened when I read about other cultures               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I feel comfortable reading about sensitive cultural issues                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. I identify with my Algerian Heritage the most                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. I identify with the American or British Cultures the most                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Tolerating the discussion of sensitive (taboo) issues is good for learning  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. I developed a sense of respect toward other cultures through literary texts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. Reading literature helped me develop intercultural competence               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

★ say yes or no

|                                                                                                                   | yes | No |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1. I get to appreciate my culture, history, customs, and traditions through reading literary texts                |     |    |
| 2. It helps me when the literary texts contain cultural elements which are familiar to me                         |     |    |
| 3. I am interested in reading more about the target culture (s) after reading the literary texts                  |     |    |
| 4. I am interested in learning more about the authors after reading their works                                   |     |    |
| 5. I accept literary texts that introduce topics and cultural elements that differ from my own values and culture |     |    |
| 6. The cultural elements are easy to elicit from literary texts                                                   |     |    |
| 7. I can compare the cultural elements in the book and those in my own society                                    |     |    |
| 8. I can recognize how the themes of the books I read appeal to my modern experience                              |     |    |
| 9. I can recognize the cultural differences between the books we read so far                                      |     |    |

★ Choose one book for each statement (write the corresponding number only):

1. *The Little Prince*
2. *Peter Pan*
3. *The Giver*
4. *Pride and Prejudice*

|   |                                                         |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------|
| + | <i>The book I prefer</i>                                |
| + | <i>The book that relates to my experience the most</i>  |
| + | <i>The book that contains most cultural elements</i>    |
| + | <i>The book that relates to my society the most</i>     |
| + | <i>The book that reflects our modern world the most</i> |
| + | <i>The book that taught me lessons the most</i>         |

Do you have anything else to say? Comment, question, or addition?

.....

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## Appendix 07: Lesson 1 (Basic Concepts in Literary Analysis)

Literature/ 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Students  
Instructor: Mohammadi Belkis

Academic Year 2022/2023

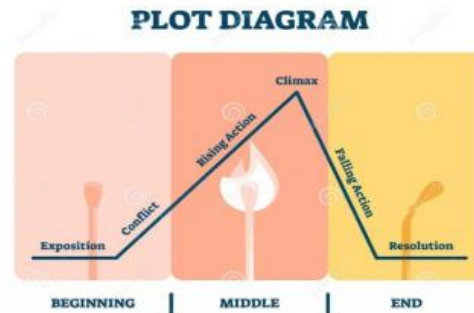
### Handout 01: Basic Concepts for Literary Analysis

#### 1. THE PLOT

The plot is the storyline of a literary text; it is the sequence of a series of events in a story. "The plot is the organization and emphasis that shapes the story and its reception, and the order or sequence in which the details or facts are given." "It is the logical interaction of the various thematic elements of a text which lead to a change of the original situation as presented at the outset of the narrative. An ideal traditional plot line encompasses the following four sequential levels: exposition—complication—climax or turning point—resolution" (Klarer, 2004)

#### PLOT ELEMENTS

- **The Exposition** is the beginning of the story where elements such as the main characters and the setting are revealed. The exposition sets the background of the story and usually introduces or hints at the major conflict.
- **The Rising Action** happens when the events in the story become complicated. It is a series of events that build up to the conflict.
- **Conflict** is any form of struggle that is presented in the text. It can be internal (within oneself), or external between the character and either (1) other characters, (2) nature, (3) society/ environment, (4) technology, (5) the supernatural, or (6) a higher power.
- **The Climax** is the turning point of the story.
- **The Falling Action:** includes events that pave the way for the conflict to be solved. This happens when complications begin to resolve.
- **The Resolution** is the conclusion or the final outcome of the story.



#### Example: The Lord of the Rings

##### Exposition

1. Bilbo goes away, leaving a magic ring for his nephew Frodo.

##### Rising Action

2. Gandalf reveals the ring is the One Ring.
3. Frodo and friends take the One Ring to Elrond in Rivendell.
4. It is decided there that Frodo will bear the ring to Mordor.
5. Along the way, the Fellowship faces many dangers.
6. The Fellowship parts.
7. Frodo and Sam go on to Mordor alone.
8. Aragorn, Gimli, Legolas, and Gandalf help fight Saruman.
9. Gondor and Rohan prepare for the coming war with Sauron.
10. Aragorn leads a force against Sauron as a distraction.

##### Climax

11. Frodo and Sam enter Mordor and travel toward Mount Doom.

##### Falling Action

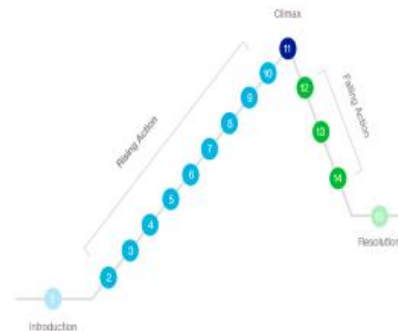
12. The One Ring is destroyed and the Fellowship is reunited.
13. Aragorn becomes king of Gondor and marries Arwen.
14. The four hobbits return to the Shire to make it safe again.

##### Resolution

15. Frodo and Bilbo depart on a ship; Sam goes home to Rosie.

(adapted from [www.coutsehero.com](http://www.coutsehero.com))

The Lord of the Rings Plot Diagram



#### 2. THE SETTING

The term "setting" denotes the location, historical period, and social surroundings in which the action of a text develops. It includes time, place, atmosphere, social conditions, and even weather conditions. The information about the setting helps us contextualize the literary work; it can be analyzed in relation to the plot, the characters, the themes, etc.

#### 3. THE CHARACTERS

Characters are people, animals, or figures represented in a work of fiction. Characters can be revealed through the description of physical appearance, through action (what they do, say, think, and feel), or through what other people say about them (we call this characterization).

There are several classifications of character types.

3. 1. According to the role of each character we can classify them into:

• **A protagonist:** the main character, the center of the story; the hero.





• **An antagonist:** the opposition or enemy of the main character; the villain in the story.

• **Deuteragonists:** the closest type to the protagonist. It could be one or a group of deuteragonists. Usually, they help the protagonist in their quest.



Examples of deuteragonists are Melmen, Gloria, and Marty in Madagascar; Legolas, Gandalf, Gimli, and Pippin in the Lord of the Rings; the team of the Avengers; Shifu, Tigress, Mantis, Viper, Crane, Monkey in Kung Fu Panda; Kirk, Jeff, Alpa Chino, Kevin in Tropic Thunder, etc.)



• **Tertiary Characters:** Characters that appear in one or two scenes to perform some actions related to the plot. Examples of this type are, Radagast in The Hobbit, Galadriel in the Lord of the Rings, Odin in Thor Ragnarok, and Mark Hanna in the Wolf of Wall Street.



• **Love Interest:** Elle (Ice Age) Kristof (Frozen), Arwen (LOTR), Dalsy (Great Gatsby), Nate (Devil Wears Prada)



• **Confidante:** the one whom the main character trusts. This character helps develop the protagonist's heroic characteristics. "He reveals the central character's thoughts, intentions, and personality traits. However, a confidante need not necessarily be a person. An animal can also be a confidante." (Ron and Hermione in Harry Potter, Darwin in Gumball)



• **Foil:** is "any character (sometimes the antagonist or an important supporting character) whose personal qualities contrast with another character (usually the protagonist). By providing this contrast, we get to know more about the other character." Examples of foil characters are Anna in Frozen, Dr. Watson in Sherlock Holmes, Donkey in Shrek, Darco in Harry Potter, Tom Buchanan, Nick Carraway in The Great Gatsby, Buzz in Toy Story, Tigress in Kung fu Panda, Huckleberry Finn in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, etc. (Huck is also the confidante of Tom)

3.2. According to the qualities of the characters, they can be classified into:

• **Dynamic:** A dynamic character changes over time, usually as a result of resolving a central conflict or facing a major crisis. Most dynamic characters tend to be central.

• **Round:** is a "fully developed personality that is affected by the story's events; he/she can learn, grow, or deteriorate by the end of the story. It is generally a complex character (Gatsby in The Great Gatsby, Macbeth in Macbeth, Edward "Teddy" Daniels / Andrew Laeddis in Shutter Island, etc.)

• **Flat:** A flat character is the opposite of a round character. "This literary personality is notable for one kind of personality trait or characteristic." It is rare when we find a flat protagonist, still, there are some examples, such as Rip in Rip Van Winkle.



• **Anti-Hero:** a major character, usually the protagonist, who lacks the conventional traits of a hero. Instead, he/she/ it is characterized by imperfections (selfishness, ignorance, bigotry, etc.), a lack of positive qualities such as "courage, physical prowess, and fortitude", and "generally feels helpless in a world over which they have no control" (Gale 2012) (Jack Sparrow in The Pirates of the Caribbean, Walter White in Breaking Bad, Deadpool, Jay Gatsby in The Great Gatsby, Hannibal Lecter in The Silence of the Lambs, Michael Corleone in the Godfather, John McClane in Die Hard, etc.)



•**Stock:** Stock characters are those types of characters who have become conventional or stereotypical (generic) through repeated use in particular types of stories. Stock characters are instantly recognizable to readers or audience members (**the geek, the loner, the angry friend, the rebel teenager, the "stupid" blond, the bad father, etc.**).



•**Symbolic:** A symbolic character is any major or minor character whose very existence represents some major idea or aspect of society and reflects the main themes of the story (**Gollum from LOTR, the Fig Tree from The Island of the Missing Trees, two-face in the Dark Knight, Aslan in The Chronicles of Narnia, etc.**)



#### 4. POINT OF VIEW (POV)

It is the angle from which the story is told (who is the narrator of the story). We can distinguish the following types of POV:

**4.1. First Person POV:** when the main character (the protagonist), or another character who interacts with the main character is the teller of the story. (**Gulliver's Travels by Swift, Moby Dick by Melville, Jane Eyre by C. Bronte, So long a Letter by Marlama Bâ, etc.**)

**4.2. Second Person POV:** when the story is told by a narrator who addresses the reader as 'you'. It is the least POV used, found in some postmodern works (**Fifth Season by N.K. Jemisin**)

**4.3. Third Person POV:** when the narrator is unknown and we see the story through his/her eyes. There are variations of this POV:

**a. Limited:** readers see only what the narrator sees. The narrator sees only what is in front of him/her but is unable to tell what characters are thinking or explain future possibilities. (**1984 by Orwell, For whom the Bell Tolls by Hemingway**)

**b. Omniscient:** the narrator seems to know everything about the characters, the places, and events (all-knowing). He/ she can see inside the minds of the characters. (**Hard Times by Dickens, Pride and Prejudice by Austen, Crime and Punishment by Dostoevsky, A Grain of Wheat by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o**)

•**Sometimes writers shift between types of POV, for example, Toni Morrison in Beloved.**

•**In My Name is Red, Pamuk narrates the story from 21 different voices of POV.**

•**In 40 Rules of Love, Elif Shafak shifts between first person (various narrators) and third person limited.**

**4.4. Innocent Eye** where the story is told through the eyes of a child (his/her judgment being different from that of an adult). **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain**

**4.5 Stream of Consciousness:** a narrative technique where the thoughts and emotions of a narrator or character are written out such that a reader can track the fluid mental state of these characters. **Ulysses by James Joyce, Notes from the Underground by Dostoevsky.**

#### 5. THEMES

The theme is the main message of the story; it is the topic or the idea discussed by the author. Themes vary from one work to another according to the writer, the movement, the genre, etc. (**love, power, death, survival, good vs evil, justice, faith, hope, betrayal, communication, escape, illusion, identity, knowledge, etc.**)

#### 6. TONE

Tone refers to the attitude of the writer towards the topic and the audience of his work. It refers to the manner in which the writer approaches the central theme of his/her work. It guides the readers and stimulates their feelings while going through the events of the story. The tone is mainly linked to diction (**cautious, humorous, serious, personal, violent, critical, affectionate, hostile, objective, pleading, indifferent, desperate, sarcastic, etc.**)

#### 7. MOOD

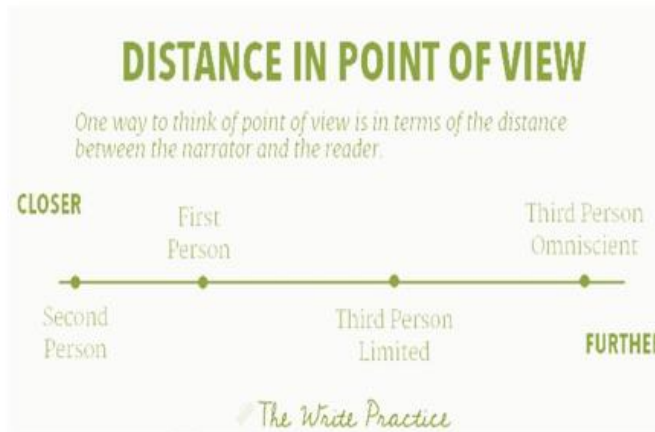
This refers to "the emotional feeling that the reader gets from the writing. Usually, the mood is related to the tone, for the tone of the author creates the mood of the reader. The mood is also affected by figurative language, sentence structure, and diction."

#### 8. Symbolism

Writers can use an object, a person, a thing, or an animal as a symbol to represent an idea or a quality. Symbols change their meanings according to context, culture, society, etc. It also depends on the reader and his knowledge. Symbolism is clearer in allegory.

#### 9. Motif

A motif can be easily confused with a symbol. It is a reoccurring image, sound, action, or other figures that has a symbolic significance, and contributes toward the development of a certain theme (through its repetition in the literary work).



## 10. Style

Style refers to the techniques the writer uses to write. It includes syntax (sentence structure), grammar, point of view, diction, tone and mood, figurative language, rhetoric, symbolism, allegory, etc. It describes **how** the writer presents events, characters, themes, and the story as a whole in terms of language.

### Practice

1. Choose a novel, a short story, a manga you have read; a movie, or an animation you have watched, and then try identifying the followings:

- Plot Elements
- Main Characters (try finding the type of 3 characters)
- Three Main themes (explain them).
- A motif and a symbol (explain them).

2. Write a paragraph in which you summarize and explain your favorite book or movie in 6 lines only, or record a video where you do the same in 60 seconds. If you choose to record a video send it to the email: [balqisismahammedi@gmail.com](mailto:balqisismahammedi@gmail.com) (due after our first session).



3. Choose up to 3 books you think every English Major should read. Say why.

4. What are the character types of: Eren from Attack on Titans, Hinata from Naruto, Luffy from One Piece, and Arrietty from the Secret World of Arrietty.

*"You see, unlike in the movies, there is no THE END sign flashing at the end of books. When I've read a book, I don't feel like I've finished anything. So I start a new one."*

*– Elif Shafak, The Bastard of Istanbul*

## Appendix 07: Lesson 2 (Theme Analysis: Writing a Theme Analysis Essay)

Literature/ Third Year  
Instructor: Mahammedi Belkis

2022/2023

Dear Students,

In the upcoming session, we will learn how to write a literary analysis essay. Starting with themes, we will discover how to identify the themes in a literary work, write a theme analysis essay, and support our analysis using various forms of illustrations). To help us have a clear idea about this form of writing, we use the essays below as samples. Different colors for the different parts of the essays are used to make it easier for us to follow.

Below is a reminder of essay structure.

### Essay Structure

#### 1. The Introduction

**1.1. The Hook** is the opening sentence (s) of your essay; it captures the readers' attention and helps raise their interest in your topic. A hook can be, a question, a quote, a line from a poem, a short anecdote, a personal story, a fun fact, or a surprising fact, statistics, jokes, etc. that relate to your topic. The choice of the hook depends on the effect you want to achieve, the type of the essay, and the audience of your written piece. To reach a better effect, keep your hooks short. (Check essay samples below) Keep in mind that a hook opens the introduction; it does not stand for it. If you cannot come up with a good hook, in some cases, you can use your thesis statement at the beginning of the essay, which will serve both as a thesis statement and a catchy hook.

**1.2. The General Statements:** after writing your hook, you need to provide few sentences that describe your topic and provide general information about it. These sentences link your hook to the thesis statement, which is the last part of the introduction.

#### 1.3. The Thesis Statement

The last part of the introduction; a sentence or two that name the topic and controls the ideas, or subdivisions of the topic that are going to be discussed in the body. It presents the topic and your position in relation to the topic. It guides your writing and keeps it focused. A thesis statement is neither too general, nor too specific. It is clear, concise and precise. Like the topic sentence, a thesis statement contains a controlling idea that indicates the pattern of organization of your essay. A reader should be able to expect what is the whole essay about when reading your thesis statement, and

the order of the ideas mentioned in your controlling idea, should be followed when organizing your body paragraphs.

**2. The Body** is composed of one or more paragraphs depending on the topic being discussed, and sometimes in the question being asked. The number of paragraphs follows the thesis statement. It differs from one topic to another, from one question to another. All body paragraphs should be focused on one main point; the point should relate to the major focus of the essay. To write a good body, you need to follow a number of tips

**2.1.** If you have one body paragraph, make sure all the information you have mentioned in the thesis statement is covered in your supporting sentence.

**2.2.** If you have more than one body paragraph, make sure every paragraph has a topic sentence that relates to one of the ideas mentioned in your thesis statement.

**2.3.** Use the concluding sentence of each paragraph to hint at or introduce the next paragraph.

**2.4.** Try to keep a balance between the paragraphs of the body in terms of length and the number of ideas discussed in each.

**2.5.** Focus on the effective use of transition words within the same paragraph, and to move from one paragraph to another.

**3. The Conclusion** in your conclusion, you can restate your thesis statement, summarize the main ideas from each paragraph, connect back to your introduction hook, provide a general comment on the topic, or do all of them together. It gives your final thought and words about the topic. Never mention an irrelevant or new idea in the conclusion.

## Sample Essay One: Theme of Culture Preservation and Identity in *Things Fall Apart*

- Hook
- Thesis statement
- Topic sentence
- (commentary, events, explanations, examples, illustration; etc)
- Quotes from the text
- Restatement of the introduction (TS)
- Citations (critics and analysts) Elaboration

### Introduction

"The writer in modern-day Africa has assumed the role of the conscience of the society, reminding readers and society of the high cultural ethos that must be upheld." (Ojaide, 1992: 44) Achebe believes in the political role of the writer and that art has the power to change things. In his novel, *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe offers an almost documentary account of the daily life, customs, ceremonies and beliefs of the Igbo people without evasion or romanticizing. Tired of the misrepresentations of Africa and the Africans in the western canon, Achebe tries to portray western colonialism and Christianity confronting an animist tribal system in Nigeria in its full complexity. As to stress the theme of culture and identity, Achebe describes both the positive and the negative aspects of the Igbo people without romanticizing or sentimentalizing them.

### Body

Achebe wants to have his cultural heritage, the oral tradition, rituals, family, social life and religion in the records. According to Diana Akers Rhoads, in her essay "Culture in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*," "One of Achebe's aims is to present the peculiarities of the Igbo culture, especially the beauties and wisdom of its art and institutions, though...Achebe also presents its weaknesses which require change and which aid in its destruction. In Achebe's presentation, Igbos are a self-governing people. For big decisions, all Umuofia gathers together under the leadership of the *ndichie* (the elders) and during these meetings everybody can speak his mind. They have developed a fairly democratic system of government where "a man was judged according to his worth and not according to the worth of his father." (11)

Igbos also have developed a well-established and effective justice system. When a member of their clan was killed by another clan, all the nine villages of Umuofia came together in the market place and decided to follow the normal procedure. "An ultimatum was immediately dispatched to Mbaino asking them to choose between war on the one hand, and on the other the offer of a young man and a virgin as compensation." (15) Everything seemed to work out in a harmonious manner as the people of Umuofia work together to settle the disputes among themselves or with other clans.

Another positive quality of the Igbo culture that Achebe emphasizes is the tolerance of other cultures. As opposed to the missionaries' comments like "We have been sent by this great God to ask you to leave your wicked ways and false gods and turn to Him so that you may be saved when you die," he said. (135) or "Unless you shave off the mark of your heathen belief I will not admit you into the church" (147), "We shall not do you any harm" said the District Commissioner to them later, "if only you agree to cooperate with us" (177-8), we have the Igbo people saying "You can stay with us if you

like our ways. You can worship your own god. It is good that a man should worship the gods and spirits of his fathers" (175) or "There is no story that is not true. The world has no end, and what is good among one people is an abomination with others" (130).

Achebe also emphasizes some negative aspects about the Igbo society. For instance, he shows that the missionaries have things to offer that are missing from the Igbo society: a government, trade, money, salvation of people, and above all schools. The white missionary, Mr. Brown says "that the leaders of the land in the future would be men and women who had learned to read and write. If Umuofia failed to send her children to the school, strangers would come from other places to rule them...From the very beginning religion and education went hand in hand" (166). Another negative aspect is the treatment of women. Women are treated harshly and not in any ways considered as equal to men. Masculinity is held in high esteem and femininity is used as an insult.

At the same time, the writer's attempts to balance between the good and the bad in the society, and takes a neutral position. Achebe shows that the Igbos have a high place for women in their lives. Apart from taking care of the children and help the economy of the family by working in the fields, they also hold a supreme position. When Okonkwo is exiled to his mother's village, Okonkwo's uncle explains the idea that mother is supreme: "It's true that a child belongs to its father. But when a father beats his child, it seeks sympathy in its mother's hut. A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is sorrow and bitterness he finds refuge in his motherland. Your mother is there to protect you." (124). He often emphasizes the capacity to realize the shortcomings of the system and change for the better within the culture. For example, in the past, the punishment for breaking the Week of Peace was harder: "a man who broke the peace was dragged on the ground through the village until he died. But after a while this custom was stopped because it spoiled the peace which it was meant to preserve" (33). They realized that it was not an appropriate punishment for the crime and changed it.

## Conclusion

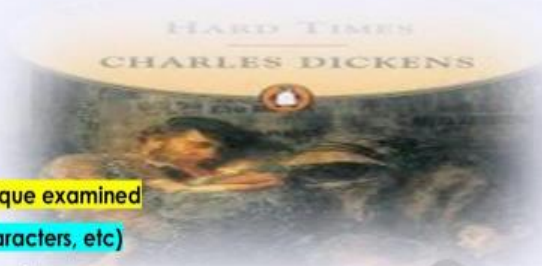
African literature emphasizes the interrelatedness of literature with morality, the didactic quality of literature. Achebe, through *Things Fall Apart*, demonstrates the positive qualities of the Igbo culture in relation to a Western idea of progress and democracy. His target audience is the Western readers and he wants to show that Igbo culture is also democratic, tolerant, balanced, open to progress and has a functioning belief system and an effective justice system. He is presenting Africa in a way that it makes sense to Western readers. He is proposing that Africa is not a silent or incomprehensible continent to Europeans, in English and in the novel form which is a European genre by demonstrating the common humanity of these cultures.

Developed from an article by PALA MULL (Clash of Cultures in CHINUA ACHEBE'S THINGS FALL APART)

- In addition to examples and quotes from the book, in this essay, the writer uses in-text citations from critics and literary analysts to support the analysis.

## Sample Essay Two: Hard Times Themes

-  Hook
-  Thesis Statement
-  Topic sentences
-  Quotes from the book
-  Explanation or examples of the technique examined
-  Illustrations from the book (events, characters, etc)
-  Commentary (link to the thesis statement)
-  Reformulation of the general statements in the introduction



### Introduction

Ideas of social change and progressive ideals are prominent in many nineteenth century works of literature. Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* is a prime example of a social criticism novel, putting prominent ideas of the time period, such as utilitarianism and social class, to the test. Dickens uses specific literary techniques that are highly effective in shocking the reader into understanding Dickens' views. **Dickens uses symbolism, satire, and synecdoche, among other literary techniques, to emphasize his argument.**

### Body

Perhaps the most effective technique is symbolism. Dickens uses it to exaggerate some ideas that may otherwise be overlooked in the overall complexity of the novel. **A symbolic motif running throughout the novel is that of the farming cycle, and the idea of reaping what is sown.** In the first chapters of the novel, Gradgrind, Bounderby and McChoakumchild "sow the seeds" of Fact into the young, fertile minds of children. The only seeds planted are those of Fact, and fancy and feeling are discouraged and tamped down by adults. In the second part of the book, the characters begin to "reap" what they "sowed" in the children at the beginning of the novel. The doctrine of fact alone begins to create problems as characters such as Louisa and Tom find themselves unable to make any right decisions, or feel any emotions at all. In part three of the novel, the harvest is "garnered", or stored, and the reader is hit with the true inadequacy of the seeds sown so long ago. Disasters such as Louisa's ruined marriage, Stephen's death, and Tom's undoing occur, and the characters who originally planted the seeds are left with nothing to sustain them. **This use of obscure symbolism sharply and sometimes cruelly highlights Dickens' disgust with the utilitarian doctrines of fact, and the reader is unable to ignore his disdain. By using this symbolism, Dickens not only expresses his disgust and disagreement with many facets of utilitarianism, but also backs up his hatred with predictions of what will happen to the people if an entire society were based solely on fact.**

Dickens also uses satire to incite the reader's vehemence for social change. In discussing many of the characters', and, indeed, Coketown's, love of fact, he adopts an almost religiously reverent view. He discusses the fact that most of the churches are unattended by the working masses: "A town so sacred in fact, and so triumphant in its assertion, of course it got on well? Why no...who belonged to the eighteen (religious) denominations? Because, whoever did, the laboring people did not..." (Book the first: Ch. V; pg. 38). He continually reinforces the ideas preached by Gradgrind and Bounderby, that Facts are the one scripture needful above every other facet of life, including religion itself. For Gradgrind, science and fact utterly consume him, leaving him no time to pay attention to the human need for comfort and peace that is often exemplified by religion. Gradgrind even goes so far as to replace the word "God" with the word "Fact" in the statement "God forbid", often exclaiming "Fact forbid!" when faced with something fanciful, such as the circus. All of these facets combine to create a highly satirical view of Coketown as a place where the religion is not one of God but one of fact. Dickens backs this up further by continually inserting religious allusions and fragments of prayers into descriptions of Coketown or passages that talk about fact. This satirical view of a much darker reality causes the reader to pause and forces thought on the twisted reality of a world where fact and science, both subject to human fallacy, have replaced a higher power.

Dickens utilizes synecdoche in order to exaggerate and bring across the true mechanization of the masses so prevalent in the Industrial age. He often refers to the Coketown workers as "the masses" and his characters often generalize them as "the hands", all wanting the same things, all doing the same things, and all part of nothing but the overall working machine of the town. In general, the individual is not spoken of; instead the whole represents the individual. This is a useful viewpoint for those such as Gradgrind and Bounderby to take because it is the view that creates the most profit. However, through his extensive use of this synecdoche, Dickens shows that it creates a vicious cycle, where the town can be ruined if only one small part of the working whole begins questioning, and where the people trapped in the cycle become less than human.

#### Conclusion

Dickens questions the greater ideas driving Industrial age itself, the ideas of individuality as opposed to profit and output, and he causes readers to also question these ideas as they see the ruin of the people of Coketown, both the workers and the leaders, such as Bounderby and Gradgrind. Therefore, *Hard Times* is considered as a social criticism novel.

Essay from [gradesfixer.com](https://www.gradesfixer.com)

- You can use a bigger number of quotes in your essay.

For further information, read the following extended essay and learn other ways of using illustrations.

#### Sample Essay Three: Themes of the Lord of the Rings and the Hobbit

- Hook
- Thesis statement
- Topic sentence
- Citations (critics and analysts)
- Elaboration (commentary, events, explanations, examples, illustration; etc)
- Quotes from the text
- References from another book
- Restatement of the thesis statement

#### Introduction

Imagine yourself in a pre-Industrial world full of mystery and magic. Imagine a world full of monsters, demons, and danger, as well as a world full of friends, fairies, good wizards, and adventure. In doing so you have just taken your first step onto a vast world created by author and scholar John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. Tolkien became fascinated by language at an early age during his schooling, in particular, the languages of Northern Europe, both ancient and modern. This affinity for language did not only lead to his profession, but also his private hobby, the invention of languages. His broad knowledge eventually led to the development of his opinions about Myth and the importance of stories. All these various perspectives: language, the heroic tradition, and Myth, as well as deeply-held beliefs in Catholic Christianity work together in all of his works. **The main themes of Tolkien's works are Good versus Evil, characters of Christian and anti-Christian origin, and the power of Imagination.**

#### Body

In Tolkien world, evil is the antithesis of creativity, and is dependent on destruction and ruin for its basis; conversely, goodness is associated with the beauty of creation as well as the preservation of anything that is created. The symbolic nature of these two ideologies is represented in the Elven Rings, which symbolize goodness, and the One Ring, which is wholly evil. A main theme of "The Hobbit", then, is the struggle within our own free will between good will and evil. **"Early in the (Lord of the Rings) narrative, Frodo recalls that his uncle Bilbo, especially during his later years, was fond of declaring that... there was only one Road; that it was like a great river: its springs were at every doorstep, and every path was tributary." (Wood, 208)**

**Bilbo, the main character of "The Hobbit", often displayed his goodness throughout Tolkien's novel.** One example of this goodness is when he decides to let the evil and corrupt Gollum live, out of pity for him, in the dark caves under the mountain. Bilbo could have easily slain the horrid creature mainly because of the ring,

which he was wearing at that time, gave him the power of invisibility. Instead, he risked his life to let the Gollum live by quickly jumping past the evil creature, thereby escaping death of either character. Gandalf, in a later narrative, lectures Frodo by praising Bilbo's act of pity upon Gollum. Gandalf's words were, **"Pity? It was pity that stayed his hand. Pity, and Mercy; not to strike without need. And he has been well rewarded Frodo."** For Gollum, later in the novel, saved Frodo from becoming possessed by the Ring of power. **"Many that live deserves death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them? Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgement..."** (Wood, 208)

**Another form of goodness that is displayed throughout "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings" is Bilbo and Frodo's actions of self-sacrifice.** In "The Hobbit" there are two instances in which villains caught the dwarves, Bilbo's fellow adventurers. Instead of fleeing their enemies, Bilbo risked his life to save the dwarves from the clutches of evil. One instance of this is when a clan of unusually large spiders captured Bilbo's companions and planned to eat them. Bilbo then devised a plan to distract the spiders away from their victims and then silently backtracked to his companions. He then cut the dwarves from the sticky spider webs with which they were tied and, together, they fought their way to safety. Also, Frodo, in "The Lord of the Rings" was challenged with the destruction of the all-evil and corrupting One Ring of power. In doing so, Frodo sacrificed his life. **"We should also remember that Frodo's self-sacrifice is not only for the defeat of evil; it is also for the good of society, for the whole community of created beings. This suggests, in turn, that in the mind of the fantasist, society is worth saving."** (Evans, 481)

**As opposed to the good deeds and morals portrayed by Bilbo and his companions, there are many foul and unholy creatures that lurk in the pages of Tolkien's works, which commit horrible acts.** One of the most horrid of the acts in "The Hobbit" was the corruption of Gollum. Gollum was not always the slimy, cave dwelling, dangerous monster that he became. He was once a Hobbit, not unlike Bilbo himself, named Smeagol. However, one day he and his brother, Deagol, were by a riverbank. Deagol found the ring of power. Then, Smeagol, who soon became the Gollum, killed his brother to attain the Ring of power for himself. This Ring, **"the Ring to rule them all"**, had the power to corrupt any person who possessed it. Whether it was the Ring's overpowering magic or simply Gollum's lust for the ring, the corruption that overcame Smeagol drove him to commit the ghastly murder of his brother.

**Even though Tolkien claims that "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings" were not written in the light of Christianity or as an allegory, there is a great presence of religious symbolism throughout his epic.** Urang agrees in his statement, **"The Lord of the Rings, although it contains no 'God', no 'Christ', and no 'Christians', embodies much of Tolkien's 'real religion'"**

and is a profoundly a Christian work." Tolkien, whether by mistake or purposely, seems to relate the adventures and acts of his characters Bilbo and Gandalf closely to the acts of Christ in the Bible. In the "The Hobbit", Bilbo often acted as Jesus would in the Bible. Confronted with the possession of the evil Ring of power, Bilbo was often tempted to use the Ring in excess and for wrong reasons. However the strong willed hobbit never succumbed to that evil power, much like when Jesus resists the temptation of Satan in the desert in Matthew 3:16. In short, the passage explains how the Lord, after fasting for forty days and forty nights, resists the temptation to create food and feast. He then is tested by Satan to call upon his angels to save him from deadly leap off of the highest point of a high precipice. Jesus simply turns Satan away again. Also, one of Bilbo's descendants, Frodo, was burdened with the temptation of the Ring. Frodo knew of the power that the Ring held and knew that he could either be a great evil power himself, or that this great evil thing must be destroyed.

Another Christian-like manifestation of Tolkien's creative imagination is the character of Gandalf, the good wizard. "Gandalf, the Christ-like wizard who lays down his life for his friends, knows that he is an unworthy bearer of the Ring – not because he has evil designs that he wants secretly to accomplish, but rather because his desire to do good is so great." (Wood 208) Gandalf is an important pawn and advantage to the hobbit and dwarves in their adventure. He often guides, gives advice, and overall helps the adventurers along in their great journey. Believers of Christianity also believe that Christ is with them, guiding and showing the way to salvation, throughout their day. Although Gandalf, in Tolkien's novels, never cured a blind man or leper with a touch of his hand, he compares to Jesus in the miracles of his magic and spell casting.

Not all the characters that Tolkien depicts in his novels are Christ-like or overall good-natured characters. There are plenty, if not as many, evil doing entities. Saruman is a wizard much like Gandalf. However, they contrast in the respect that Saruman uses his miracles and spell casting powers to do works of evil rather than good. He is utterly undone by the lure of total power. In the New Testament, Judas, believing Jesus to be the long awaited and prophesized king of the Jews, wanted to speed the earthly rule of Jesus. He delivered him to the Romans in thoughts that he would perform his miracles and prove that he is, in fact, the king of the Jews. Like Judas, Saruman is impatient with the slow way that goodness works. He cannot abide the torturous path up Mount Doom; he wants rapid results.

When Tolkien created the "The Lord of the Rings" and its prelude, he created an entire imaginary world full of wonder and adventure. In reading his books you fall deeper and deeper into its detail and depth, which makes his fictional world very believable. In a way, it eventually mutates your sense of reality and creates what is called "secondary belief."

"Knowing that an imaginary world must be realistically equipped down to the last whisker of the last monster, Tolkien put close to 20 years into the creation of middle earth, the three-volume 'Lord of the Rings,' and its predecessor, 'The Hobbit.'" (Time) Even after his four masterpieces were finished and published, he continued to build upon the fictional reality that he created with his next two books "Simarillion" and "Akallabeth," which told the early history of middle- earth. Tolkien's power to command secondary belief in his readers is real. History comes alive in the characters and events because he creates speeches and actions that have the "inner consistency of reality." (Evans, 481). Reading the "Lord of the Rings", for some people, is a great way to get away, or escape, from reality. In the time of the publishing of "The Hobbit" the United States was at war. "Perplexed by our nation's carnage in Vietnam and by the ultimate threat of a nuclear inferno, a whole generation of young Americans could lose themselves and their troubles in the intricacies of this triple-decker epic." (Wood 208)

## Conclusion

By the use of his amazing imagination, as well as mastery of language and knowledge of myth and Christian principles, Tolkien created his characters who were the epitome of good and evil. It would seem the Ring itself had the power of the devil. However, the virtues of the Christ-like Bilbo and Frodo Baggins destroyed the all-consuming evil for the purpose of the common good. It is the Christ ethic that is the force that conquers evil. Tolkien's writings mesmerize the reader, creating a spell bounding "secondary reality" for all that reads it.

Essay adapted from [onlineessays.com](http://onlineessays.com) and modified.

## Task:

- Try to identify the main elements of writing a theme analysis essay.
- Identify the possible types of textual evidence we can use to support our analysis. (answers are found in the essays above)

## Appendix 08: 'The Little Prince' Study Guide

Third Year Students/ Literature  
Teacher: Mohammed Belkis

2022/2023

### ★ The Little Prince Study Guide ★ Part One

Before we start analyzing the book, we need to find information about the followings:

- The writer: try finding any information from the biography of the writer that is relevant to the book's themes, characters, events, etc.
- The Historical context of the book.
- Existentialism (definition, principles, main philosophers).

Now that you have finished the book, try answering the questions below.

#### 1. Comment on the following quotes

• "Whenever I met one of them who seemed to me at all clear-sighted, I tried the experiment of showing him my Drawing Number One, which I have always kept. I would try to find out, so, if this was a person of true understanding. But, whoever it was, he, or she, would always say" :That is a hat ".Then I would never talk to that person about boa constrictors, or primeval forests, or stars. I would bring myself down to his level. I would talk to him about bridge, and golf, and politics, and neckties. And the grown-up would be greatly pleased to have met such a sensible man."

• "On making his discovery, the astronomer had presented it to the International Astronomical Congress, in a great demonstration. But he was in Turkish costume, and so nobody would believe what he said .Grown-ups are like that... So in 1920 the astronomer gave his demonstration all over again, dressed with impressive style and elegance. And this time everybody accepted his report."

• "Just so, you might say to them: "The proof that the little prince existed is that he was charming, that he laughed, and that he was looking for a sheep. If anybody wants a sheep that is a proof that he exists." And what good would it do to tell them that? They would shrug their shoulders, and treat you like a child. But if you said to them: "The planet he came from is Asteroid B-612," then they would be convinced, and leave you in peace from their questions."

★ Right at the beginning of the story, through quotes like the ones above, the writer hints at the main conflict of the book. Describe and explain it with regard to the themes of the book.





## 2. Explain the following quotes in relation to the themes of the book.

• "The little prince never let go of a question, once he had asked it."

• "Exactly. One must require from each one the duty which each one can perform," the king went on. "Accepted authority rests first of all on reason. If you ordered your people to go and throw themselves into the sea, they would rise up in revolution. I have the right to require obedience because my orders are reasonable." ...



• "Then you shall judge yourself," the king answered. "that is the most difficult thing of all. It is much more difficult to judge oneself than to judge others. If you succeed in judging yourself rightly, then you are indeed a man of true wisdom."

• "I myself own a flower," he continued his conversation with the businessman, "which I water every day. I own three volcanoes, which I clean out every week (for I also clean out the one that is extinct; one never knows). It is of some use to my volcanoes, and it is of some use to my flower, that I own them. But you are of no use to the stars . . ."



• "That man," said the little prince to himself, as he continued farther on his journey, "that man would be scorned by all the others: by the king, by the conceited man, by the tippler, by the businessman. Nevertheless, he is the only one of them all who does not seem to me ridiculous. Perhaps that is because he is thinking of something else besides himself."



## 3. All the characters in the story are symbolic. What does each character represent? How does that link to the themes of the book?



## 4. Describe the setting of the story. Say how it helps build the themes of the book.



## 5. Explain the motifs below and say how they relate to the themes of exploration, self-discovery, imagination, and knowing vs believing.

- Sunsets
- Stars
- Drawing
- Questions





The Writer uses the analogy of the little prince, the fox, and the rose alluding to the themes of **relationships, responsibility, love, loss, connection, and choice**. Explain how in light of the quotes below.

● "To establish ties?" "Just that," said the fox. "To me, you are still nothing more than a little boy who is just like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you, on your part, have no need of me. To you, I am nothing more than a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, then we shall need each other. To me, you will be unique in all the world. To you, I shall be unique in all the world . . ."

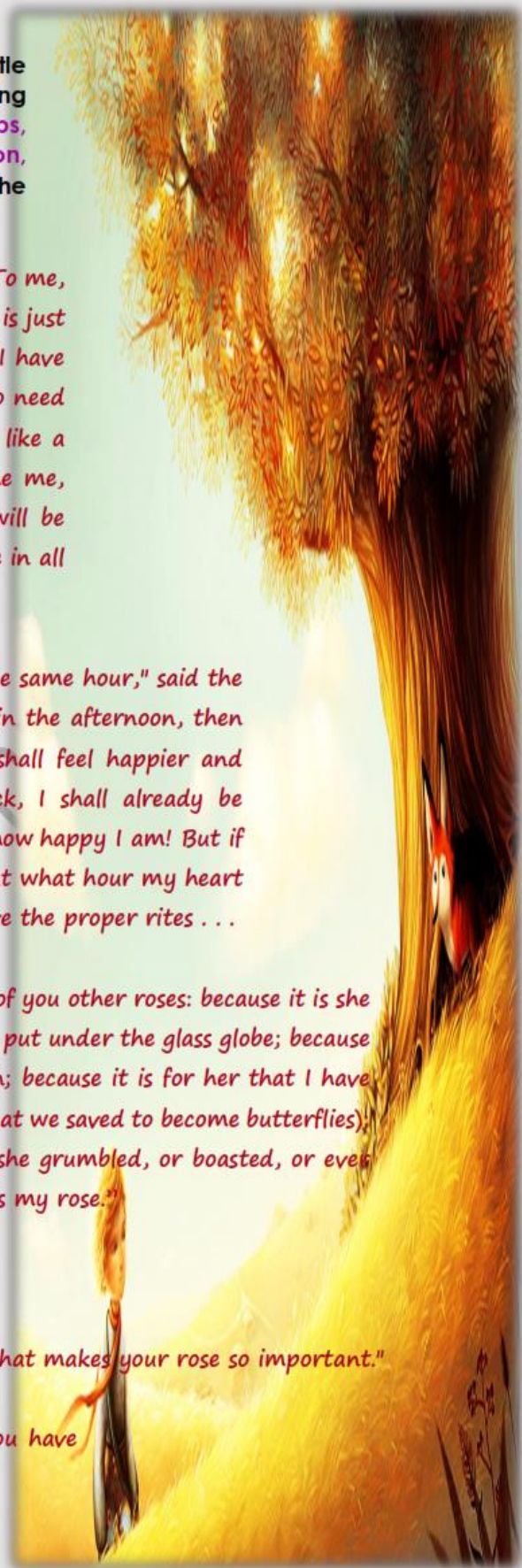
● "It would have been better to come back at the same hour," said the fox. "If, for example, you come at four o'clock in the afternoon, then at three o'clock I shall begin to be happy. I shall feel happier and happier as the hour advances. At four o'clock, I shall already be worrying and jumping about. I shall show you how happy I am! But if you come at just any time, I shall never know at what hour my heart is to be ready to greet you . . . One must observe the proper rites . . ."

● "she is more important than all the hundreds of you other roses: because it is she that I have watered; because it is she that I have put under the glass globe; because it is she that I have sheltered behind the screen; because it is for her that I have killed the caterpillars (except the two or three that we saved to become butterflies); because it is she that I have listened to, when she grumbled, or boasted, or even sometimes when she said nothing. Because she is my rose."

● "what is essential is invisible to the eye."

● "It is the time you have wasted for your rose that makes your rose so important."

● "You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed. You are responsible for your rose . . ."



## ★ The Little Prince Study Guide ★ Part Two

### ★ 1. Identify the POV in The Little Prince. Illustrate

2. "In the course of this life I have had a great many encounters with a great many people who have been concerned with matters of consequence. I have lived a great deal among grown-ups. I have seen them intimately, close at hand. And that hasn't much improved my opinion of them."

- Both the narrator and the little prince agree that grown-ups are absurd. How?
- Analyze the notion of grown-ups in the Little Prince. Illustrate.
- To what extent do you agree with the portrayal of grown-ups in the novella?
- Explain the dichotomy of growing old vs growing up.

3. "All men have the stars," he answered, "but they are not the same things for different people. For some, who are travelers, the stars are guides. For others they are no more than little lights in the sky. For others, who are scholars, they are problems. For my businessman they were wealth. But all these stars are silent. You-- you alone-- will have the stars as no one else has them--"

• "It is just as it is with the flower. If you love a flower that lives on a star, it is sweet to look at the sky at night. All the stars are a-bloom with flowers" "...Yes, I know" "...It is just as it is with the water. Because of the pulley, and the rope, what you gave me to drink was like music. You remember-- how good it was"

• "It will be as if, in place of the stars, I had given you a great number of little bells that knew how to laugh"...

• "You know, it will be very nice. I, too, shall look at the stars. All the stars will be wells with a rusty pulley. All the stars will pour out fresh water for me to drink"...

• "That will be so amusing! You will have five hundred million little bells, and I shall have five hundred million springs of fresh water"

### ★ Explain the quotes above in light of the following statement:

"The world is, of course, nothing but our conception of it."  
Anton Chekhov.



4. To practice using textual evidence, discuss the idea of “the invisible essence” in “The Little Prince” using the quotes below to guide you.

- “The men where you live,” said the little prince, “raise five thousand roses in the same garden-- and they do not find in it what they are looking for”
- “They do not find it,” I replied. “And yet what they are looking for could be found in one single rose, or in a little water”
- “The stars are beautiful, because of a flower that cannot be seen.”
- “The desert is beautiful,” the little prince added. “And that was true. I have always loved the desert. One sits down on a desert and dune, sees nothing, hears nothing. Yet through the silence something throbs, and gleams” ...
- “What makes the desert beautiful,” said the little prince, “is that somewhere it hides a well..”
- “I was astonished by a sudden understanding of that mysterious radiation of the sands. When I was a little boy I lived in an old house, and legend told us that a treasure was buried there. To be sure, no one had ever known how to find it; perhaps no one had ever even looked for it. But it cast an enchantment over that house. My home was hiding a secret in the depths of its heart”
- “Yes,” I said to the little prince. “The house, the stars, the desert-- what gives them their beauty is something that is invisible!”



5. “This was a merchant who sold pills that had been invented to quench thirst.”

- “You need only swallow one pill a week, and you would feel no need of anything to drink . “Why are you selling those?” asked the little prince” .

Because they save a tremendous amount of time,” said the merchant. “Computations have been made by experts. With these pills, you save fifty-three minutes in every week”.

- “And what do I do with those fifty-three minutes?”  
“Anything you like”...

- “As for me,” said the little prince to himself, “if I had fifty-three minutes to spend as I liked, I should walk at my leisure toward a spring of fresh water.”

- Explain the metaphor of the thirst pills. How is that mirrored in our modern world?





6. Read the following philosophical quotes and explain how they are reflected in the novella. Illustrate.

You can read more about Existentialism to have a better understanding.

- "We do not know what we want and yet we are responsible for what we are – that is the fact."
  - "It is only in our decisions, that we are important."
  - "Existence precedes and rules essence."
  - "Man is fully responsible for his nature and his choices."
  - "We do not judge the people we love."
- Jean-Paul Sartre.
- "One must have at least a readiness to love the other person, broadly speaking, if one is to be able to understand him."
- Rollo May.

#### Some Quotes for Reflection

- It may well be that this man is absurd. But he is not so absurd as the king, the conceited man, the businessman, and the tippler. For at least his work has some meaning. When he lights his street lamp, it is as if he brought one more star to life, or one flower. When he puts out his lamp, he sends the flower, or the star, to sleep. That is a beautiful occupation. And since it is beautiful, it is truly useful."
- "No one is ever satisfied where he is," said the switchman.
- "Only the children know what they are looking for," said the little prince. "They waste their time over a rag doll and it becomes very important to them; and if anybody takes it away from them, they cry..."



## Appendix 09: Peter Pan Study Guide

Literature/ L3

Teacher: Mahammedi Belkis

2022/2023



### Part One

#### 1. Read the Quotes and:

- ❖ Identify the theme(s) present in each;
- ❖ Explain them;
- ❖ Search for other textual evidence that illustrates the same theme(s);
- ❖ Answer the questions;
- ❖ Write down your thoughts, questions, and comments as you proceed.

✦ "All children, except one, grow up. They soon know that they will grow up, and the way Wendy knew was this. One day when she was two years old she was playing in a garden, and she plucked another flower and ran with it to her mother. I suppose she must have looked rather delightful, for Mrs. Darling put her hand to her heart and cried, "Oh, *why can't you remain like this forever!*" This was all that passed between them on the subject, but henceforth Wendy knew that *she must grow up*. You always know after you are two. Two is the beginning of the end."

Read about J.M. Barrie's relationship with his mother to better understand the statements

- ✦ "Her romantic mind was like the tiny boxes, one within the other, that come from the puzzling East, however many you discover there is always one more; and her sweet mocking mouth *had one kiss on it that Wendy could never get*, though there it was, perfectly conspicuous in the right-hand corner."
- ✦ "She started up with a cry, and saw the boy, and somehow she knew at once that he was Peter Pan. If you or I or Wendy had been there we should have seen that *he was very like Mrs. Darling's kiss.*"
- What does the mother's kiss symbolize? Why do you think so?
- ✦ "If he thought at all, but I don't believe he ever thought, it was that he and his *shadow*, when brought near each other, would *join like drops of water*, and when they did not he was appalled. He tried to stick it on with soap from the bathroom, but that also failed."
- What does Peter's shadow represent? Explain. Can we consider it as a metaphor, a symbol, or a motif? Justify.



✦ "You see, Wendy, when the first baby laughed for the first time, its laugh broke into a thousand pieces, and they all went skipping about, and that was the beginning of fairies."...

✦ "No. You see children know such a lot now, they soon don't believe in fairies, and every time a child says, 'I don't believe in fairies,' there is a fairy somewhere that falls down dead."



2. Collect textual evidence for the following themes: responsibility, choice, motherhood, gender roles, and imagination.

3. Drawing on your personal experience, and in light of your reading of "Peter Pan" and "The Little Prince", try answering these questions:



- Which character is more relatable, the little prince, the pilot, Peter Pan, or Wendy? Justify.
- Are the following characters bad or good, Peter Pan, Captain Hook, the King, the snake, the businessman, the drunk, and Mr. Darling?
- What are the things you like and dislike about the followings: being a child, being an adult (young adult), being a boy (man), being a girl (woman)?
- The Neverland is different for each child, did you have a place like the neverland as a child? What is its significance to you now as a young adult?



4. "Peter Pan" Vs "The Little Prince"

- ◆ In both works, there is a thin line between fantasy and reality, what is real and what is imaginary. Explain and illustrate.
- ◆ Compare and contrast how each writer approaches the theme of responsibility.
- ◆ Both works call for preserving aspects of CHILDHOOD, and at the same time pinpoint the necessity of "GROWING UP", representing two distinct perspectives. Explain how?



Literature/L3  
Teacher: Mohammadi Belkis  
2022/2023

## Peter Pan: The Ageless Boy Study Guide

### Part Two

✦ What do the following quotes suggest? Explain.

★ "Mrs. Darling first heard of Peter when she was tidying up her children's minds. It is the nightly custom of every good mother after her children are asleep to rummage in their minds and put things straight for next morning, repacking into their proper places the many articles that have wandered during the day. Occasionally in her travels through her children's minds Mrs. Darling found things she could not understand, and of these quite the most perplexing was the word Peter."

★ "At first Mrs. Darling did not know, but after thinking back into her childhood she just remembered a Peter Pan who was said to live with the fairies. There were odd stories about him, as that when children died he went part of the way with them, so that they should not be frightened. She had believed in him at the time, but now that she was married and full of sense she quite doubted whether there was any such person."

★ "They are the children who fall out of their perambulators when the nurse is looking the other way. If they are not claimed in seven days they are sent far away to the Neverland to defray expenses. I'm captain."  
"Oh, no; girls, you know, are much too clever to fall out of their prams."

★ "Of course Peter promised; and then he flew away. He took Mrs. Darling's kiss with him. The kiss that had been for no one else, Peter took quite easily. Funny. But she seemed satisfied."



- ★ "It was because I heard father and mother," he explained in a low voice, talking about what I was to be when I became a man." He was extraordinarily agitated now. "I don't want ever to be a man," he said with passion. "I want always to be a little boy and to have fun. So I ran away to Kensington Gardens and lived a long long time among the fairies."



- ✦ Peter Pan refuses to grow up, the pilot from "The Little Prince" refuses the ways of adults, and the Little Prince wants to cherish the essence of childhood forever. Peter Pan remains ageless forever, we see Wendy and the Pilot growing up, but what about the Little Prince? What does the ending of "The Little Prince" suggest?



- ✦ Growing old is inevitable; growing up is a choice. Discuss and illustrate from both books.
- ✦ Compare the perspectives about growing up and identify the quotes that represent them in both books.



- ★ "The difference between him and the other boys at such a time was that they knew it was make-believe, while to him make-believe and true were exactly the same thing."



- ✦ Analyze the theme of "the power of belief" in "Peter Pan" and compare it to that in "The Little Prince."



- ★ "For unless your tree fitted you it was difficult to go up and down, and no two of the boys were quite the same size. Once you fitted, you drew in [let out] your breath at the top, and down you went at exactly the right speed, while to ascend you drew in and let out alternately, and so wriggled up. Of course, when you have mastered the action you are able to do these things without thinking of them, and nothing can be more graceful. But you simply must fit, and Peter measures you for your tree as carefully as for a suit of clothes: the only difference being that the clothes are made to fit you, while you have to be made to fit the tree.



Peter does some things to you, and after that you fit. Once you fit, great care must be taken to go on fitting, and this, as Wendy was to discover to her delight, keeps a whole family in perfect condition."



- ✦ Fitting in is important to keep a whole family in "perfect condition". Where do Peter Pan and the pilot stand when it comes to this idea?





- ★ "Every child is affected thus the first time he is treated unfairly. All he thinks he has a right to when he comes to you to be yours is fairness. After you have been unfair to him he will love you again, but will never afterwards be quite the same boy. No one ever gets over the first unfairness; no one except Peter. He often met it, but he always forgot it. I suppose that was the real difference between him and all the rest."



- ✦ Identify the theme(s) in this quote.



- ★ "The way I flew? Do you know, Jane, I sometimes wonder whether I ever did really fly.

Why can't you fly now, mother?

Because I am grown up, dearest. When people grow up they forget the way" ".Why do they forget the way" "?Because they are no longer gay and innocent and heartless. It is only the gay and innocent and heartless who can fly."

- ✦ Why does **Peter Pan** forget? The narrator says he has no sense of time; explain how this links to the main themes of the book.



- ✦ Other characters **forget** as well. What do they forget? How is that relevant to the theme of **Eternal youth Vs Growing up**? Illustrate.



- ✦ What is the **significance** of the **Neverland**?

- ✦ Every main character in **Peter Pan** needs a **motherly figure**; the theme of **motherhood** is central in the book. Analyze it. Illustrate.



- ★ "As you look at Wendy, you may see her hair becoming white, and her figure little again, for all this happened long ago. Jane is now a common grown-up, with a daughter called Margaret; and every spring cleaning time, except when he forgets, Peter comes for Margaret and takes her to the Neverland, where she tells him stories about himself, to which he listens eagerly. When Margaret grows up she will have a daughter, who is to be Peter's mother in turn; and thus it will go on, so long as children are gay and innocent and heartless."



- ✦ Comment on the endings of the two books.

- ✦ The two endings relate to one of the major themes. Identify the theme and clarify the link.



## Appendix 10: Plot Types

Literature 3<sup>rd</sup> Year

2022/2023

Teacher: Mahammedi Belkis

### Plot Types and Structures

There are several models of plot structures and types available in literature. The number of plot types differs from one author to another. For instance, in his book *"The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations,"* Georges Polti (1895) provides a descriptive list of 36 types of plots (for example, Supplication, Deliverance, Crime pursued by vengeance, Vengeance taken for kin upon kin, Pursuit, Disaster, etc). He based his categorization on the analysis of a good number of classical Greek myths and classical French works. Ronald B. Tobias (1993), identifies 20 plot types (Quest, adventure, pursuit, rescue, escape, revenge, the riddle, rivalry, underdog, temptation, metamorphosis, etc), while Foster Harris (1959) argues that literary works fall under one of three basic plots (the happy ending, the unhappy ending, or the literary plot). One of the most acknowledged classifications of plot types is Christopher Booker's (2004) seven basic plots.

This handout is based on *"The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories"* by Christopher Booker. It provides a selection of quotes that explain the basic types of plots.

#### The Archetypes of stories: The Seven Basic Plots

Booker provides a model of seven-story archetypes, each of which follows a five-stage structure. He claims that most literary works fall under one of the plots described in his book. He provides examples from fairytales, classics, and some contemporary works of various genres.

 Important Note

Booker notes that: "There are extensive areas of overlap between one type of plot and another. Indeed, there are many stories which are shaped by more than one 'basic plot' at a time (there are even a very small number, including *The Lord of the Rings*, which include all seven of the plots which give this book its title). There are still other stories which are shaped only by part of such a plot. Again there are others, a great many, which show the story somehow 'going wrong', in terms of failing fully to realize the basic plot which lies behind it." (p 5, 6)

He adds that: "It would be easy to point to countless individual stories which in one way or another do not correspond precisely to any of these plots. Indeed a whole section of this book will later be devoted to looking at such stories and why they vary from the basic patterns. There are even a handful of other, more specialized plots - such as that behind 'creation myths' explaining how the world came into being, or the Mystery plot which underlies detective stories." (p 215)

 Important

The seven plots are explained as follows:



#### 1. Overcoming a Monster:

"The realm of storytelling contains nothing stranger or more spectacular than this terrifying, life-threatening, seemingly all-powerful monster whom the hero must confront in a fight to the death." (p 22)

"The essence of the 'Overcoming the Monster' story is simple. Both we and the hero are made aware of the existence of some superhuman embodiment of evil

power. This monster may take human form (e.g., a giant or a witch); the form of an animal (a wolf, a dragon, a shark); or a combination of both (the Minotaur, the Sphinx). It is always deadly, threatening destruction to those who cross its path or fall into its clutches. Often it is threatening an entire community or kingdom, even mankind and the world in general. But the monster often also has in its clutches some great prize, a priceless treasure or a beautiful 'Princess'."

(P. 23)

The monster can take various forms depending on the setting and genre of the story. Some genres that often use this plot are Thriller, Hollywood western, war movies, and melodramas.

Some examples are *James Bond*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Star Wars*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Beowulf*, *Avatar*, *Harry Potter*, *Rise of the Guardians*, *the Lion King*, *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*, and *Pan's Labyrinth*.



This plot follows five stages:

"1. **Anticipation Stage and 'Call'**: We usually first become aware of the monster as if from a great distance, although in some stories we may be given some striking glimpse of its destructive power at the outset. Although initially, we may see it as little more than a vaguely menacing curiosity, we gradually learn of its fearsome reputation, and how it is usually casting its threatening shadow over some community, country, kingdom, or mankind in general. The hero then experiences a 'Call' to confront it.

2. **Dream Stage**: As the hero makes his preparations for the battle to come (e.g., as he travels towards the monster or as the monster approaches), all for a while may seem to be going reasonably well. Our feelings are still of a comfortable remoteness from and immunity to danger.

3. **Frustration Stage**: At last we come face to face with the monster in all its awesome power. The hero seems tiny and very much alone against such a supernaturally strong opponent. Indeed it seems that he is slipping into the monster's power (he may even fall helplessly into the monster's clutches) and that the struggle can only have one outcome.



4. **Nightmare Stage:** The final ordeal begins, a nightmare battle in which all the odds seem loaded on the monster's side. But at the climax of the story, just when all seems lost, comes the 'reversal'.

5. **The Thrilling Escape from Death, and Death of the Monster:** In the nick of time, the monster is miraculously dealt a fatal blow. Its dark power is overthrown. The community which had fallen under its shadow is liberated. And the hero emerges with his full stature to enjoy the prize he has won from the monster's grasp: a great treasure; union with the 'Princess'; succession to some kind of kingdom.'" (P, 48, 49).

## 2. Rags to Riches

"We see an ordinary, insignificant person, dismissed by everyone as of little account, who suddenly steps to the centre of the stage, revealed to be someone quite exceptional." (P 51)

"... someone who has seemed to the world quite commonplace is dramatically shown to have been hiding the potential for a second, much more exceptional, self within. Somehow the moment of transformation when this other greater self emerges has a strange power to move us." (P 52)



Examples of this type are *Jane Eyre*, *Cinderella*, *Great Expectations*, *Pygmalion* (*My Fair Lady*), *Joy*, *the Social Network*, *Slumdog Millionaire*, *the Internship*, and *Pride and Prejudice*.

"This type of story shows "how some young, unrecognized hero or heroine is eventually lifted out of obscurity, poverty, and misery to a state of great splendor and happiness. But their upward progress is unlikely to be a continuous unbroken

climb, and most Rags to Riches stories, except the very simplest versions, may well unfold through a recognizable series of stages like this:

1. **Initial Wretchedness at Home and the 'Call':** We are first introduced to the young hero or heroine in their original lowly and unhappy state, usually at home. The most obvious reason for their misery is that they are overshadowed by malevolent 'dark' figures around them, who scorn or maltreat them. This phase ends when something happens to call or send them out into a wider world.



2. **Out into the World, Initial Success:** Although this new phase may be marked by new ordeals, the hero or heroine is here rewarded with their first, limited success, and may have some prevision of their eventual glorious destiny. They may make a first encounter with their 'Princess' or 'Prince', and may even outstrip 'dark rivals'; but only in some incomplete fashion, and it is made clear that they are not yet ready for their final state of complete fulfillment.

**3. The Central Crisis:** Everything suddenly goes wrong. The shadows cast by the dark figures return. Hero or heroine is separated from that which has become more important to them than anything in the world, and they are overwhelmed with despair. Because of the earlier lift in their fortunes, and because they are so powerless, this is their worst moment in the story

**4. Independence and the Final Ordeal:** As they emerge from the crisis, we gradually come to see the hero or heroine in a new light. Although still unfulfilled, they are discovering in themselves a new independent strength. As this develops, it must, at last, be put to a final test, again usually involving a battle with some powerful dark figure who stands, as a dark rival, between them and their goal; and this forms the climax to the whole story. Only when this has been successfully resolved and the shadow over their lives wholly removed, are they at last liberated to move to the final stage.

**5. Final Union, Completion, and Fulfilment:** Their reward is usually a state of complete, loving union with the 'Princess' or 'Prince'. They may also finally succeed to some kind of 'kingdom', the nature of which is not spelled out but which, from their mature and developed state, implies a domain over which they will rule wisely and well. The story thus resolves on an image which signifies a perfect state of wholeness, lasting indefinitely into the future ('they lived happily ever after')." (P 65, 66)



"There is a variation to this theme that Booker calls "the dark version". "This is the sort of tale which shows a hero or heroine who attempts to follow the general pattern of the climb from rags to riches, but in some way fails to arrive at its fully rewarding conclusion. Another lesser 'dark' version of the Rags to Riches plot can be seen in the kind of story where the hero may actually achieve these goals, but only in a way which is hollow and brings frustration, because again he has sought them only in an outward and egocentric fashion." (p 66, 67) (*The Great Gatsby, The Wolf of Wall Street, breaking bad, Scarface*)



### 3. The Quest:



"No type of story is more instantly recognizable to us than a Quest. Far away, we learn, there is some priceless goal, worth any effort to achieve: a treasure; a promised land; something of infinite value. From the moment the hero learns of this prize, the need to set out on the long hazardous journey to reach it becomes the most important thing to him in the world. Whatever perils and diversions lie in wait on the way, the story is shaped by that one overriding imperative; and the story remains unresolved until the objective has been finally, triumphantly secured." (P 69)

In this type of plot, the hero and his companions embark on a journey, but they face **ordeals** (monsters, temptations, the deadly opposites (2 opposing dangers), and the journey to the underworld where they encounter the spirits of the dead). However, on their way, they meet various **helpers** to fulfill the purpose of the quest and overcome these obstacles.



The following works illustrate this type of plot: **The Hobbit**, **The Lord of the Rings**, **The Wonderful Wizard of OZ**, the **Chronicles of Narnia**, **Moana**, **Finding Nemo**, **The Odyssey**, and **Treasure Island**.

The stages of this plot are as follows:

**1. The Call:** Life in some 'City of Destruction' has become oppressive and intolerable, and the hero recognizes that he can only rectify matters by making a long, difficult journey. He is given supernatural or visionary direction as to the distant, life-renewing goal he must aim for.

**2. The Journey:** The hero and his companions set out across hostile terrain, encountering a series of life-threatening ordeals. These include horrific monsters to be overcome; temptations to be resisted; and, probably the need to travel between two equally deadly 'opposites'. These each end with a 'thrilling escape', and the ordeals alternate with periods of respite, when the hero and his companions receive hospitality, help or advice, often from 'wise old men' or 'beautiful young women'. During this stage the hero may also have to make a 'journey through the underworld', where he temporarily transcends the separating power of death and comes into helpful contact with spirits from the past, who give him guidance as to how to reach his goal.

**3. Arrival and Frustration:** The hero arrives within sight of his goal. But he is far from having reached the end of his story, because now, on the edge of the goal, he sees a new and terrible series of obstacles looming up between him and his prize, which have to be overcome before it can be fully and completely secured.

**4. The Final Ordeals:** The hero has to undergo a last series of tests (often three in number) to prove that he is truly worthy of the prize. This culminates in a last great battle or ordeal which may be the most threatening of all.

**5. The Goal:** After a last 'thrilling escape from death', the kingdom, the 'Princess' or the life-transforming treasure are finally won: with an assurance of renewed life stretching indefinitely into the future. (P 83)



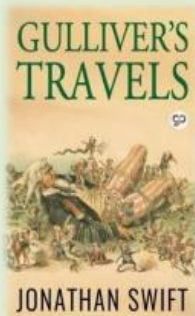
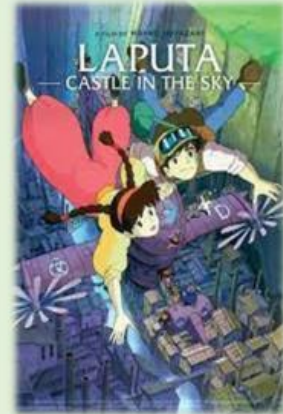
#### 4. Voyage and Return:



"The essence of the Voyage and Return story is that its hero or heroine (or the central group of characters) travel out of their familiar, everyday 'normal' surroundings into another world completely cut off from the first, where everything seems disconcertingly abnormal.

At first, the strangeness of this new world, with its freaks and marvels, may seem diverting, even exhilarating, if also highly perplexing. But gradually a shadow intrudes. The hero or heroine feels increasingly threatened, even trapped: until eventually (usually by way of a

'thrilling escape') they are released from the abnormal world, and can return to the safety of the familiar world where they began." (P 87)



Examples of this plot are *The Odyssey*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *The Time Machine*, *the Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *Spirited Away*, *Laputa: Castle in the Sky*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Hobbit*.

##### The Stages of Voyage and Return

**1. Anticipation Stage and 'fall' into the other world:** When we first meet the hero, heroine or central figures, they are likely to be in some state which lays them open to a shattering new experience. Their consciousness is in some way restricted. They may just be young and naive, with only limited experience of the world. They may be more actively curious and looking for something unexpected to happen to them. They may be bored, or drowsy, or reckless. But for whatever reason, they find themselves suddenly precipitated out of their familiar, limited existence, into a strange world, unlike anything they have experienced before.

**2. Initial fascination or Dream Stage:** At first their exploration of this disconcerting new world may be exhilarating because it is so puzzling and unfamiliar. But it is never a place in which they can feel at home. (P 105)

**3. Frustration Stage:** Gradually the mood of the adventure changes to one of frustration, difficulty, and oppression. A shadow begins to intrude, which becomes increasingly alarming.

**4. Nightmare Stage:** The shadow becomes so dominating that it seems to pose a serious threat to the hero or heroine's survival.

**5. Thrilling Escape and return:** Just when the threat closing in on the hero or heroine becomes too much to bear, they make their escape from the other world, back to where they started. At this point, the real



question posed by the whole adventure is: how far have they learned or gained anything from their experience? Have they been fundamentally changed, or was it all 'just a dream'? (p 106)

### 5. Comedy:



Comedy according to Booker is "a very specific kind of story. It is not simply any story which is funny. Some very funny stories have quite different kinds of plot... a story may follow the plot of comedy without it being intended to be funny at all. Even the fact that an author describes his story as a 'comedy' (e.g., Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*) does not necessarily mean that it is a Comedy in plot terms. But just what it is that shapes the plot of Comedy, that provides the common factor between say, a Marx Brothers film and a play by Shakespeare, an American musical and a novel by Jane Austen, a Mozart opera and a story by P. G. Wodehouse, requires a little careful unraveling. (P 107, 108)

Examples are: *Twelfth Night*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Rivals*, *Emma*, *There is Something About Mary*, *Ten Things I Hate About You*, *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*, *Shallow Hall*, *Just Go with It*, etc.



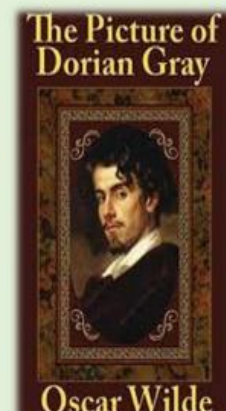
Comedy cannot be summarized in quite the same way as the other basic plots because the very nature of the plot requires it to cover such a range of variations, but the essence of the story is always that:

- (1) we see a little world in which people have passed under a shadow of confusion, uncertainty, and frustration, and are shut off from one another;
- (2) the confusion gets worse until the pressure of darkness is at its most acute and everyone is in a nightmarish tangle;
- (3) finally, with the coming to light of things not previously recognized, perceptions are dramatically changed. The shadows are dispelled, the situation is miraculously transformed and the little world is brought together in a state of joyful union. (P 150)



### 6. Tragedy:

"... a hero being tempted or impelled into a course of action which is in some way dark or forbidden. For a time, as the hero embarks on a course, he enjoys almost unbelievable, dreamlike success. But somehow it is in the nature of the course he is pursuing that he cannot achieve satisfaction. His mood is increasingly chequered by a sense of frustration. As he still pursues the dream, vainly trying to make his position secure, he begins to feel more and more threatened - things have got out of control. The original dream has soured into a nightmare where everything is going more and more wrong. This eventually culminates in the hero's violent destruction." (P 155)





"1. **Anticipation Stage:** the hero is in some way incomplete or unfulfilled and his thoughts are turned towards the future in hope of some unusual gratification. Some object of desire or course of action presents itself, and his energies have found a focus.

2. **Dream Stage:** he becomes in some way committed to his course of action (e.g., Faust signing his pact with the devil, Humbert causing the death of Lolita's mother which enables him to enter on his affair) and for a while things go almost improbably well for the hero. He is winning the gratification he had dreamed of, and seems to be 'getting away with it'.

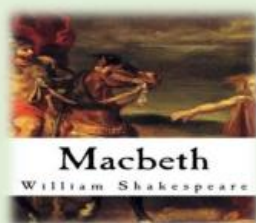
3. **Frustration Stage:** Almost imperceptibly things begin to go wrong. The hero cannot find a point of rest. He begins to experience a sense of frustration, and in order to secure his position may feel compelled to further 'dark acts' which lock him into his course of action even more irrevocably. A 'shadow figure' may appear at this point,

seeming in some obscure way to threaten him.

4. **Nightmare Stage:** things are now slipping seriously out of the hero's control. He has a mounting sense of threat and despair. Forces of opposition and fate are closing in on him.

5. **Destruction:** or death wish Stage: either by the forces he has aroused against him or by some final act of violence which precipitates his own death (e.g., murder

or suicide), the hero is destroyed." (P 156)



Examples of tragedies are *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Anna Karenina*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Othello*.

## 7. Rebirth:

“(1) a young hero or heroine falls under the shadow of the dark power;

(2) for a while, all may seem to go reasonably well, the threat may even seem to have receded;

(3) but eventually it approaches again in full force, until the hero or heroine is seen imprisoned in the state of living death;

(4) this continues for a long time, when it seems that the dark power has completely triumphed;

(5) but finally comes the miraculous redemption: either, where the imprisoned figure is a heroine, by the hero; or, where it is the hero, by a Young Woman or a Child.” (P 194)





"The power of this type of story to move us lies in the contrast between the condition of the hero or heroine when we see them frozen in their isolated, imprisoned state and the moment when the liberation begins, as we see them being released from the dark power's icy grip. Again and again we

see the same range of imagery being used to conjure up the former state, when the dark power is dominant: *coldness, hardness, immobility, constriction, sleep, darkness, sickness, decay, isolation, torment, despair, lack of love*. Finally, prevailing against that state as spring follows winter; we see the exactly corresponding imagery of *warmth, softness, movement, liberation, awakening, light, health, growth, joining together, happiness, hope, and love*." (P 204)

### Common Plot Structure of Rebirth

(1) This begins with an initial phase when we are shown how the hero or heroine feel in some way constricted. This sets up the tension requiring resolution which leads into the action of the story.

(2) This is followed by a phase of opening out, as the hero or heroine sense that they are on the road to some new state or some far-off point of resolution.

(3) Eventually this leads to a more severe phase of constriction, where the strength of the dark power and the hero or heroine's limitations in face of it both become more obvious.

(4) We then see a phase where, although the dark power is still dominant, the light elements in the story are preparing for the final confrontation. This eventually works up to the nightmare climax, when opposition between light and dark is at its most extreme and the pressure on everyone involved is at its greatest.



(5) This culminates in the moment of reversal and liberation, when the grip of the darkness is finally broken. The story thus ends on the sense of a final opening out into life, with everything at last resolved. (p 228)

Examples of Rebirth are *Snow White, The Sleeping Beauty, The Secret Garden, the Frog Prince, Howl's Moving Castle, a Christmas Carol, The Guardians, The Lion King, Money Ball, The Beauty and the Beast, Despicable Me, Mega-Mind, When Marnie Was There*.

### Activity:

Identify the plot types of "THE LITTLE PRINCE" and "PETER PAN."

Provide a detailed description of the stages of each plot.

## Appendix 11: POV

Literature /3<sup>rd</sup> year

2022/2023

Teacher: Mahmmadi Belkis

### Point of View in Literary Analysis



**Recap:** We have seen in a previous handout the types of POV, their definitions, and some examples of each. Here is a reminder:

**Point of view (POV):** is the angle from which the story is told (who is the narrator of the story). We can distinguish the following types of POV

**First Person POV:** when the main character (the protagonist), or another character who interacts with the main character is the teller of the story. (*Gulliver's Travels* by Swift, *Moby Dick* by Melville, *Jane Eyre* by C. Bronte, *So long a Letter* by Mariama Bâ, etc)

**Second Person POV:** when the story is told by a narrator who addresses the reader as 'you'. It is the least POV used, found in some post-modern works.

**Third Person POV:** when the narrator is unknown and we see the

story through his eyes. There are three variations of this POV:

**a. Limited:** readers see only what the narrator sees. The narrator sees only what is in front of him/her but is unable to tell what characters are thinking or explain future possibilities. (*1984* by Orwell, *For whom the Bell Tolls* by Hemingway)

**b. Omniscient:** the narrator seems to know everything about the characters, the places, and events (all-knowing). He/ she can see inside the minds of the characters. (*Hard Times* by Dickens, *Pride and Prejudice* by Austen, *Crime and Punishment* by Dostoevsky, *A Grain of Wheat* by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o )

Sometimes writers shift between types of POV, for example, Toni Morrison in *Beloved*.

In *My Name is Red*, Pamuk narrates the story from 21 different voices of POV.

In *40 Rules of Love*, Elif Shafak shifts between first person (various narrators) and third person limited.

**Another type of POV is:**

**Innocent Eye:** The story is told through the eyes of a child (his/her judgment being different from that of an adult). *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

**.Stream of Consciousness:** a narrative technique where the thoughts and emotions of a narrator or character are written out such that a reader can track the fluid mental state of these characters. *Ulysses* by James Joyce, *Notes from the Underground* by Dostoevsky

Here are some sample texts which illustrate each type.

- Read the texts carefully, and think about the differences between them.
- Pay attention to the highlighted words and statements.
- Comparing these texts, try to deduce the possible effects of using each type of POV.

### 1. Examples of POV Types

1. First Person POV (the protagonist telling the story): *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte

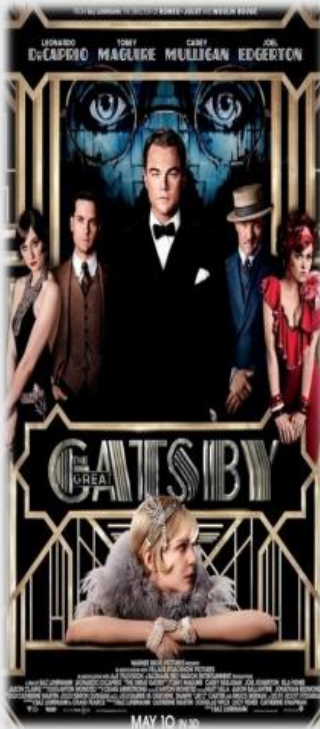


**Text 1:** There was no possibility of taking a walk that day. *We* had been wandering, indeed, in the leafless shrubbery an hour in the morning; but since dinner (Mrs. Reed, when there was no company, dined early) the cold winter wind had brought with it clouds so somber, and a rain so penetrating, that further out-door exercise was now out of the question. *I* was glad of it: *I* never liked long walks, especially on chilly afternoons: dreadful *me* was the coming home in the raw twilight, with nipped fingers and toes, and a heart saddened by the chidings of Bessie, the nurse, and humbled by the consciousness of *my* physical inferiority to Eliza, John, and Georgiana Reed.



**Text 2:** I resisted all the way: a new thing for *me*, and a circumstance which greatly strengthened the bad opinion Bessie and Miss Abbot were disposed to entertain of *me*. The fact is, I was a trifle beside myself; or rather OUT of *myself*, as the French would say: I was conscious that a moment's mutiny had already rendered me liable to strange penalties, and, like any other rebel slave, I felt resolved, in my desperation, to go all lengths.

## 2. First Person POV (One of the main characters narrating the story): *The Great Gatsby* by Fitzgerald



**Text 1:** In *my* younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in *my* mind ever since. 'Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone,' he told *me*, 'just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had.' He didn't say any more but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that.

**Text 2:** This is an unusual party for *me*. I haven't even seen the host. I live over there—' I waved my hand at the invisible hedge in the distance, 'and this man Gatsby sent over his chauffeur with an invitation.' For a moment he looked at *me* as if he failed to understand.

'I'm Gatsby,' he said suddenly.

'What!' I exclaimed. 'Oh, I beg your pardon.'

'I thought you knew, old sport. I'm afraid I'm not a very good host.'

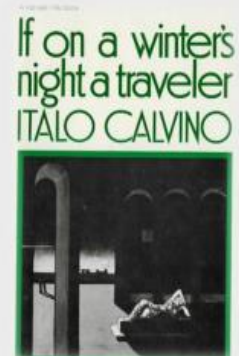
He smiled understandingly—much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that *you* may come across four or five times in life. It faced—or seemed to face—the whole external world for an instant, and then concentrated on *YOU* with an irresistible prejudice in your favor.



## 3. Second Person POV

### 3.1. "If on a Winter's Night a Traveler" by Italo Calvino

**Text 1:** *You* arrive punctually at the university, *you* pick *your* way past the young men and girls sitting on the steps, *you* wander bewildered among those austere walls which students' hands have arabesqued with outsize capital writing and detailed graffiti, just as the cavemen felt the need to decorate the cold walls of their caves to become masters of the tormenting mineral alienness, to make them familiar, empty them into their own inner space, annex them to the physical reality of living. *Reader*, we are not sufficiently acquainted for me to know whether *you* move with indifferent assurance in a university or whether or pondered choices make a universe of pupils and teachers seem a nightmare to *your* sensitive and sensible soul.



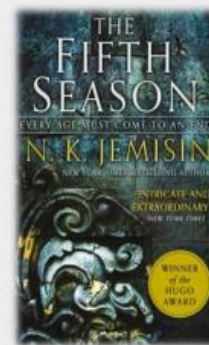
**Text 2:** But no. Instead *you* pick it up, *you* dust it off; *you* have to take it back to the bookseller so he will exchange it for *you*. *You* know *you* are somewhat impulsive, but *you* have learned to control *yourself*. The thing that most exasperates *you* is to find *yourself* at the mercy of the fortuitous, the aleatory, the random, in things and in human actions—carelessness, approximation, Imprecision, whether *your* own or others'.



### 3.2. Fifth Season by N.K. Jemisin

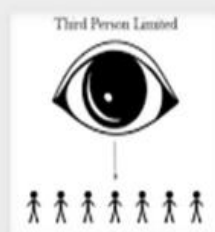
**Text 1:** None of these places or people matter, by the way. I simply point them out for context. But here is a man who will matter a great deal. **You** can imagine how he looks, for now. **You** may also imagine what he's thinking. This might be wrong, mere conjecture, but a certain amount of likelihood applies nevertheless. Based on his subsequent actions, there are only a few thoughts that could be in his mind in this moment.

**Text 2:** **YOU** ARE SHE. SHE IS **you**. **You** are Essun. Remember? The woman whose son is dead. **You're** an orogene who's been living in the little nothing town of Tirimo for ten years. Only three people here know what **you** are, and two of them **you** gave birth to. Well. One left who knows, now.



### 4. Third person limited:

#### 4.1. 1948 by George Orwell



**Text 1:** Winston turned round abruptly. **He** had set **his** features into the expression of quiet optimism which it was advisable to wear when facing the telescreen. **He** crossed the room into the tiny kitchen. By leaving the Ministry at this time of day **he** had sacrificed **his** lunch in the canteen, and he was aware that there was no food in the kitchen except a hunk of dark-colored bread which had got to be saved for tomorrow's breakfast.

**Text 2:** **He** sat back. A sense of complete helplessness had descended upon **him**. To begin with, **he** did not know with any certainty that this was 1984. It must be round about that date, since **he** was fairly sure that his age was thirty-nine, and **he** believed that he had been born in 1944 or 1945; but it was never possible nowadays to pin down any date within a year or two.



#### 4.2. For Whom the Bell Tolls by Hemingway

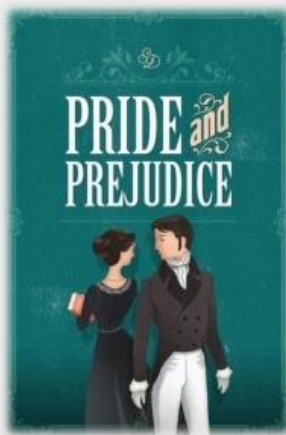
**Text:** "**his** Anselmo had been a good guide and **he** could travel wonderfully in the mountains. Robert Jordan could walk well enough **himself** and he knew from following **him** since before daylight that the old man could walk him to death. Robert Jordan trusted the man, Anselmo, so far, in everything except judgment. **He** had not yet had an opportunity to test his judgment, and, anyway, the judgment was **his** own responsibility. No, he did not worry about Anselmo and the problem of the bridge was no more difficult than many other problems. **He** knew how to blow any sort of bridge that you could name and **he** had blown them of all sizes and constructions."

### 5. Third person omniscient POV

#### 5.1. Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

**Text 1:** It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife. However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on **his** first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that **he** is considered the rightful property of someone or other of their daughters





Text 2: Mary had neither genius nor taste; and though vanity had given her application, it had given her likewise a pedantic air and conceited manner, which would have injured a higher degree of excellence than she had reached. Elizabeth, easy and unaffected, had been listened to with much more pleasure, though not playing half so well; and Mary, at the end of a long concerto, was glad to purchase praise and gratitude by Scotch and Irish airs, at the request of her younger sisters, who, with some of the Lucases, and two or three officers, joined eagerly in dancing at one end of the room.

Text 3: Elizabeth was again deep in thought, and after a time exclaimed, 'To treat in such a manner the godson, the friend, the favourite of his father!' She could have added, 'A young man, too, like YOU, whose very countenance may vouch for your being amiable'—but she contented herself with, 'and one, too, who had probably been his companion from childhood, connected together, as I think you said, in the closest manner!'

## 5.2. Peter Pan



Text 1: If he thought at all, but I don't believe he ever thought, it was that he and his shadow, when brought near each other, would join like drops of water, and when they did not he was appalled. He tried to stick it on with soap from the bathroom, but that also failed. A shudder passed through Peter, and he sat on the floor and cried.

Text 2: Tink was not all bad; or, rather, she was all bad just now, but, on the other hand, sometimes she was all good. Fairies have to be one thing or the other, because being so small they unfortunately have room for one feeling only at a time. They are,

however, allowed to change, only it must be a complete change. At present she was full of jealousy of Wendy. What she said in her lovely tinkle Wendy could not of course understand, and I believe some of it was bad words, but it sounded kind, and she flew back and forward, plainly meaning "Follow me, and all will be well."



Text 3: The way Mr. Darling won her was this: the many gentlemen who had been boys when she was a girl discovered simultaneously that they loved her, and they all ran to her house to propose to her except Mr. Darling, who took a cab and nipped in first, and so he got her. He got all of her except the innermost box and the kiss. He never knew about the box, and in time he gave up trying

for the kiss. Wendy thought Napoleon could have got it, but I can picture him trying, and then going off in a passion, slamming the door.

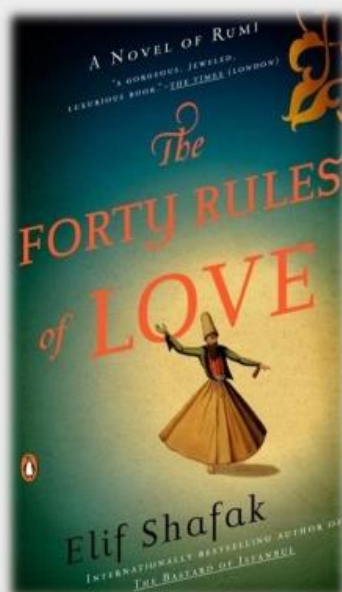
## II. Shifts

"The 40 rules of love" by Elif Shafak

A shift between Third person limited POV and first person POV

The main story is told from third person limited POV, yet it shifts to the first person POV, as the protagonist reads a book with different characters narrating their story.

Text 1: Bested by the tension that followed the argument with David and Jeannette, Ella was so drained she had to stop reading Sweet Blasphemy for a while. She felt as though the lid of a boiling cauldron had suddenly been lifted, emitting old conflicts and new resentments in the rising steam. Unfortunately, it was no one other than she who had



lifted that lid. And *she* had done it by dialing Scott's number and asking him not to marry her daughter. *Ella /Third person Limited POV.*

*Text 2:* Baghdad took no note of the arrival of Shams of Tabriz, but *I* will never forget the day he came to our modest dervish lodge. *We* had important guests that afternoon. The high judge had dropped by with a group of his men, and *I* suspected there was more than cordiality behind his visit. Renowned for his dislike of Sufism, the judge wanted to remind *me* that he kept an eye on *us*, just as he kept an eye on all the Sufis in the area. *The master/ First Person POV.*

*Text 3:* During that time it wasn't sheer curiosity that prompted *me* to closely observe Baba Zaman. Deep inside, *I* sensed that the letter concerned *me* personally, although in what way *I* could not tell. *I* spent many evenings in the praying room reciting the ninety-nine names of God for guidance. Each time one name stood out: al-Jabbar—the One in whose dominion nothing happens except that which He has willed. *Shams/ First person POV*

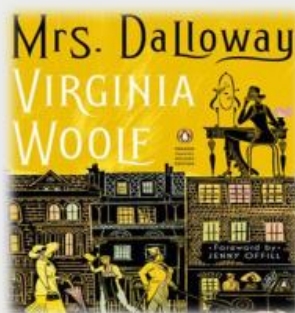
*Text 4:* Bristling with irritation, *I* sat under the maple tree. *I* continued to be angry at Rumi for his flamboyant speech on suffering—a subject he clearly knew little about. The shadow of the minaret inched its way across the street. Half dozing, half eyeing the passersby, *I* was about to fall asleep when *I* caught sight of a dervish *I* had never seen before. Dressed in black rags, holding a large staff in his hand, with no facial hair and a tiny silver earring in one ear, he looked so different that *I* couldn't help fixing my gaze upon him. *Hassan/ First person POV*

### III. Stream of Consciousness

Stream of consciousness is used with various types of POV.

While reading this part, observe sentence structures, punctuation, repetition, and ideas order. *Comment!*

Highlight odd forms in each text.



#### 1. Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf

Third person omniscient POV with the use of stream of consciousness

*Text 1:* Remember my party, remember my party, said Peter Walsh as he stepped down the street, speaking to himself rhythmically, in time with the flow of the sound, the direct downright sound of Big Ben striking the half-hour. (The leaden circles dissolved in the air.) Oh these parties, he thought; Clarissa's parties. Why does she give these parties, he thought. Not that he blamed her or this effigy of a man in a tail-coat with a carnation in his buttonhole coming towards him. Only one person in the world could be as he was, in love. And there he was, this fortunate

man, himself, reflected in the plate-glass window of a motor-car manufacturer in Victoria Street. All India lay behind him; plains, mountains; epidemics of cholera; a district twice as big as Ireland; decisions he had come to alone—he, Peter Walsh; who was now really for the first time in his life, in love.

*Text 2:* Here she is mending her dress; mending her dress as usual, he thought; here she's been sitting all the time I've been in India; mending her dress; playing about; going to parties; running to the House and back and all that, he thought, growing more and more irritated, more and more agitated, for there's nothing in the world so bad for some

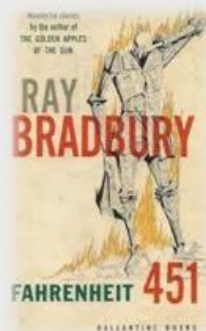
women as marriage, he thought; and politics; and having a Conservative husband, like the admirable Richard. So it is, so it is, he thought, shutting his knife with a snap.

**Text 3:** Quiet descended on her, calm, content, as her needle, drawing the silk smoothly to its gentle pause, collected the green folds together and attached them, very lightly, to the belt. So on a summer's day waves collect, overbalance, and fall; collect and fall; and the whole world seems to be saying "that is all" more and more ponderously, until even the heart in the body which lies in the sun on the beach says too, That is all. Fear no more, says the heart. Fear no more, says the heart, committing its burden to some sea, which sighs collectively for all sorrows, and renews, begins, collects, lets fall. And the body alone listens to the passing bee; the wave breaking; the dog barking, far away barking and barking.



## 2. Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

The author uses stream of consciousness along with third person limited POV.



**Text 01:** One drop of rain. Clarisse. Another drop. Mildred. A third. The uncle. A fourth. The fire tonight. One, Clarisse. Two, Mildred. Three, uncle. Four, fire, One, Mildred, two, Clarisse. One, two, three, four, five, Clarisse, Mildred, uncle, fire, sleeping-tablets, men, disposable tissue, coat-tails, blow, wad, flush, Clarisse, Mildred, uncle, fire, tablets, tissues, blow, wad, flush. One, two, three, one, two, three! Rain. The storm. The uncle laughing. Thunder falling downstairs. The whole world pouring down. The fire gushing up in a volcano. All rushing on down around in a spouting roar and rivering stream toward morning.

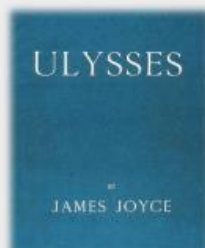
**Text 02:** He clenched the book in his fists. Trumpets blared. "Denham's Dentrifrice." Shut up, thought Montag. Consider the lilies of the field. "Denham's Dentifrice." They toil not" Denham's--"Consider the lilies of the field, shut up, shut up. "Dentifrice!" He tore the book

open and flicked the pages and felt them as if he were blind, he picked at the shape of the individual letters, not blinking. "Denham's. Spelled: D-E-N "They toil not, neither do they. A fierce whisper of hot sand through empty sieve. "Denham's does it!" Consider the lilies, the lilies, the lilies..."Denham's dental detergent." "Shut up, shut up, shut up! "It was a plea, a cry so terrible that Montag found himself on his feet, the shocked inhabitants of the loud car staring, moving back from this man with the insane, gorged face, the gibbering, dry mouth, the flapping book in his fist.



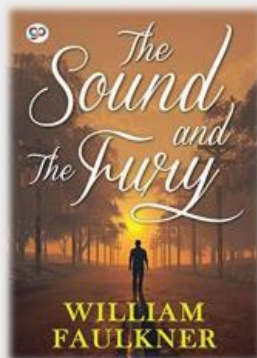
## 3. Ulysses by James Joyce

The author shifts from third person omniscient and first person POV in passages, some of which take the form of internal monologues. He uses stream of consciousness as a technique.



**Text:** For nonperishable goods bought of Moses Herzog, of 13 Saint Kevin's parade in the city of Dublin, Wood quay ward, merchant, hereinafter called the vendor, and sold and delivered to Michael E. Geraghty, esquire, of 29 Arbour hill in the city of Dublin, Arran quay ward, gentleman, hereinafter called the purchaser, videlicet, five pounds avoirdupois of first choice tea at three shillings and no pence per pound avoirdupois and three stone avoirdupois of sugar, crushed crystal, at three pence per pound avoirdupois, the said purchaser debtor to the said vendor of one pound five shillings and sixpence sterling for value received which amount shall be paid by said purchaser to said vendor in weekly instalments every seven calendar days of three

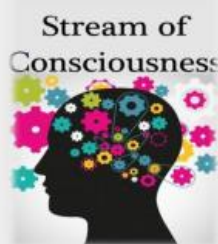
shillings and no pence sterling: and the said nonperishable goods shall not be pawned or pledged or sold or otherwise alienated by the said purchaser but shall be and remain and be held to be the sole and exclusive property of the said vendor to be disposed of at his good will and pleasure until the said amount shall have been duly paid by the said purchaser to the said vendor in the manner herein set forth as this day hereby agreed between the said vendor, his heirs, successors, trustees and assigns of the one part and the said purchaser, his heirs, successors, trustees and assigns of the other part.



#### 4. The Sound and the Fury by William Faulkner

The POV shifts between first person and third person since the book has four different sections with four narrators. The first three sections are told from 1<sup>st</sup> person and in the last section, the narrator is omniscient. The author uses stream of consciousness in the first three sections.

**Text 1:** "My poor baby," mother said. She let me go. "You and Versh take good care of him, honey." "Yessum." Caddy said. We went out Caddy said, "You needn" go, Versh. I'll keep him for a while." He went on and we stopped in the hall an Caddy knelt and put her arms around me and her cold bright face against mine. She smelled like trees. "You aren't a poor boy. Are you. Are you. You have got your Caddy. Haven't you got your Caddy." Can't you shut up that moaning and slobbering, Luster said. Ain't you shamed of yourself, making all this racket. We passed the carriage house, where the carriage was. It had a new wheel. "Git in, now, and set still until your maw come." Dilsey said. She shoved me into the carriage. T.P. Held the reins. "Clare I don't see how come Jason wont get a new surrey." Dilsey said. "This thing going to fall to pieces under you all someday. Look at them wheels.



#### Stream of Consciousness

**Text 2:** They came on. I opened the gate and they stopped, turning. I was trying to say, and I caught her, trying to say, and she screamed and I was trying to say and trying and the bright shapes began stop and I tried to get out. I tried to get it off of my face, but the bright shapes were going again. They were going up the hill to where it fell away and I tried to cry. But when I breathed in, I couldn't breathe out again to cry, and I tried to keep from falling off the hill and I fell off the hill into the bright, whirling shapes...

#### Activity

1. Identify the POV in The Giver. Illustrate.
2. Identify the POV in the Little Prince. Explain



**Text 1:** Once when I was six years old I saw a magnificent picture in a book, called True Stories from Nature, about the primeval forest. It was a picture of a boa constrictor in the act of swallowing an animal. Here is a copy of the drawing. In the book it said: "Boa constrictors swallow their prey whole, without chewing it. After that they are not able to move, and they sleep through the six months that they need for digestion." I pondered deeply,

then, over the adventures of the jungle. And after some work with a colored pencil I succeeded in making my first drawing.

Text 2: I soon learned to know this flower better. On the little prince's planet the flowers had always been very simple. They had only one ring of petals; they took up no room at all; they were a trouble to nobody. One morning they would appear in the grass, and by night they would have faded peacefully away. But one day, from a seed blown from no one knew where, a new flower had come up; and the little prince had watched very closely over this small sprout which was not like any other small sprouts on his planet. It might, you see, have been a new kind of baobab. The shrub soon stopped growing, and began to get ready to produce a flower.

The little prince, who was present at the first appearance of a huge bud, felt at once that some sort of miraculous apparition must emerge from it. But the flower was not satisfied to complete the preparations for her beauty in the shelter of her green chamber. She chose her colours with the greatest care. She adjusted her petals one by one. She did not wish to go out into the world all rumpled, like the field poppies. It was only in the full radiance of her beauty that she wished to appear. Oh, yes! She was a coquettish creature! And her mysterious adornment lasted for days and days.

Text 3: Here, then, is a great mystery. For you who also love the little prince, and for me, nothing in the universe can be the same if somewhere, we do not know where, a sheep that we never saw has-- yes or no?-- eaten a rose... Look up at the sky. Ask yourselves: is it yes or no? Has the sheep eaten the flower? And you will see how everything changes... And no grown-up will ever understand that this is a matter of so much importance! This is, to me, the loveliest and saddest landscape in the world. It is the same as that on the preceding page, but I have drawn it again to impress it on your memory. It is here that the little prince appeared on Earth, and disappeared. Look at it carefully so that you will be sure to recognise it in case you travel someday to the African desert. And, if you should come upon this spot, please do not hurry on. Wait for a time, exactly under the star. Then, if a little man appears who laughs, who has golden hair and who refuses to answer questions, you will know who he is. If this should happen, please comfort me. Send me word that he has come back.

## Appendix 12: Characterization (Lesson and Practice)

Literature / 3rd year

Teacher: Mahammed Belkis

2022/2023

### Characterization in Literature

Read the Handout and summarize the key points.

**RECAP:** We have seen in a previous handout the types of characters in literature. Here is a reminder:

There are several classifications of characters types; the most common ones are

**1. According to the role of each character we can classify them into:**

- **A protagonist:** the main character, the center of the story).
- **An antagonist:** the opposition or enemy of the main character; the villain in the story.
- **Deuteragonists:** the closest type to the protagonist. It could be one or a group of deuteragonists. Usually, they help the protagonist in his quest. Examples of deuteragonists are **Melmen, Gloria, Marty in Madagascar; Legolas, Gandalf, Gimli, Pippin in the Lord of the Rings; the team of the Avengers; Shifu, Tigress, Mantle, Viper, Crane, Monkey in Kung Fu Panda; Kirk, Jeff, Alpa Chino, Kevin in Tropic Thunder, etc)**
- **Tertiary Characters:** Characters that appear in one or two scenes to perform some actions related to the plot. Examples of this type are, **Radagast in The Hobbit, Galadriel in the Lord of the Rings, Odin in Thor Ragnarok, Mark Hanna in the Wolf of Wall Street.**
- **Confidante:** is the one whom the main character trusts. This character helps develop the protagonist's heroic characteristics. "He reveals the central character's thoughts, intentions, and personality traits. However, a confidante need not necessarily be a person. An animal can also be a confidante." (**Ron and Hermione in Harry Potter, Darwin in Gumball**)
- **Love Interest:** **Elle (Ice Age) Kristof (Frozen), Arwen (LOTR), Daisy (Great Gatsby), Nate (Devil Wears Prada)**
- **Foil:** is "any character (sometimes the antagonist or an important supporting character) whose personal qualities contrast with another character (usually the protagonist). By providing this contrast, we get to know more about the other character." Examples of foil characters are **Anna in Frozen, Dr. Watson in Sherlock Holmes, Donkey in Shrek, Darco in Harry Potter, Tom Buchanan in The Great Gatsby, Buzz in Toy Story, Tigress in Kung fu Panda, Huckleberry Finn in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, etc. (Huck is also the confidante of Tom)**

**2. According to the qualities of the characters, they can be classified into:**

**Dynamic:** A dynamic character changes over time, usually as a result of resolving a central conflict or facing a major crisis. Most dynamic characters tend to be central.

**Round:** is a "fully developed personality that is affected by the story's events; he/she can learn, grow, or deteriorate by the end of the story. It is generally a complex character (**Gatsby in The Great Gatsby, Macbeth in Macbeth, Edward "Teddy" Daniels / Andrew Laeddis in Shutter Island, etc**)

**Flat:** A flat character is the opposite of a round character. "This literary personality is notable for one kind of personality trait or characteristic." It is rare when we find a flat protagonist, still, there are some examples, such as **Rip in Rip Van Winkle.**

**Anti-Hero:** is a major character, usually the protagonist, who lacks the conventional traits of a hero. Instead, he/she/ it is characterized with imperfections (selfishness, ignorance, bigotry, etc.), lack of positive qualities such as "courage, physical prowess, and fortitude", and "generally feels helpless in a world over which they have no control" (Gale 2012)(**Jack Sparrow**)

**Stock:** Stock characters are those types of characters who have become conventional or stereotypical (generic) through repeated use in particular types of stories. Stock characters are instantly recognizable to readers or audience members (**the geek, the loner, the angry friend, the rebel teenager, the "stupid" blond, the bad father, etc**).

**Symbolic:** A symbolic character is any major or minor character whose very existence represents some major idea or aspect of society and reflect the main themes of the story (**Gollum from LOTR**)

Now, we will learn about characterization: the literary technique of representing a character in a literary work.

A writer indicates characters by what he says about them, what they say about themselves and what they think, what other characters say about them, and what they do.

In her Book "**Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics**", Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan provides the following definition of characterization:



A Character, as one construct within the abstracted story, can be described in terms of a **network of character traits**. These traits, however, may or may not appear as such in the text. How, then, is the construct arrived at? By **assembling various character indicators** distributed along the text continuum and, when necessary, **inferring the traits from them**. It is these indicators that I seek to define under the heading of 'characterization'."



### Types of Characterization

There are two types of characterization: **direct definition** and **indirect presentation**.



#### 1. Direct Characterization

The Naming of the characters' qualities is only taken into consideration as characterization when proceeded from the most **authoritative voices** in the text. Yet, if an unreliable character describes another, these traits are not to be taken as part of the writer's characterization. This type "names the trait **by an adjective** (e.g. 'he was good-hearted'), **an abstract noun** ('his goodness knew no bounds'), or possibly some **other kind of noun** ('she was a real charmer) or **part of speech** ('he loves only himself')." (P 59)

#### Examples of Direct Characterization



**Text 1:** "He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a **simple good-natured man**; he was, moreover, a **kind neighbor**, and an **obedient hen-pecked husband**. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be **owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity**; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home."



**Text 2:** "The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor... He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil..."



**Text 3:** "Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound." **Rip Van Winkle by Irving Washington**



#### 2. Indirect Presentation

This type "**does not mention the trait** but displays and exemplifies it in various ways, leaving to the reader the task of **inferring the quality** they imply." An indirect presentation displays the traits in various ways. (P 59, P 61)



##### 2.1. Through Action

Rimmon-Kenan states that: "a trait may be implied both by **one-time (or non-routine) actions**, like Meursault's murder of the Arab in Camus's *L'Etranger* (1942) and by **habitual ones**, like Eveline's dusting of the house in Joyce's short story bearing her name (1914). One-time actions tend to evoke the dynamic aspect of the character, often playing a part in a turning point in the narrative. By contrast, habitual actions tend to reveal the character's unchanging or static aspect, often having a comic or ironic effect, as when a character clings to old habits in a situation which renders them inadequate." (P 62)



•Being a one-time action does not belittle the importance of this type of action. Sometimes they are more crucial and significant to the plot than the habitual actions. They can reveal hidden traits the reader does not know.



• Actions can belong to one of the following categories:

**Act of Commission:** something performed by the character.

**Act of Omission:** something which the character should, but does not do.

**Contemplated Act:** an unrealized plan or intention of the character.



## 2.2. Through Speech

"A character's speech, whether in conversation or as a silent activity of the mind, can be indicative of a trait or traits both through its **content** and through its **form**. The form or style of speech is a common means of characterization in texts where the characters' language is individuated and distinguished from that of the narrator. Style may be indicative of origin, dwelling place, social class, or profession."



## 2.3. Through External Appearance and Character Traits

This is a powerful aspect of characterization in literature. There is often a connection between those external features which are beyond the character's control, -such as height, the color of eyes, and shape of the nose, and those which at least partly depend on him, like hairstyle and clothes, and the character's personality. The author explains that "the first group characterizes through **contiguity** alone, the second has additional **causal** overtones. At times the external description speaks for itself; at other times its relation to a trait is explicated by the narrator." (p 66)



## 2.4. Through Environment:

"A character's physical surroundings (room, house, street, town), as well as his human environment (family, social class), are also often used as trait-connoting metonymies. As with external appearance, the relation of contiguity is frequently supplemented by that of causality." (P 66)

## Examples of indirect characterization



**Text 1:** "Both were dressed in denim trousers and in denim coats with brass buttons. Both wore black, shapeless hats and both carried tight blanket rolls slung over their shoulders. The first man was small and quick, dark of face, with restless eyes and sharp, strong features. Every part of him was defined: small, strong hands, slender arms, and a thin and bony nose. Behind him walked his opposite, a huge man, shapeless of face, with large, pale eyes, with wide, sloping shoulders; and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws. His arms did not swing at his sides, but hung loosely." *Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck*



**Text 2:** "She is not at all an attractive person. She is perhaps eighteen, perhaps twenty, hardly older. She wears a little sailor hat of black straw that has long been exposed to the dust and soot of London and has seldom if ever been brushed. Her hair needs washing rather badly: its mousy color can hardly be natural. She wears a shoddy black coat that reaches nearly to her knees and is shaped to her waist. She has a brown skirt with a coarse apron. Her boots are much the worse for wear."



**Text 3:** Liza: I ain't done nothing wrong by speaking to the gentleman. I've a right to sell flowers if I keep off the kerb. [Hysterically] I'm a respectable girl: so help me, I never spoke to him except to ask him to buy a flower off me.



**Text 4:** Liza: Ah—ah—ah—ow—ow—ow—oo! [Wounded and whimpering] I won't be called a baggage when I've offered to pay like any lady.



**Text 5:** Higgins: I find that the moment I let a woman make friends with me, she becomes jealous, exacting, suspicious, and a damned nuisance. I find that the moment I let myself make friends with a woman, I become selfish and tyrannical. Women upset everything. **Pygmalion by Bernard Shaw**



**Text 6:** "The room I came into was very large and high. The windows were high, and pointed at the top, and so far above the black floor that they were quite out of reach. Only a little light, red in color, made its way through the glass, and served to lighten the nearer and larger objects. My eyes, however, tried and failed to see into the far, high corners of the room. Dark coverings hung upon the walls. The many chairs and tables had been used for a long, long time. Books lay around the room, but could give it no sense of life. I felt sadness hanging over everything. No escape from this deep cold gloom seemed possible."



**Text 7:** "Surely, no man had ever before changed as Roderick Usher had! Could this be the friend of my early years? It is true that his face had always been unusual. He had gray-white skin; eyes large and full of light; lips not bright in color, but of a beautiful shape; a well-shaped nose; hair of great softness — a face that was not easy to forget. And now the increase in this strangeness of his face had caused so great a change that I almost did not know him. The horrible white of his skin, and the strange light in his eyes, surprised me and even made me afraid. His hair had been allowed to grow, and in its softness it did not fall around his face but seemed to lie upon the air. I could not, even with an effort, see in my friend the appearance of a simple human being." **The Fall of the House of Usher by Edgar Allan Poe**

❖ Some authors use the mnemonic "P.A.R.T.S" to make it easier to remember types of indirect characterization:



P: physical description

A: Action

R: Reaction

T: Thoughts

S: Speech



### Reinforcement by Analogy

Rimmon-Kenan argues that analogy is a reinforcement of characterization rather than as a separate type of character-indicator (equivalent to the direct definition and indirect presentation) "because its characterizing capacity depends on the prior establishment, by other means, of the traits on which it is based." (P 67)

• Analogies in literature are of different types, but when it comes to characterization, there are a few ways to use it:



1. **Analogous names:** names can parallel character traits. Examples of these analogies are, **Snow White**, **Megamind**, **Hawkeye** from **Marvel comics**, **Cruella de Vil** from **One Hundred and One Dalmatians**, **Darth Vader** in **Star Wars**, **Chihiro** is spirited away, **Sophie** in **Howl's Moving Castle**, etc.



**2. Analogous landscape:** "the physical or social environment of a character does not only present a trait or traits indirectly but, being man-made, may also cause it or be caused by it (ex: the dreamer's place in White nights, Bruce Wayne house in Batman). "Landscape, on the other hand, is independent of man, and hence it does not normally entertain a relation of story-causality with the characters (although a character's choice to live or pass his time in a certain natural location may suggest a cause-and-effect relation)." Examples of this are **the Shire and the hobbit's traits, Mordor and Sauron.**



"The analogy established by the text between a certain landscape and a character-trait may be either '**straight**' (based on similarity) or '**inverse**' (emphasizing contrast). Catherine and Heathcliff in Bronte's Wuthering Heights (1847) are similar to the wilderness in which they live, just as the nature of the Linton family parallels the peacefulness of their dwelling place." (p 69)



**4. Analogy between Characters:** "When two characters are presented in similar circumstances, the similarity or contrast between their behaviors emphasizes traits characteristic of both. Thus there is reciprocal characterization in the contrasted behavior of Dostoevsky's four brothers Karamazov toward their father (1880). Similarly, in Shakespeare's King Lear the sisters! Cruelty underscores Cordelia's goodness (and vice-versa) by way of contrast, but the analogy also suggests a similarity between the evil and the good sisters: while, in the opening scene, Regan and Goneril disguise the truth by overstatement, Cordelia disguises it by understatement." (P.70)



#### IMPORTANT NOTES

- ♦ A character indicator does not always suggest one trait to the exclusion of others; it may imply the co-presence of several traits, or cause the reader to hesitate among various labels.
- ♦ Characterization differs from one author to another, from one genre to another, from one book of the same author to another. **One book can have multiple forms of characterization, as it can have one type only.**
- ♦ To decide which means of characterization predominates a text, one needs to check the **kind of character in question, the themes of the work, the genre to which it belongs, the author's preferences, the norms of the period (literary movement), etc.**
- ♦ It is important to examine the **interaction** between various means of characterization and its effect on the text. Ewen (1971) in Rimmon-Kenan (1983) explains that "The result, as well as the reading process, will be different according to whether the indicators **repeat** the same trait in different ways, **complement** each other, partially **overlap**, or **conflict** with each other." (p 70)



**PS: The Lord of the Rings is a book that has all types of characters mentioned, all types of characterization, and most types of plots we have discussed earlier.**

**Activity: Try Finding examples of the different types of characterization in THE LITTLE PRINCE, PETER PAN, and THE GIVER.**

Read the texts and identify the types of characterization.

★ I showed my masterpiece to the grown-ups, and asked them whether the drawing frightened them. But they answered: "Frighten? Why should anyone be frightened by a hat?" My drawing was not a picture of a hat. It was a picture of a boa constrictor digesting an elephant. But since the grown-ups were not able to understand it, I made another drawing: I drew the inside of the boa constrictor, so that the grown-ups could see it clearly. They always need to have things explained.

★ Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them. So then I chose another profession, and learned to pilot airplanes. Whenever I met one of them who seemed to me at all clear-sighted, I tried the experiment of showing him my Drawing Number One, which I have always kept. I would try to find out, so, if this was a person of true understanding...

★ That, however, is not my fault. The grown-ups discouraged me in my painter's career when I was six years old, and I never learned to draw anything, except boas from the outside and boas from the inside.

★ It took me a long time to learn where he came from. The little prince, who asked me so many questions, never seemed to hear the ones I asked him. It was from words dropped by chance that, little by little, everything was revealed to me.

★ The little prince never let go of a question, once he had asked it.

★ "Oh! How beautiful you are!"

"Am I not?" the flower responded, sweetly. "And I was born at the same moment as the sun..." The little prince could guess easily enough that she was not any too modest-- but how moving-- and exciting-- she was! So, too, she began very quickly to torment him with her vanity-- which was, if the truth be known, a little difficult to deal with.

★ "The fact is that I did not know how to understand anything! I ought to have judged by deeds and not by words. She cast her fragrance and her radiance over me. I ought never to have run away from her... I ought to have guessed all the affection that lay behind her poor little strate gems. Flowers are so inconsistent! But I was too young to know how to love her..."

- + What about the characterization of the fox, the snake, and the rest of the minor characters?
- + Identify the type of the following characters (according to role and quality):
- + The pilot, the little prince, the king, the lamplighter, the fox, and the snake?





★ She was a lovely lady, with a romantic mind and such a sweet mocking mouth. Her romantic mind was like the tiny boxes, one within the other, that come from the puzzling East, however many you discover there is always one more; and her sweet mocking mouth had one kiss on it that Wendy could never get, though there it was, perfectly conspicuous in the right-hand corner.

★ Wendy had a splendid idea. "Why not both take it at the same time?" "Certainly," said Mr. Darling. "Are you ready, Michael?" Wendy gave the words, one, two, three, and Michael took his medicine, but Mr. Darling slipped his behind his back. There was a yell of rage from Michael, and "O father!" Wendy exclaimed. "What do you mean by 'O father'?" Mr. Darling demanded. "Stop that row, Michael. I meant to take mine, but I--I missed it."

It was dreadful the way all the three were looking at him, just as if they did not admire him. "Look here, all of you," he said entreatingly, as soon as Nana had gone into the bathroom. "I have just thought of a splendid joke. I shall pour my medicine into Nana's bowl, and she will drink it, thinking it is milk!"

★ It was the colour of milk; but the children did not have their father's sense of humour, and they looked at him reproachfully as he poured the medicine into Nana's bowl. "What fun!" he said doubtfully, and they did not dare expose him when Mrs. Darling and Nana returned.

"Nana, good dog," he said, patting her, "I have put a little milk into your bowl, Nana."

★ Peter could be exceeding polite also, having learned the grand manner at fairy ceremonies, and he rose and bowed to her beautifully. She was much pleased, and bowed beautifully to him from the bed.

★ Peter, boy like, was indifferent to appearances, and he was now jumping about in the wildest glee. Alas, he had already forgotten that he owed his bliss to Wendy. He thought he had attached the shadow himself. "How clever I am!" he crowed rapturously, "oh, the cleverness of me!"

★ It is humiliating to have to confess that this conceit of Peter was one of his most fascinating qualities. To put it with brutal frankness, there never was a cockier boy.

★ To induce her to look up he pretended to be going away, and when this failed he sat on the end of the bed and tapped her gently with his foot.

★ "Wendy," he said, "don't withdraw. I can't help crowing, Wendy, when I'm pleased with myself." Still she would not look up, though she was listening eagerly. "Wendy," he continued, in a voice that no woman has ever yet been able to resist, "Wendy, one girl is more use than twenty boys."

Now Wendy was every inch a woman, though there were not very many inches, and she peeped out of the bed-clothes. "Do you really think so, Peter?"

"Yes, I do."

★ It was because I heard father and mother," he explained in a low voice, "talking about what I was to be when I became a man." He was extraordinarily agitated now. "I don't want ever to be a man," he said with passion. "I want always to be a little boy and to have fun. So I ran away to Kensington Gardens and lived a long long time among the fairies." He had to translate. "She is not very polite. She says you are a great [huge] ugly girl, and that she is my fairy."

★ Eventually Peter would dive through the air, and catch Michael just before he could strike the sea, and it was lovely the way he did it; but he always waited till the last moment, and you felt it was his cleverness that interested him and not the saving of human life. Also he was fond of variety, and the sport that engrossed him one moment would suddenly cease to engage him, so there was always the possibility that the next time you fell he would let you go.

★ Tink was not all bad; or, rather, she was all bad just now, but, on the other hand, sometimes she was all good. next time you fell he would let you go. At present she was full of jealousy of Wendy

★ The difference between him and the other boys at such a time was that they knew it was make-believe, while to him make-believe and true were exactly the same thing. This sometimes troubled them, as when they had to make-believe that they had had their dinners.

★ But Peter had no sinking, he had one feeling only, gladness; and he gnashed his pretty teeth with joy. Quick as thought he snatched a knife from Hook's belt and was about to drive it home, when he saw that he was higher up the rock than his foe. It would not have been fighting fair. He gave the pirate a hand to help him up.

it was then that Hook bit him.

Not the pain of this but its unfairness was what dazed Peter. It made him quite helpless. He could only stare, horrified.

★ Thus defenceless Hook found him. He stood silent at the foot of the tree looking across the chamber at his enemy. Did no feeling of compassion disturb his sombre breast? The man was not wholly evil; he loved flowers (I have been told) and sweet music (he was himself no mean performer on the harpsichord); and, let it be frankly admitted, the idyllic nature of the scene stirred him profoundly. Mastered by his better self he would have returned reluctantly up the tree, but for one thing.

★ Alas, Tinker Bell could not explain this, for even she did not know the dark secret of Slightly's tree. Nevertheless Hook's words had left no room for doubt. The cup was poisoned. "Besides," said Peter, quite believing himself "I never fell asleep." He raised the cup. No time for words now; time for deeds; and with one of her lightning movements Tink got between his lips and the draught, and drained it to the dregs. "Why, Tink, how dare you drink my medicine?" But she did not answer. Already she was reeling in the air.

- + Characters in Peter Pan are full of contradictory traits. Give examples
- + How is this relevant to the main themes of the books?
- + What do these traits suggest?





Jonas was careful about language. Not like his friend, Asher, who talked too fast and mixed things up, scrambling words and phrases until they were barely recognizable and often very funny.



"You've visited other communities, haven't you?" Jonas asked. "My group has, often."

Lily nodded again. "When we were Sixes, we went and shared a whole school day with a group of Sixes in their community."

"How did you feel when you were there?"

Lily frowned. "I felt strange. Because their methods were different.

They were learning usages that my group hadn't learned yet, so we felt stupid."

Father was listening with interest. "I'm thinking, Lily," he said, "about the boy who didn't obey the rules today. Do you think it's possible that he felt strange and stupid, being in a new place with rules that he didn't know about?"

Lily pondered that. "Yes," she said, finally.

"I feel a little sorry for him," Jonas said, "even though I don't even know him. I feel sorry for anyone who is in a place where he feels strange and stupid."



His father smiled his gentle smile. "Well, it was clear to me--and my parents later confessed that it had been obvious to them, too--what my aptitude was. I had always loved the new children more than anything. When my friends in my age group were holding bicycle races, or building toy vehicles or bridges with their construction sets, or--

"All the things I do with my friends," Jonas pointed out, and his mother nodded in agreement.

"I always participated, of course, because as children we must experience all of those things. And I studied hard in school, as you do, Jonas. But again and again, during free time, I found myself drawn to the new children. I spent almost all of my volunteer hours helping in the Nurturing Center. Ofcourse the Elders knew that, from their observation."



It was the first thing Jonas noticed as he looked at the new child peering up curiously from the basket. The pale eyes. Almost every citizen in the community had dark eyes. His parents did, and Lily did, and so did all of his group members and friends. But there were a few exceptions: Jonas himself, and a female Five who he had noticed had the different, lighter eyes.



Jonas shrugged. He followed them inside. But he had been startled by the new child's eyes. Mirrors were rare in the community; they weren't forbidden, but there was no real need of them, and Jonas had simply never bothered to look at himself very often even when he found himself in a location where a mirror existed. Now, seeing the new child and its expression, he was reminded that the light eyes were not only a rarity but gave the one who had them a certain look--what was it? Depth, he decided; as if one were looking into the clear water of the river, down to the bottom, where things might lurk which hadn't been discovered yet. He felt self-conscious, realizing that he, too, had that look.



So Jonas laughed too, and with his laughter tried to ignore his uneasy conviction that something had happened. But he had taken the apple home, against the recreation area rules.



The exemption from rudeness startled him. Reading it again, however, he realized that it didn't compel him to be rude; it simply allowed him the option. He was quite certain he would never take advantage

of it. He was so completely, so thoroughly accustomed to courtesy within the community that the thought of asking another citizen an intimate question, of calling someone's attention to an area of awkwardness, was unnerving. He had never, within his memory, been tempted to lie.



In his mind, Jonas had questions. A thousand. A million questions. As many questions as there were books lining the walls. But he did not ask one, not yet.



The Giver shook his head. "No, flesh isn't red. But it has red tones in it. There was a time, actually--you'll see this in the memories later--when flesh was many different colors. That was before we went to Sameness. Today flesh is all the same, and what you saw was the red tones.



"Things could change, Gabe," Jonas went on. "Things could be different. I don't know how, but there must be some way for things to be different. There could be colors. "And grandparents," he added, staring through the dimness toward the ceiling of his sleeping room. "And everybody would have the memories.



"You know about memories," he whispered, turning toward the crib. Gabriel's breathing was even and deep. Jonas liked having him there, though he felt guilty about the secret. Each night he gave memories to Gabriel: memories of boat rides and picnics in the sun; memories of soft rainfall against windowpanes; memories of dancing barefoot on a damp lawn.



The next morning, for the first time, Jonas did not take his pill. Something within him, something that had grown there through the memories, told him to throw the pill away.



His father turned and opened the cupboard. He took out a syringe and a small bottle. Very carefully he inserted the needle into the bottle and began to fill the syringe with a clear liquid. Jonas winced sympathetically. He had forgotten that new children had to get shots. He hated shots himself, though he knew that they were necessary. To his surprise, his father began very carefully to direct the needle into the top of new child's forehead, puncturing the place where the fragile skin pulsed. The newborn squirmed, and wailed faintly.

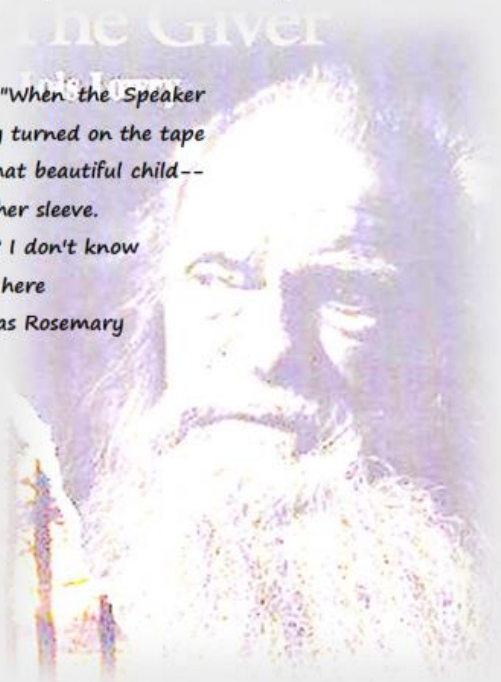


The Giver turned to him. Quite calmly, he related, "When the Speaker notified me that Rosemary had applied for release, they turned on the tape to show me the process. There she was--my last glimpse of that beautiful child--waiting. They brought in the syringe and asked her to roll up her sleeve.

"You suggested, Jonas, that perhaps she wasn't brave enough? I don't know about bravery: what it is, what it means. I do know that I sat here numb with horror. Wretched with helplessness. And I listened as Rosemary told them that she would prefer to inject herself.

What do the following actions say about the characters:

- Rosemary asking for release.
- Jonas taking Gabe with him.
- The Giver telling Jonas about Rosemary.
- The Giver showing the ceremony of release to Jonas.
- The Giver starting with the snow and sled memory.



## Appendix 13: The Giver Mind Map





What does the ending suggest?  
 How does technology serve the ideology of Sameness?  
 (reflect on our modern world)

Do you think people lost their memories a choice to give them up?  
 If the system wanted to kill Sameness, why keep memories with the Giver?

## Appendix 14: Pride and Prejudice Study Guide

L 3/ Literature  
Mahammedi Belkis  
2022/2023

### *Pride and Prejudice Study Guide*

*The Handout contains questions to help us reflect on our reading of Pride and Prejudice*

-  1. What is the type of plot of *Pride and Prejudice*?
  - ✦ How does it relate to the main themes of the book?
  - ✦ How does it relate to character motivation?
-  2. Jane Austen uses her characters to represent the major themes of her book, namely "Pride" and "Prejudice". Explain how with illustrations.
-  3. The Author Uses foil characters and the analogy between characters as characterization techniques to enhance character traits. Give examples and explain how these characters are defined in opposition to each other.
  - ✦ How do these techniques demonstrate character motivation?
-  4. Austen uses 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient point of view to amplify the social commentary tone of the novel.
  - ✦ Explain and illustrate.
5. The tone of the book is often critical and sarcastic towards the characters, their attitudes, and their customs and social habits, which reflect Austen's critical view of society and its traditions.
  - ✦ How does the narrator accentuate these various tones? Give examples.
-  6. The Author uses various types of characterization in the book. Give examples of the following:
  - ✦ Direct Characterization
  - ✦ Indirect characterization through speech
  - ✦ Indirect characterization through action (habitual and one-time actions)
  - ✦ Indirect characterization through physical appearance.

Can you identify the most dominant type in the novel? Why do you think it is?

  - ✦ Identify and analyze characterizations in the following parts:
    - Chapter 01 Mr. and Mrs. Bennet's Conversation
    - Chapter 8.
    - Chapter 10
    - Chapter 14 Mr. Collins Reading
    - Chapter 19 Mr. Collins and Elizabeth's Conversation
-  7. There are over 20 letters in the novel.
  - ✦ What is the significance of these letters?
  - ✦ What is their narrative function?
  - ✦ What is the link between the letters and characterization?
  - ✦ To which themes do these letters relate?

*"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."*



8. Austen uses the novel to shed light on stereotypical gender roles,

social hierarchy, and patriarchy.

✦ Read about the Regency Period, and then comment on the statement above.

✦ Say how this prevails in our modern society.



9. Austen uses her characters to represent various perspectives

on important issues (themes) such as courtship and marriage, love, social class, family, education, and manners. Say how?

✦ Explain These themes.

✦ Comment on the social conventions of that era around these themes.

10. Trace the themes of *Pride and Prejudice* in the novel; analyze them.



11. Austen depicts a picture of a society with its culture, traditions, values, and social norms.

✦ Highlight the characteristics of this society.

✦ Extract cultural and social aspects from the novel (traditions, customs, ideologies, habits, etc.) and compare them to those of our society. Do you think they converge, where do they converge, and where do they diverge?

❖ What is the thing you like about the novel?

❖ What is the thing you dislike about the novel?

❖ Who is the female character you identify with the most?

❖ Who is the male character you identify with the most?

❖ Do you agree with Elizabeth's view about love and marriage? Why?

❖ Rewrite one of the letters in the novel to change the course of the narrative.

❖ What is the one event you would like to change?

❖ Reimagine the events of the story in your own time or/and your society. What would happen?



## Appendix 14: POV and Characterization Practice

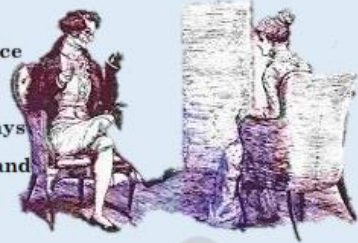
Lit/ Third Year

2022/2023

Teacher: Mahammedi Belkis

• This handout contains quotes and passages from *Pride and Prejudice* that can be used as illustrations in POV and Characterization Essays.

In our next session, we will be dealing with writing these two types of essays and answering some sample questions about plot, characterization, POV, and the possible links between them.



### 1. POV Illustrations

- ➔ Read the passages and say how they illustrate the ideas mentioned in our previous handout.
- ✓ Note: Some of these can be used to illustrate characterization as well.

❖ "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife. However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighborhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered the rightful property of someone or other of their daughters."

➔ What do you know about "Adage"?

❖ "Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve, and caprice, that the experience of three-and-twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character. HER mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented, she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news."

❖ "Mr. Bingley was good-looking and gentlemanlike; he had a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners. His sisters were fine women, with an air of decided fashion. His brother-in-law, Mr. Hurst, merely looked the gentleman; but his friend Mr. Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien, and the report which was in general circulation within five minutes after his entrance, of his having ten thousand a year. The gentlemen pronounced him to be a fine figure of a man, the ladies declared he was much handsomer than Mr. Bingley, and he was looked at with great admiration for about half the evening, till his manners gave a disgust which turned the tide of his popularity; for he was discovered to be proud; to be above his company, and above being pleased; and not all his large estate in Derbyshire could then save him from having a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance, and being unworthy to be compared with his friend."

❖ "Within a short walk of Longbourn lived a family with whom the Bennets were particularly intimate. Sir William Lucas had been formerly in trade in Meryton, where he had made a tolerable fortune, and risen to the honour of knighthood by an address to the king during his mayoralty . . . on the contrary, he was all attention to everybody by nature inoffensive, friendly, and obliging, his presentation at St. James's had made him courteous."

- ❖ Happy for all her maternal feelings was the day on which Mrs. Bennet got rid of her two most deserving daughters. With what delighted pride she afterwards visited Mrs. Bingley, and talked of Mrs. Darcy, may be guessed. I wish I could say, for the sake of her family, that the accomplishment of her earnest desire in the establishment of so many of her children produced so happy an effect as to make her a sensible, amiable, well-informed woman for the rest of her life; though perhaps it was lucky for her husband, who might not have relished domestic felicity in so unusual a form, that she still was occasionally nervous and invariably silly.
- ❖ It is not the object of this work to give a description of Derbyshire, nor of any of the remarkable places through which their route thither lay; Oxford, Blenheim, Warwick, Kenilworth, Birmingham, &c. are sufficiently known. A small part of Derbyshire is all the present concern.
- ❖ Elizabeth allowed that he had given a very rational account of it, and they continued talking together, with mutual satisfaction till supper put an end to cards, and gave the rest of the ladies their share of Mr. Wickham's attentions. There could be no conversation in the noise of Mrs. Phillips's supper party, but his manners recommended him to everybody. Whatever he said, was said well; and whatever he did, done gracefully.
- ❖ "How differently did everything now appear in which he was concerned!"
- ❖ Elizabeth happening to see the countenance of both as they looked at each other, was all astonishment at the effect of the meeting. Both changed colour, one looked white, the other red. Mr. Wickham, after a few moments, touched his hat—a salutation which Mr. Darcy just deigned to return. What could be the meaning of it? It was impossible to imagine; it was impossible not to long to know.
- ❖ Mr. Collins's return into Hertfordshire was no longer a matter of pleasure to Mrs. Bennet. On the contrary, she was as much disposed to complain of it as her husband. —It was very strange that he should come to Longbourn instead of to Lucas Lodge; it was also very inconvenient and exceedingly troublesome. — She hated having visitors in the house while her health was so indifferent, and lovers were of all people the most disagreeable. Such were the gentle murmurs of Mrs. Bennet
- ❖ "Elizabeth would wonder, and probably would blame her; and though her resolution was not to be shaken, her feelings must be hurt by such a disapprobation."
- ❖ Sir William and Lady Lucas were speedily applied to for their consent; and it was bestowed with a most joyful alacrity. Mr. Collins's present circumstances made it a most eligible match for their daughter, to whom they could give little fortune; and his prospects of future wealth were exceedingly fair. Lady Lucas began directly to calculate, with more interest than the matter had ever excited before, how many years longer Mr. Bennet was likely to live; and Sir William gave it as his decided opinion, that whenever Mr. Collins should be in possession of the Longbourn estate, it would be highly expedient that both he and his wife should make their appearance at St. James's. The whole family, in short, were properly overjoyed on the occasion. The younger girls formed hopes of COMING OUT a year or two sooner than they might otherwise have done; and the

boys were relieved from their apprehension of Charlotte's dying an old maid. Charlotte herself was tolerably composed. She had gained her point, and had time to consider of it. Her reflections were in general satisfactory. Mr. Collins, to be sure, was neither sensible nor agreeable; his society was irksome, and his attachment to her must be imaginary. But still he would be her husband. Without thinking highly either of men or matrimony, marriage had always been her object; it was the only provision for well-educated young women of small fortune, and however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want. This preservative she had now obtained; and at the age of twenty-seven, without having ever been handsome, she felt all the good luck of it.

- ❖ The strangeness of Mr. Collins's making two offers of marriage within three days was nothing in comparison of his being now accepted. She had always felt that Charlotte's opinion of matrimony was not exactly like her own, but she had not supposed it to be possible that, when called into action, she would have sacrificed every better feeling to worldly advantage.
- ❖ In spite of her deeply-rooted dislike, she could not be insensible to the compliment of such a man's affection, and though her intentions did not vary for an instant, she was at first sorry for the pain he was to receive; till, roused to resentment by his subsequent language, she lost all compassion in anger. She tried, however, to compose.

## 2. Characterization Illustrations

- ➔ In addition to the sample chapters and passages provided in the previous handout and some of the quotes above, we can use the following texts to illustrate the various types of characterization.
- ➔ Read these texts, and then identify the type of characterization in each.
- ❖ Mr. Bingley followed his advice. Mr. Darcy walked off; and Elizabeth remained with no very cordial feeling toward him. She told the story, however, with great spirit among her friends; for she had a lively, playful disposition, which delighted in anything ridiculous.
- ❖ 'Did not you? I did for you. But that is one great difference between us. Compliments always take YOU by surprise, and ME never. What could be more natural than his asking you again? He could not help seeing that you were about five times as pretty as every other woman in the room. No thanks to his gallantry for that. Well, he certainly is very agreeable, and I give you leave to like him. You have liked many a stupider person.'
- ❖ 'Dear Lizzy!' 'Oh! you are a great deal too apt, you know, to like people in general. You never see a fault in anybody. All the world are good and agreeable in your eyes. I never heard you speak ill of a human being in your life.' 'I would not wish to be hasty in censuring anyone; but I always speak what I think.' 'I know you do; and it is THAT which makes the wonder. With YOUR good sense, to be so honestly blind to the follies and nonsense of others! Affectation of candour is common enough—one meets with it everywhere. But to be candid without ostentation or design—to take the good of everybody's character and make it still better, and say nothing of the bad—belongs to you alone. And so you like this man's sisters, too, do you? Their manners are not equal to his.'

- ❖ Elizabeth listened in silence, but was not convinced; their behaviour at the assembly had not been calculated to please in general; and with more quickness of observation and less pliancy of temper than her sister, and with a judgement too unassailed by any attention to herself, she was very little disposed to approve them. They were in fact very fine ladies; not deficient in good humour when they were pleased, nor in the power of making themselves agreeable when they chose it, but proud and conceited. They were rather handsome, had been educated in one of the first private seminaries in town, had a fortune of twenty thousand pounds, were in the habit of spending more than they ought, and of associating with people of rank, and were therefore in every respect entitled to think well of themselves, and meanly of others. They were of a respectable family in the north of England; a circumstance more deeply impressed on their memories than that their brother's fortune and their own had been acquired by trade.
- ❖ Between him and Darcy there was a very steady friendship, in spite of great opposition of character. Bingley was endeared to Darcy by the easiness, openness, and ductility of his temper, though no disposition could offer a greater contrast to his own, and though with his own he never appeared dissatisfied. On the strength of Darcy's regard, Bingley had the firmest reliance, and of his judgement the highest opinion. In understanding, Darcy was the superior. Bingley was by no means deficient, but Darcy was clever. He was at the same time haughty, reserved, and fastidious, and his manners, though well-bred, were not inviting. In that respect his friend had greatly the advantage. Bingley was sure of being liked wherever he appeared, Darcy was continually giving offense.
- ❖ I am not romantic, you know; I never was. I ask only a comfortable home; and considering Mr. Collins's character, connection, and situation in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people can boast on entering the marriage state.'
- ❖ Mr. Collins was not a sensible man, and the deficiency of nature had been but little assisted by education or society; the greatest part of his life having been spent under the guidance of an illiterate and miserly father; and though he belonged to one of the universities, he had merely kept the necessary terms, without forming at it any useful acquaintance. The subjection in which his father had brought him up had given him originally great humility of manner; but it was now a good deal counteracted by the self-conceit of a weak head, living in retirement, and the consequential feelings of early and unexpected prosperity.
- ❖ Jane confessed herself a little surprised at the match; but she said less of her astonishment than of her earnest desire for their happiness; nor could Elizabeth persuade her to consider it as improbable. Kitty and Lydia were far from envying Miss Lucas, for Mr. Collins was only a clergyman; and it affected them in no other way than as a piece of news to spread at Meryton.



- ❖ 'Indeed, Mr. Bennet,' said she, 'it is very hard to think that Charlotte Lucas should ever be mistress of this house, that I should be forced to make way for HER, and live to see her take her place in it!' 'My dear, do not give way to such gloomy thoughts. Let us hope for better things. Let us flatter ourselves that I may be the survivor.'

## الملخص

استخدام نهج الاستجابة الثقافية في تدريس الأدب في الفصل الدراسي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

طلاب السنة الثالثة في جامعة زيان عاشور

يهدف هذا البحث إلى المساهمة في تطوير بيداغوجية تدريس الأدب في فصول التعليم العالي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، وتحسين تصميم الدروس والمناهج، وعكس الاتجاه الملحوظ لضعف التحصيل في مجال الدراسات الأدبية. يقترح البحث نهجا متعدد التخصصات لتدريس الأدب يدمج تقنيات واستراتيجيات من خمسة مناهج ونظريات مختلفة، وهي التدريس المستجيب ثقافيا، والنهج المعرفي، ونظرية استجابة القارئ، والنهج الاجتماعي الثقافي، وتحليل الخطاب. يعتمد النهج على فلسفة الاستجابة الثقافية، التي تعلم من خلال ولغاية الثقافة، ودمج الأطر المرجعية الثقافية للطلاب في تصميم الدروس وفي مختلف النشاطات داخل الأقسام. لاختبار فعالية النهج المقترح لتدريس الأدب، يتبع البحث تصميمًا شبه تجريبي، والذي يدمج بين الوضعية والبنائية مستخدما كلا من أدوات نوعية وكمية لجمع البيانات (مقابلات الاساتذة، واستبيانات الطلاب، والبيانات الأرشيفية، والملاحظة، والاختبارات التجريبية) والتحليل (تحليل المحتوى الموضوعي، والتحليل النمطي، وتحليلات التشخيص الوصفي، والتحليل الإحصائي). المشاركون في البحث هم 30 طالبا في السنة الثالثة في جامعة زيان عاشور بالجلفة، تم اختبارهم قبل وبعد تدريس دام 14 أسبوعا. تشير النتائج التي تم التحقق منها من أدوات البحث المختلفة إلى وجود فرق كبير بين درجات الطلاب قبل التجربة وبعدها. كما تشير إلى تأثير إيجابي على مجالات مختلفة لتعلم الادب بما في ذلك الوعي الثقافي والفهم والتفاعل والتعاون والتسامح. تم عرض هذه الجوانب من خلال تقنيات وأنشطة متعددة مثل المناقشات والمشاريع الجماعية والعروض التقديمية والواجبات ومذكرات القراءة. أشارت البيانات إلى تأثير أقل وضوحا وأبطأ على المهارات اللغوية، وخاصة القواعد وعلامات الترقيم، وأكدت على التحدي المتمثل في دمج التعلم الاجتماعي العاطفي في الفصل الدراسي.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

الأدب، الثقافة، اللغة الإنجليزية، منهج متعدد التخصصات، التجاوب الثقافي.

