"We Can't Become Robots who Reproduce Texts": Brazilian Students' Narratives About the Presence of Literature in English Language Classes

"Não podemos virar robôs que reproduzem texto": Narrativas de estudantes brasileiros sobre a presença de literatura nas aulas de língua inglesa

Elisa Seerig*

*Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Sul (IFRS), Bento Gonçalves , Rio Grande do Sul / Brasil
eseerig@gmail.com
http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1677-6228

Christine Siqueira Nicolaides**

**Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos (UNISINOS), São Leopoldo, Rio Grande do Sul / Brasil
cnicolaides@unisinos.br
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0167-3592

ABSTRACT: Considering that literature can work as an instigator of constructive emotions (ROSIEK, 2003), and given that the Sociocultural Historical Theory based on Vygotsky recognizes emotions as an important aspect of the individual's development (VYGOTSKY, 1989), this study aims at analyzing the multimodal narratives (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014) provided by ten public high school students. Data for this study were generated on-line due to the COVID-19 pandemic and regard their memories of the use of literature in 2018 and 2019. We analyzed the presence of emotions as motivators for engagement and, thus, beneficial for language development, collaborating to fulfill the gap in empirical research on literature and emotions in lessons of English as an Additional Language (PARAN, 2008; BLOEMERT et. al., 2019).

KEYWORDS: English as an Additional Language, literature, narrative inquiry , Sociocultural Historical Theory, emotions.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

181

RESUMO: Considerando que a literatura funciona como instigadora de emoções construtivas (ROSIEK, 2003), e levando em conta que a Teoria Socio-Histórico-Cultural, baseada em Vygotsky, reconhece as emoções como um aspecto importante para o desenvolvimento do indivíduo (VYGOTSKY, 1989), este estudo analisa narrativas multimodais (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014) fornecidas por dez estudantes de ensino médio da rede pública. Os dados, gerados on-line devido à pandemia COVID-19, referem-se às memórias das aulas que envolveram literatura em língua inglesa, em 2018 e 2019. Buscamos analisar a presença de emoções como motivadoras para o engajamento e, desta forma, benéficas para o desenvolvimento linguístico dos estudantes, colaborando para preencher a lacuna de investigações empíricas sobre literatura e emoções nas aulas de inglês como língua adicional (PARAN, 2008; BLOEMERT et. al., 2019).

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Inglês como Língua Adicional, literatura, pesquisa narrativa, Teoria Socio-Histórico-Cultural, emoções.

1. Introduction

Considering that Applied Linguistics is a field of study that investigates several manifestations of language, it would be only natural to verify a proximity between Linguistics and Literature – both belonging to the area of Language Education. There is, however, a growing distance between these fields – at least in Brazil; a movement that is questioned by a well-known Brazilian linguist, José Luiz Fiorin:

> A linguist cannot ignore literature, because it is the field of language where one develops language in all possibilities and where one condenses the ways of seeing, thinking and feeling of a certain social formation in a certain time[1]. (FIORIN, 2008, p. 31).

He claims that Linguistics and Literature should be more closely related, as the latter is a high manifestation of language – thus, a proficuous object of study. The benefits of Literature in language lessons, the focus of this study, have been known for a long time. As summarized by Slater and Collie (1987), this type of material provides cultural and linguistic enrichment, taking into account that this genre can present more memorable lexical or syntactic items and serve as a prompt for oral activities. The main aspect is, however, that literary texts promote personal involvement: "[e]ngaging imaginatively with literature enables learners to shift the focus of their attention beyond the more mechanical aspects of the foreign

---

[1] All translations of original quotes in this paper were done by the authors.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

182

language system" (SLATER; COLLIE, 1987, p. 05). In other words, the student can focus on meaning, as it is a meaningful text, instead of focusing only on form.

Although the relevance of reading skills is recognized in the English as a Foreign Language/English as a Second Language (henceforth EFL/ESL) field, there is still a preference for newspaper and magazine articles and advertisements over literary texts when we look at course textbooks[2] - the distance between Linguistics and Literature is thus still present. Teachers themselves tend to avoid the use of literature in English, claiming that students "won't get it anyway"[3]. Fiorin's description of literature as a way of *feeling* (see quote above) might indicate why research on second language learning has maintained this distance from the literary genre: the cognitive approach to learning, together with the Western tradition that tends to separate reason from emotion, has produced an "emotional deficit" in the area of second language acquisition (DÖRNYEI; RYAN, 2015) that has only recently been investigated (SWAIN, 2013; DEWAELE et al., 2017).

The criticism that some researchers have directed towards the use of Literature in EFL/ESL classrooms (PARAN, 2008) also points in the same direction: many see that this type of material might be unsuitable for the language learner. By doing so, they perceive the student as a "language learning machine", who is not able to access subjective aspects in communication, forgetting the human aspect and the whole interaction process: "[t]he point is that literary texts are suitable because language is learned by human beings, and the interest and love of literature for its various qualities is a human characteristic (…)." (PARAN, 2008, p. 469). As a consequence, investigators have directed their attention to the relevance of literature to the development of the whole person – affective development and affective factors are taken into account in this process (PARAN, 2008).

Regarding academic research on language-literature integration, Amos Paran's careful state-of-the-art review on this topic (2008) also indicates that school settings remain overlooked. The claim is that, recently, Viana and Zyngier

---

[2]   The Federal Government provides public schools with English textbooks; book sections that contain Literature usually are "extra" sections. 2018 BNCC (Common National Curricular Basis, the national guidelines that attempt to standardize content in Brazil) does not present any reference to the use of literary texts in Secondary English classes, which might make literary texts even more absent from these materials.

[3]   This quote is widespread in Brazilian school environments, from the authors' experience. This perception is also due to some difficulties that are posed to teachers in Brazilian public schools: we face huge heterogeneity in regards to students' language proficiency as well as reduced weekly class hours. Lesson planning is demanding and classes might not be so engaging to all participants due to that. The researcher's classes lasted one hour and thirty minutes; many schools only provide fifty-minute classes once a week.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

183

(2020), Bloemert et al. (2019), and Tsang, Paran and Lau (2020), who tried to address this gap with their investigations, still argue for further studies in school settings in their reviews and research. Our aim is to collaborate in this aspect.

Considering literature as a genre that is able to reach the individual's emotions, this paper intends to discuss the presence of literature in the English as an Additional Language4 (EAL) learning process as a relevant instrument to promote constructive emotions (ROSIEK, 2003) among students. We argue that this is important for students' enjoyment in the process of learning, which is a beneficial emotion for learners' development (DEWAELE et al., 2017). In this sense, Sociocultural Historical theory understands human development as integrated to emotions, and studies in the field of Applied Linguistics acknowledge the connection between cognition and emotion (SWAIN, 2013). As a form of art, the investigation of literature also agrees with Vygotsky's understanding that Art regulates feelings at a social level (VASSILIEVA; ZAVERSHNEVA, 2020). Such perspectives guide this analysis, which investigates EAL students' narrative impressions on classroom reading practices that involve Literature.

This article first provides a brief discussion on the research related to literature as a language teaching resource, considering the perspective of the Sociocultural Historical Theory, and then describes the methods used to generate data, which consisted of multimodal narratives (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014). Finally, this data is analyzed with a focus on the emotions demonstrated in the students' narratives to identify the impacts of the use of literature in the classroom. This way, we hope this study will contribute to the desired reintegration of Literature and Linguistics (more specifically, Applied Linguistics), and collaborate to reduce the "emotional deficit" in the field (DÖRNYEI; RYAN, 2015).

2. Literature Review

The Sociocultural Historical Theory of development, proposed by Vygotsky (1896-1934), posits that learning happens through the interaction with others and with the world – which means that biological factors such as age are not the only aspects responsible for mental capacities to develop. In order to conduct these interactions, humans have created material and symbolic tools that work as mediators for development. Therefore, language works as a symbolic mediator between us, our thoughts, and the world (Vygotsky, 1978; Swain et al., 2015).

---

4 We use EAL (instead of ESL) as a form of consideration to those learners who already have a second or third language in their families or communities of practice.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

184

Vygotsky (1989) also argues for the importance of formal instruction (acquired in schools) so as to promote further development of the subject. While *spontaneous concepts* are informally constructed by the individual in the interactions with the world, *scientific concepts* go through a process of elaboration (mostly happening through formal education) and are always interactively mediated by teachers, colleagues, books, notes, exercises, and so on. Thus, these instructional spaces, also rich with opportunities for interaction, are important places to observe human development.

Although continued focus has been put on the cognitive part of Vygotsky's theory, the past decades started to revisit his perceptions on the importance of emotions in the process of development (SWAIN, 2013). In fact, in one of his most well-known books, *Thought and Language* (1989), he defines that the systems of meaning integrate affective and intellectual aspects. Vygotsky, who was also an art critic, wrote about the importance of Art for human development (in *The Psychology of Art*[5], 1925). He claimed that arts regulated feelings at the social level, systematizing the special sphere in the psyche of humans – emotions (VASSILIEVA; ZAVERSHNEVA, 2020, p. 10). Another fundamental function of art, according to him, is

> that of an instrument for mapping and expanding human potentiality—a function it performs not by providing inspiring or moralistic examples but by engaging us at all levels—the embodied, physiological level, the emotional and affective level, the level of intellectual processing and reflection—in a unique work. (VASSILIEVA; ZAVERSHNEVA, 2020, P. 10)

Thus, in this paper, we discuss Literature as one of the arts that can collaborate to balance the cognitive and emotional development of the social individual in the classroom. Paran's (2008, p. 470) investigation on the role of literature points out that research should attempt to validate "and to support the claims that literature can contribute to language learning, that learners are motivated and interested in it, and that its study has something unique to contribute to language learning." His recent studies with collaborators presented valid empirical data on this topic (BLOEMERT et al., 2019; BLOEMERT; JANSEN; PARAN, 2019; TSANG; PARAN; LAU, 2020a), but all of them encourage further investigation, especially in secondary school environments.

---

[5] Available at: https://www.marxists.org/archive/vygotsky/works/1925/index.htm

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

185

For this reason, we will present data generated through narratives that indicate the importance of literary texts in the language classroom.

Literature is seen here as any poetic, fictional, or dramatic form in any societal level and by any culture, without which no people throughout history have existed (CANDIDO, 2011). Its power relies on its humanization: it activates the imagination and the intellect, leading to socialization and dialogue. It also exercises reflection, empathy, emotional alignment, the perception of beauty, and the sense of humor as well as develops the capacity to deal with life problems and with the complexity of being human (CANDIDO, 2011; ZILBERMAN, 2009). In summary, it is argued that literature is an essential aspect of society, and it is also a right to be accessed by every individual (CANDIDO, 2011).

In the same line of thought, Kozulin (2016) points out that Vygotsky understood art as a social technique of feelings. The peculiarity of literature as an art is that its main material is a symbolic system that already works in itself – the language (JOUVE, 2012). Thus, literature works in the nuances of language as a mediator, going further than the cognitive part of the written6 text (the message in itself) to deal with the subjective aspects of it, bringing inferences and conducting the reader to an aesthetic experience. Perhaps because of this, Vygotsky understood language-based creative activities as "the apex of human development, the highest forms in which higher mental processes can be realized." (KOZULIN, 2016).

Literary texts can work not only as mediators to learn a different language, but also as instruments to develop subjective aspects of the reader, who, in turn, can capture these nuances of language, dealing with all the formative aspects previously listed, but also getting immersed in the cultural characteristics that are provided by literature (BLOEMERT et al., 2019; PARAN, 2008; SLATER; COLLIE, 1987). The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, Council of Europe 2001) also indicates the literary text as able to go further than its aesthetic purpose, working as an educational resource for cultural, intellectual, emotional, moral and linguistic purposes. Thus, considering these subjective aspects, observing the emotions that are manifested when in contact with literature is paramount.

Only very recent studies have been discussing language-literature integration empirically in an attempt to fill the gap that has been indicated by Paran (2008), especially regarding school settings, which remain overlooked: there must be further investigation on "how literature is perceived by teachers and received by

---

6   We focus on the written text because it is a "registered" form, but we view oral texts with the same literary potential.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

186

students" (p. 490). A quantitative study on students' perspectives on the presence of literature was carried out in the Netherlands (BLOEMERT et al., 2019), revealing findings that indicate that learners recognize the linguistic relevance and utility of this type of reading. The non-language benefits of the use of literature have also been investigated quantitatively in secondary schools in Hong Kong (TSANG, PARAN, LAU 2020a), indicating that students' "knowledge of the world," "understanding of humans' thoughts and feelings," and "aesthetic/ literary appreciation" are among the benefits that are slightly improved by literature. Students' motivation and disaffection have also been addressed in another study in the Netherlands (BLOEMERT; JANSEN; PARAN, 2019), where the 365 respondents revealed they value literature lessons for improving their proficiency, but that was not so much related to higher engagement. Researchers encourage that the study should be replicated and that classroom practices should be observed to foster additional research in the area. In Brazil, where English literature is not part of the core curriculum for high schools, qualitative data was generated based on students' perspectives on specific classes designed to work with literary awareness. Findings support the insertion (and production) of "imaginative texts, thus avoiding information-oriented models" (Viana and Zyngier 2020, p. 11). Similarly, our study aims at collaborating with the ones previously described, so that we can have a wider research corpus in the field.

The consideration of students' perspectives clearly takes students' emotions into account (more clearly in Bloemert, Jansen, and Paran, 2019, on motivation), and has been focused on, in order to provide teachers, pre-service teachers, and curriculum designers with resources for more engaging classes. Rosiek (2003) observes that the study of emotions is important for teachers in order to anticipate students' reactions, recognize that they work together with cognitive aspects of learning, and also because "promoting responsiveness to students' emotional experience of learning is a moral necessity", as "teaching is a caring profession" (ROSIEK, 2003, p. 400). In language classes, emotions interfere on a series of events that interest the teachers' daily activities, such as "enlighten[ing] and keep[ing] students' interest for learning the language, involv[ing] students in speaking dynamics; promot[ing] responsibility for their own learning; deal[ing] with those who resist or fear to express themselves in the classroom." (ARAGÃO, 2008, p. 296). Rosiek also proposes the concept of "emotional scaffolding", which consists in the support given by teachers (or peers) to make emotional connections to specific topics of the subject matter. He (2003) provides an interesting classification of emotions, dividing them into constructive or unconstructive – instead of positive or negative.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

187

> Emotions commonly considered discomforting—such as anger, sadness, or frustration—can often function to focus students more closely on the subject matter being taught. The notion of unconstructive emotions is used here to refer to emotions that serve to distract students from the subject matter content or in some other way inhibit their learning. Conversely, constructive emotion is not used to refer to just any positive emotion but instead to emotions that serve to focus student attention more closely on the salient aspects of the subject matter being taught. (ROSIEK, 2003, p. 407)

In a dialogue with Paran's (2008) proposition on the intersection between language and literature, Bloemert, Jansen and van de Grift (2016) looked into teachers' practices and suggested four approaches to literature in the language classroom, aiming at systematizing several different proposals – which, according to them, are mainly based on teachers' beliefs and evidences, but have no clear theoretical conceptualization. These approaches are: 1) focus on text (literary language, character development), 2) focus on context (cultural elements, publishing context), 3) focus on reader (personal interpretation, critical thinking) and 4) focus on language (vocabulary acquisition, reading abilities). Approaches 1 and 2 are related to the study of the literary text, whereas 3 and 4 make use of the literary text, with a focus on student development. However, Bloemert et al. (2016, 2019) suggest the Comprehensive Approach to Foreign Language Literature Learning, which combines all four approaches, since all of them bring different benefits to the learner. The classes that had been delivered by the first author of this article in the years 2018 and 2019, due to the participation in a teacher training in the USA in 2018[7], might belong to this category as all four forms of approaches for literature studies have been addressed (at different levels). There were debates about the literary content, but there was also a focus on the language, providing scaffolding for the students to comprehend meaning either prior to or after contact with the text. Classes were prepared in order to promote useful mediation along the readings.

Scaffolding is a concept that is often related to Vygotsky's theory (FIGUEIREDO, 2019) as a form of mediating learning processes and moving forward along the "zone of proximal development8" (ZPD). "In co-construction

---

[7] PDPI – Programa de Desenvolvimento Profissional para Professores de Inglês da Rede Pública – provided by the Federal Government together with Fulbright. Almost five hundred English teachers were sent to the USA for a six-week program in several different universities.

[8] He defined ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

188

of knowledge," scaffolding consists of "assistance given when needed and in the quantity and quality needed, and is then gradually dismantled when the structure/individual can mediate (regulate) itself." (SWAIN; KINNEAR; STEINMAN, 2015). In the activities provided in the classes (in 2018 and in 2019, the focus of this study), the teacher would promote scaffolding through vocabulary review and pair work, so that the teacher and the students could build new knowledge and reach wider comprehension of the literary text. The use of L1 (Brazilian Portuguese) by the teacher to give commands and clarify specific vocabulary was also recurrent in class, given the different levels of proficiency among the students in the group. Therefore, the reflexive process of learning the language could happen explicitly as well. The use of L1 was considered in the questionnaire, as common knowledge (due to theoretical proposals along language learning history) sometimes understands that learning happens only with the constant use of target language (SWAIN; LAPKIN, 2013).

These aspects, inspired by the use of Literature, related to mediation, scaffolding, and emotions are the ones that will be analyzed in the present article, contributing to the development of further research on the language-literature integration (BLOEMERT et al., 2019; TSANG; PARAN; LAU, 2020; VIANA; ZYNGIER, 2020), and on the study of emotions.

Although *emotions* can be described and interpreted in a wide range of perspectives (which may differ depending on the focus and the purpose of a given study), we pose that they are "dynamic corporal dispositions that modulate possible actions and relationships, in a specific moment in an historical flow" (ARAGÃO, 2008, p. 295-296). Due to certain emotions, we act in different ways, and these actions change according to their flow. Language allows us to reflect on them both. We understand that the concepts of *emotions* and *feelings* might be used interchangeably and in distinct ways. In this study, we use the term *feelings* as suggested by Aragão (2008): a description of emotions recalled by the individual.

After having introduced the aim of this paper, as well as the main theoretical constructs to sustain the arguments, in the next section we describe how data were generated in this study.

---

by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (VYGOTSKY, 1978). There are scholars who advocate that the concepts of scaffolding and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) are not the same (LANTOLF, XI, 2021), while others do not (see Figueiredo, 2019); for the purpose of this paper, we will be addressing only the concept of scaffolding, as a means of mediation along the ZPD, and not as an equivalent to it.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

189

3. Methodology

The motivation for this paper comes from positive feedback received from students of the first author of this paper's EAL classes in 2018 and 2019. During these years, the public high school teacher implemented the use of literary texts as a means to learn the target language in a more subjective manner. In order to generate this data in a way that could show the possible impacts of these experiences for different learners in various stages of their language learning development, we chose the narrative inquiry methodology (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014, PAVLENKO AND LANTOLF, 2000, SANTOS AND BASTOS, 2013). Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) advocate that narrative inquiry should not necessarily substitute the more traditional kind of research, as the observational/experimental one. Instead, narrative research can bring a different perspective on what is happening in a situated context, in which participants, while telling their stories, can construct and reconstruct their identities throughout an event. By adopting the analysis of multiple narratives, we understand that "it is important to understand phenomena from the perspectives of those who experience them" (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014, p. 17), thus allowing them to present their own stories of how these experiments with literature were perceived.

In education, and more specifically in language learning, "narrative inquiry is relevant (...) because it helps us to understand the inner mental worlds of language teachers and learners and the nature of language teaching and learning as social and educational activity." (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014, p. 17). In this approach of narrative generation, three themes that constantly emerge are identity, context, and affect (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014). The latter is the one in which our research aimed to concentrate on, but instances of the first two can also be observed in the narratives that were generated.

The educational institution in which the present research was developed consists of a full-time public high school, managed by the Federal Government. This type of institution (IF – Instituto *Federal*) offers technical courses integrated with the regular high school syllabus, thus enabling students to pursue a technical career, should they choose not to try to obtain a college degree. In the Brazilian official educational guidelines (Brazil, Federal Law 11.892, 2008), this type of institution must provide Professional and Technological Education not only as a way of producing "manpower", but as a promoter of a critical thinker who works, a "worker-learner", a complete citizen that could be a technician, or a philosopher, or both (PACHECO, 2011). This perspective of polytechnical education as a means of balancing theoretical and practical labor was suggested by Vygotsky in 1930,

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

190

when he argued that this could be a way of promoting professional development to enhance humankind equally (VYGOTSKY, 1994). Although the political intention of institutionalizing schools such as IFs is admirable, students there sometimes complain about the excessive focus on the technical/professional/competitive aspects of the syllabus – an issue that the proposed investigation also addresses.

This investigation was carried out in the months of April-June, 2020, while we faced the COVID-19 pandemic and social isolation in Brazil9. Schools were closed and remote tutoring only started to happen in public schools in September-October 2020. As it was not possible to meet students in person in the schools to generate their narratives orally and in person, we did it remotely. Although an on-line interview could have been proposed, we understand that this format would require not only an internet connection, but also cameras, microphones, and a connection good enough for the interview to happen naturally. Given the circumstances, this could make it more difficult for the student to accept to participate, as they could only rely on their domestic devices. We then decided to develop a multimodal on-line form for data generation – multimodal because it does not use only oral or written open-ended narratives, but it demands from the participant that he or she interact in an on-line platform and access links that work as reminders or references of the class reading that is being mentioned in the questionnaire (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014).

Regarding its nature, this is an "open-ended" study (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014, p. 73), in which the analysis is discussed based on the specific data that emerges from the narratives. Considering that various aspects of the English language classes could be taken into consideration, the questions ranged from the students' experiences prior to high school to their own perspectives on specific techniques used in the classes. The focus was to investigate their impressions (and memories) on the use of literary texts as a resource for language development; in other words, their emotions. We also took the opportunity of the questionnaire to address the use of L1 by the teacher during the classes, to observe students' perceptions of the use of both languages in the teacher-student relationship; more specifically, what emotions came out when they recalled these activities. Based on learners' answers, a thematic analysis was made, in which some aspects related to the Sociocultural Historical Theory such as mediation, scaffolding, and the presence of emotions could be verified.

---

9   The project is part of the main research project "Agency and Empowerment of the Language Learner: the pursuit of his/her Sociocultural Autonomy in face-to-face and digital spaces", which is registered under the number 24809 and was approved by the Ethical Research Committee, as well as officially authorized by the Institution Principal.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

191

In order to map and establish relationships among the answers, the Software ATLAS TI10 mode was used, in which the above-mentioned aspects were inserted according to the data generated. The respondents are described in table 1:

Table 1: profile of respondents			
Name[1]:	Age	Level of proficiency in English (according to their own perception)	Year as a student of the teacher researcher:
ALICE	17	Advanced	2018
AURELIANO	17	Fluent	2018
BEATRIZ	18	Basic	2019
CARL	17	Advanced	2019
CHARLIE	17	Advanced	2019
ELEANOR	18	Fluent	2018
ERIC	18	Advanced	2019
JOE	17	Intermediate	2019
LARA	17	Advanced	2019
PAULO	18	Basic	2018

Out of the ten respondents, between 17 and 18 years of age, four were the teacher's students in 2018: these students then had to access their memories from a longer period. They were all high school students in the second year at the time[11]. The year (2018 or 2019) and their level of English comprehension will be indicated by the side of their names (basic, intermediate, advanced or fluent).

4. Findings and Discussion

The level of English proficiency is very representative of what we usually find in the groups of students from the studied institution: two of the students claimed to have a *basic level*, one *intermediate*, while the others consider themselves *advanced* or *fluent*. This heterogeneity is interesting to comprehend the perception of the same activity from different levels. Due to this heterogeneity, the questionnaire and the answers were in Portuguese, although with notes indicating

---

[10] ATLAS TI is a software used for coding qualitative analyses in academic, market and user experience research. It provides a simplified version on a "cloud" mode. https://atlasti.com/

[11] Brazilian high schools consist of a three-year course, and students are usually between 14-17 years old. In this institution, they also have a technical course that happens concomitantly – they finish high school and are also entitled to work as agricultural technicians, winery technicians or IT technicians, depending on their choice. This demands their presence in school full-time.

that they could answer the questions in English. This way, the selected excerpts were translated into English for the purpose of this article. Only CHARLIE used English in his answers.

Students were aware that the focus of the questionnaire (APPENDIX I) was Literature. First, they were asked about their previous relationship with this type of reading. All of them read literature (either in Portuguese or English) at some level, outside school, but all of them also reported not working with this type of text in the EAL classes, prior to high school or in the classes that are being analyzed. The closest to literature was the presence of songs they practiced in middle school, or the access to graded readings in the school library. Thus, all the respondents are readers and seem to already enjoy reading.

From the data analysis, considering this as an open-ended questionnaire, we verified three main aspects: the presence of enjoyment (and motivation as a consequence), the main emotion in relation to the literary text; the use of L1 as a means of scaffolding learning along the reading experience; and the relevance of literature as opposed to other genres traditionally used in the language classroom.

1. The presence of enjoyment and motivation[12]

The main emotion that could be tracked in the data generation was enjoyment, which is, as we pointed out, essential in the process of learning (DEWAELE et al., 2017). This enjoyment was manifested in many answers, especially when they were asked, in the beginning of the questionnaire, about a positive experience they had from the English classes:

> "The presentations with songs! I love music, and studying with what you're passionate about makes it much more **pleasing and intense**[13]." PAULO, basic, 2018.

> "When teacher * gave us a group work, in which we had to choose a song and present facts and prepare an activity about it. For me it was [a] **positive** [experience], for I like music very much, so it was very good to be able to present a work about it and also see the **engagement** most colleagues had with this activity" ELEANOR, fluent, 2018.

---

[12] Motivation is highlighted as an engaging attitude derived from the emotional experiences (SWAIN, LANTOLF, 2020) provided by the contact with the literary texts.

[13] Some parts of the excerpts were highlighted in bold to help the reader to follow our line of thinking regarding the analysis of the data.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

193

These students are both referring to the same activity, which consisted of them selecting a song and preparing an activity for the group. Enjoyment and motivation are clear, and they refer to the possibility provided to the students to become agents of their own learning, as they were the ones preparing the exercise. The fact that they highlight music as a source of enjoyment leads to Vygotsky's reflection on the importance of the arts – and song lyrics which are, in a way, a manifestation of literature. As a teacher, the fact that these students recalled this activity as memorable came as a surprise – there were problems related to collaboration during this activity, which made us believe this was not a successful proposal. This false impression signalizes the importance of communication between teachers and students in terms of how they *feel*.

> "My best experiences with English at school were in high school (...). It was the only teacher who presented didactics that is **different from the traditional study of verbal tenses** and brought classes with music, series and historic events related to the language." LARA, advanced, 2019.

> "I like the English subject since Elemetary school, what I liked the most were the music clips we watched and the divings into the American culture. When I started high school, I guess what **surprised me was that I also liked to learn about the literature**. I remember getting to know new writers and movies and bands... So yeah, It's really great learning English." CHARLIE, advanced, 2019.

> "The readings of **poems** in English. The reading together with the context of the author and further discussions were **the most positive and different aspect in the classes** for me, and it became a trademark. It was positive because as well as the learning of English (which was deeper as in this case it deals with more complex words and structures) there was also the learning of English literature and culture, getting to know authors, styles and texts in this language." CARL, advanced, 2019.

> "The activities with **poems and other literary works** in high school. It was a positive experience because it is **much more interesting and positive** to learn this way than with word lists to be memorized (a traditional method I had in middle school). The pieces catch our interest and make the learning of vocabulary easier, less tiring. Besides, we can visualize the **"meaning" of the words in context"**. ALICE, advanced, 2018.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

194

These answers make it clear that the use of language in context (as opposed to vocabulary lists and verb tenses, as commented by ALICE and LARA) provide a different process of learning – which is not a strategy restricted to literary texts, of course. ALICE also comments on feeling "tired" with more "traditional" strategies.

Further on, they were asked if there was a specific literary text that they could recall from memory:

> "I remember a text about a soup (...). It was very good, as it was kind of a joke and it played with the words." ELEANOR, fluent, 2018.

> "I will mention Stone Soup again, which was considered extremely easy by many of my colleagues (promoting laughter) but, for me, who had never had contact with texts in the language, it was very **satisfying and remarkable**. I remember that the conduction happened with the presentation of vocabulary, and later, reading." PAULO, basic, 2018.

In this memory, both 2018 students, one considered to be fluent and one to have basic level of proficiency in English, recall the same activity: "Stone Soup", a folktale (Taylor, 2000). The characteristics of this genre engage different levels of English, when well conducted, as it provides a time-ordered structure, repetition, predictability, simple grammar and concrete vocabulary (TAYLOR, 2000). For all these reasons, probably, this was a meaningful practice for the respondents. The advanced student had fun with the vocabulary tricks, and the basic one recognized the importance of the step-by-step of the lesson (in which pictures were used). In another part of the questionnaire, PAULO mentions his experience with this text as very positive once again, as he was able to understand it easily. His memory also points out to the importance of the process of mediation between the student and the text, through different activities that provide *scaffolding* (SWAIN; KINNEAR; STEINMAN, 2015).

Another student that made comments that can be related to mediation is CARL, while he expresses the activity "matches" his preferences:

> "Yes, especially two of them: "I Keep Six Honest Serving Men" and "The Raven". The first because I **liked the way the activity about the text was developed** and because I was in a very good day and I think the sensations the text provided in that moment matched with what I would like. The second because I **already knew** a little about Poe before reading and it was a class full of curiosities (such as his life and the band) and interesting debates about this type of writing" CARL, advanced, 2019.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

195

CARL's comment reveals the importance of not only the mediation (SWAIN, KINNEAR, STEINMAN, 2015) provided by the teacher, but also his own emotions in the context, which made him remember this experience. He can clearly state his enjoyment with the development of the reading process and even his mood at the time; his familiarity with writer and literary critic Edgar Allan Poe (a personal preference) is also important to cause his interest and affect his memory. This corroborates how important emotions are to cause an impact on the student, and it confirms Vygotsky's claim regarding the importance of art in the construction of one's personality (VASSILIEVA; ZAVERSHNEVA, 2020b), as well as his argument that cognition and emotions are inseparable (LANTOLF; SWAIN, 2020).

Only after these questions were the participants asked about specific aspects related to literature: their memories related to sample texts and the emotions that rose with them. Their impressions are presented next.

This way, the 2019 students were asked to choose among five literary texts (namely, "I keep six honest-serving men", by Rudyard Kypling14, "Bluebird", by Charles Bukowski, "My name", an extract from *The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros, "Eclipse", a song by Pink Floyd, and "For Katrina's Sun Dial", by Henry Van Dyke). These five texts were previously selected by the first author because they had been worked on for a longer period of time in class, and might have been more memorable to students because of that. They were asked to categorize between "very important/interesting to me" and "not very important/interesting to me" in a 1-5 Likert scale. The answers ranged between 3-5, and the favorite ones were Kypling's exert, Bukowski's poem and Pink Floyd's lyrics. Then, they were asked to select three feelings that were recalled by the favorite one. In the table below, we transcribe the students' answers. They are listed on table 2.

Table 2: Respondent's selection of "feelings" regarding the poems chosen by them		
"I keep six honest-serving men"	"Bluebird"	Eclipse
"enthusiasm, curiosity, joy" (CARL)	"shivers, deep thoughts, recognizing-that-even-man-like-bukowski-cry-so-there's-no-shame" (CHARLIE)	"fear, uncertainty, life" (ERIC)
"improvement", "knowledge", "opportunity" (JOE)	"fear, outburst, comfort" (LARA)	"tranquility, love, peace" (BEATRIZ)

Kypling's poem promoted "enthusiasm", "curiosity" and "joy", "improvement" and "knowledge" (the latter not exactly feelings). JOE also declared that, thanks to this extract, he learnt how to be more "attentive" to

---

14 This poem was brought to the teacher by a student. This attitude indicates that 1) the student is aware that poems are rich sources of debate in class; 2) there is an "open" channel of communication. This way, bringing the poem to be shared with the whole group demonstrates that the student's move was appreciated.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

196

things15. However, not all texts picked up as a favorite were promoters of positive sensations. "Bluebird", the favorite for two respondents, is described as promoting "shivers, deep thoughts, recognizing-that-even-men-like-bukowski-cry-so-there's-no-shame", "outburst", "fear" and "comfort". The presence of discomforting feelings in a favorite object of art demonstrates the capacity of catharsis that is promoted by the arts, more specifically literature, in this case. "Eclipse" was described with almost opposing sensations: "fear", "uncertainty", "life", and "tranquility", "love" and "peace". These are indicators of how individuals perceive a same literary text differently[16], and yet signalize it as a touching experience for them, demonstrating the relevance of literature at different levels (CANDIDO, 2011). It also indicates that, be them understood as "positive" or "negative", these were constructive emotions (ROSIEK, 2003) to respondents, in a sense that they make students engage with the activities.

2. The use of L1 as a scaffold

Considering the heterogeneity of the groups as regards to their familiarity with English, we thought that it would be important to ask how they understood the language shifting that happened frequently in order to provide comprehension to all students. This language shifting would be with translation strategies, as well as the review of the activity instructions in L1, usually asked to be explained by a "strong" student. This conduction worked as a mediator, providing scaffolding to less proficient students along the process. Students were asked whether the language shift affected them.

All students with an advanced/fluent level of proficiency perceive the use of L1 as a support for peers and themselves, which reveals empathy, a perception of their context. AURELIANO and ELEANOR, for example, did not see the language shift as a problem, claiming it was collaborating "with everyone's learning" (ELEANOR). CARL and CHARLIE also recognized the difference in language proficiency in their classroom and, for this reason, the importance of using L1 "so that everybody can comprehend" (CHARLIE). BEATRIZ' s perception of the use of Portuguese signalizes another important aspect, when she mentions "it was good, she [the teacher] would only use Portuguese when it

---

15 Participants were also asked to comment on their selection of words; however, this specific data will be further analyzed in the future.

16 This different perception of a same element is an example of Vygotsky's concept of *perezhivanie*, the prism through which each of us receives the experiences from the outside world into ourselves (Lantolf & Swain, 2020); this aspect will be further discussed in future analyses.

was very necessary, such as when translating an unknown word or something". (basic, 2019). Swain and Lapkin's study investigated the relevance of the use of L1 for language teaching (2013). One of the guiding principles stated by them is that, being the target language the focus of the class, "use of the L1 should be purposeful, not random" (SWAIN; LAPKIN, 2013). It is relevant to observe that the students were able to perceive that the use of Portuguese was made with the purpose to integrate and scaffold less proficient students. PAULO, who also claimed a basic level of proficiency, commented that the use of Portuguese affected him positively because he was "able to participate in the discussions and reflections about the text"; something that we can infer would not happen had the language used been only English.[17]

3. How is literature different from other texts?

Considering that most of the texts worked with in EAL classes in Brazil consist of journal or magazine articles and advertisements[18], participants were asked whether they observed a difference when dealing with literary texts: "do you think the experience in class would be the same with journal articles and advertisements?" The answers reveal a good perception of the relevance of Literature.

> "I found it different, something new from what I was used to. Without Literature, it would possibly lose the **essence/charm**". JOE, intermediate, 2019.

> "**I think literature is what primarily defines a language and the best way to learn it is through it** (literature). In case it was another type of text, the experience would have been different. Even if the classes were led with a focus on another type of text, such as News, for instance, literature is the area that goes deeper and wider into this matter, thus I believe that yes, it is better for this situation" CARL, advanced, 2019.

---

[17] "Afetou de forma positiva, foi o que fez com que pudesse participar das discussões e reflexões sobre o texto."

[18] It is important to indicate that we do not see the use of articles or advertisements as less beneficial for the English language classroom. We understand the relevance of the promotion of multimodal critical literacy, in which students analyze and debate different genres of texts with the intention of developing their critical sense regarding the languages and the world around them (PINHEIRO, 2019). Our intention is only to suggest that adding literary texts can contribute for an even wider possibility of development, in a more subjective manner.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

198

> "**In general, it is always good to learn English through literature, for there are many literary genres that the more you read them, wider will your vocabulary and knowledge be**. I personally don't enjoy to be only reading, but all teachers I had could balance it with activities related to the texts read. In relation to a different type of reading such as news or ads, I believe the experience would be, in fact, different, for the first would be a more formal reading, and the second would be a faster reading. Anyway, literature was a great way to learn English, for as well as vocabulary, it also brings **cultural aspects**" ELEANOR, fluent, 2018.

> "I liked the literature because it was a way of getting to know the people who are considered great writers or songwriters, and also **to get to a philosophical way of thinking** in the English classes." CHARLIE, advanced, 2019.

In these narratives, it is clear that students are able to contrast the genres and the more subjective aspects that are developed with the use of literature. They indicate the importance of the "cultural aspects", the "deepness" of the literary text, and the "philosophical way of thinking" in English as elements that might not be so clearly experienced through other types of texts. PAULO (basic, 2018) claimed "we needed to have this contact", highlighting once more the importance of the manner the classes were conducted. The words "essence/charm" indicated by JOE also demonstrate a more subjective relationship with the literary text.

ERIC's perception goes deeper into this idea and indicates the relevance of arts – in this case, literature – in the development of the individual's subjectivity (CANDIDO, 2011; KOZULIN, 2016; VASSILIEVA; ZAVERSHNEVA, 2020b):

> "They [he literary texts] showed **a more human side** that, independently from the language, all people have **feelings they reflect at the moment they express themselves**, and this is utterly important in order to learn a new language, for **we can't become robots who reproduce texts**, but fluent speakers who are able **to think by ourselves and express who we are and what we feel**". ERIC, advanced, 2019

It is very evident that ERIC sees the language and the literature as a form to express his subjectivity; when he indicates literature as promoter of a "human side" and declares that "we can't become robots", he might be criticizing the excessive focus we have been giving (as teachers, students, social system) to the cognitive, factual

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

199

aspects of life, leaving aside the observation of emotions as part of this very life (as pointed out by Swain, 2013, on the inseparability of cognition and emotion). He clearly states that fluent speakers should be able to "think" and "express who they *are* and what they *feel*"19. Swain and Lapkin (2013, p. 123) mention a 2008 study by Fortune indicating that "most of the time learners express feelings through their L1; thus a practical implication is that teachers need to teach learners how to express their emotions in the target language." ERIC's affirmation shows that the use of literature can work to fill this gap in English language teaching, by providing students with these aspects of language that relate to emotions.

ELEANOR mentioned a different pace according to the reading material; CHARLIE was able to signalize the relevance of other genres for the promotion of different aspects of the language, such as day-to-day life:

> "Yes, I think that if the content of the class was based on news or other texts, the experience would be different. (...) If there was news on the literature texts place, the immersion into the **day-to-day** life at English speaking countries would be bigger." CHARLIE, advanced, 2019.

In the final question, respondents were asked whether their relationship with literature had changed. The question was elaborated as a way to identify any shifts in the interest in Literature or the language in general. Although all of them claimed to be readers, some answers present a shift in their impressions regarding Literature:

> "I started to like it [Literature] more and to see that it isn't only for the elderly and for the people who sit at the front of the bus." CHARLIE, advanced, 2019.

CHARLIE's observation replicates a somewhat common-sense idea that literature is for those who might have nothing else to do, or for those who have "time" to experience it. Perceiving that he does not comply with this idea anymore, noticing literature as an important source of learning, is very enriching for us as language researchers.

In the same line of thought, it is also possible that this set of answers is the one that most closely demonstrates the students' emotions regarding the language and the experience with literature:

---

19 When questioned about a positive memory he had in his English classes, Eric also recalled how he cherished being taught how to express his emotions in primary school ("sad", "happy", etc).

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

200

> "I feel more **encouraged** to reach for new types of reading, not only in other styles but also in other languages and cultures" ERIC, advanced, 2019.

> "I feel mainly more **interested and knowledgeable**", JOE, advanced, 2019.

> "I have even more **affection** for literature after the English classes we shared and I keep an extreme **interest** for the area. These experiences influenced in my choice for Letters as my undergraduate course in 2019". AURELIANO, fluent, 2018.

These perceptions highlight the impact that literary texts can have on the language classroom, to the point of influencing a career choice, in AURELIANO's case – and a choice related to *feelings*, as he feels "affection" for literature. The presence of "encouragement" also points to a more autonomous relationship with the language[20], one that does not depend only on classroom interactions. The proximity with the language as a cultural element is also present in the students' words, confirming that "[t]he cultural features of literature represent a powerful merging of language, affect, and intercultural encounters and often provide the exposure to living language that a FL [foreign language] student lacks" (Shanahan, 1997, p. 168).

We also call attention to BEATRIZ's (basic, 2019) simple and yet so meaningful words: "I felt much **closer to the language, to the culture and happy with myself**." Her declaration becomes even more important when we see her considering herself "basic" level, as regards to English knowledge. The indication of enjoyment as a promoter of her development (DEWAELE et al., 2017), as she feels "closer" to the language, is stated in her words. And making these lower-level students feel "closer" to the language, and "happy" with *themselves* in the English context is certainly our main objective as teachers.

PAULO's comment is also very relevant:

> "What has drastically changed is my **fear** of English (which is inexistent now). These experiences made me be able to see that English is not something impossible, and that learning is at reach. I remember clearly, in one of these experiences, teacher (Elisa) sitting

---

[20] Autonomy is a current topic of investigation in Sociocultural Historical Theory research. See Nicolaides & Archanjo, 2019.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

201

beside me helping me out in the reading, which was very **special and remarkable**." PAULO, basic, 2018.

His memory is very clearly related to the method that was used by the teacher, and perhaps not so much to the presence of Literature in itself. However, once again the importance of mediation (SWAIN; KINNEAR; STEINMAN, 2015) is stated in his words – we can claim, then, that what really matters is not the type of text that is worked with, but the planning that can provide scaffold to students of different levels of learning. This is specifically important if we consider that PAULO claims his level of proficiency is basic, defining himself as someone who used to "fear" English.

On the other hand, there are, of course, limitations to this study: we have a small group of respondents, and coincidently, all of them were already readers/consumers of literature at some level, be it in Portuguese or in English. It would be interesting to replicate a similar questionnaire to a wider range of students and perhaps select the narratives from the ones who did not have an individual preference for literary texts in order to perceive any shifts in their relationship with literature and language due to the use of this reading material. Nevertheless, we understand that the study contributes to the demonstration of how relevant literary texts can be for our students' language development, as well as a way to express their emotions.

5. Concluding remarks

The aim of this study was to identify in students' narratives whether the presence of the literary text in the English language classroom can promote constructive emotions, and thus work as a successful mediating tool for language acquisition. We considered the fact that there are still few studies that investigate the presence of literature in language development research (VIANA; ZYNGIER, 2020), more specifically in high school environments (PARAN, 2008), which are issues this study has successfully addressed. We also claim that this investigation collaborates to the approximation of cognition and emotion in Sociocultural Historical Theory, as they are seen as a dialectic unity by Vygotsky (FLEER; REY; VERESOV, 2017; SWAIN, 2013).

As shown in the compiled data, "focus on narrative content can certainly contribute to a richer and more rounded understanding of language teaching and learning as lived experience" (BARKHUIZEN; BENSON; CHIK, 2014, p. 21). We were able to observe the presence of constructive emotions related to the

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

202

remembrance of the experiences with literature, in expressions such as "affection", "happy with myself", "satisfying", "interesting". As pointed out by Bloemert, Jansen and Paran (2019, p. 5), "Knowing how students value foreign language literature is extremely relevant in view of the different ways in which literary focus and language learning are moving towards being integrated." Our data further supports Paran's observation (2008) that previous studies found, where students "benefit linguistically and enjoy the experience" with literature, voicing arguments in favor of the literary text (as we observed in our narratives), pointing that "it is enjoyable, that it deals with substantial and non-trivial topics" (p. 480).

The presence of discomforting feelings when specific texts were recalled by the questionnaire directs our sight to the importance of the presence of emotions *in general* for human development, as they are, according to Rosiek (2003), also constructive. This cathartic experience – that can happen through the arts – impacted the students' memories and thus their subjectivity, agreeing with Vygotsky's claims on the relevance of these experiences for the development of higher mental functions21: "Vygotsky asserts that it is the experiences derived from the encounter with art that provide a model for the human being of the future, the "new man"—self-actualizing, constantly exceeding his or her own limits, and self-transforming" (VASSILIEVA; ZAVERSHNEVA, 2020, p. 11). The idea of subjects who self-transform could be observed in the presence of "encouragement" (ERIC), and in the loss of "fear" to learn the language (PAULO), as well as the idea of feeling "closer" to language or "more interested".

The focus on literature did not fade the importance of how the class was conducted by the teacher, something that was constantly highlighted by the students – especially the less proficient ones, in terms of language development. This aspect points to the relevance of the Vygotskyan concept of mediation (LANTOLF, 2000; SWAIN et al., 2015) and the reflexive process, on the part of the teacher, of promoting good scaffolding so that students are able to move along the reading process, feeling more comfortable in the English language learning environment. In accordance with our results, Kim's investigation on literature conveys that "there is no doubt that the teacher should play a significant role in orchestrating and supporting both student interaction with the text and interaction with other students." (KIM, 2004, p. 163).

---

21 For Vygotsky, "Higher mental capacities include voluntary attention, intentional memory, planning, logical thought and problem solving, learning, and evaluation of the effectiveness of these processes." (Lantolf, 2000, p.2).

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

203

We hence verify from the narratives here presented that Literature can be a useful tool to promote contact with more subjective aspects of the language and promote positive, transforming experiences. One of the paths that could be taken to analyze the same data or even the generation of new data can be related to the concept of *perezhivanie*, which "is a unit of analysis of a social situation of development" (FLEER; REY; VERESOV, 2017, p. 11). This concept, that was used by Vygotsky in his writings about art and relates to the "lived experience" of the individual, has been revisited by the Sociocultural Historical scholars. In this perspective, the "dramatic events in the education spaces seem to point to the possibility of relevant refractions of resources to be invoked in the subject's existence as agents in and of transformation" (LIBERALI; FUGA, 2018, p. 369). Therefore, *perezhivanie* may be a revealing construct to be developed when it comes to the relationship between language development, literature and emotions.

The findings of this study have important implications for future teaching practices, as they show the relevance of the literary text in the promotion of enjoyable, remarkable and transforming experiences, which are understood as essential for human development, in the Sociocultural Historical Theory. In the realm of emotions, it is possible to observe how relevant a role they play on the responses we expect (or not) from students in their learning processes and in their interaction with a new language and with others is (ARAGÃO, 2008). Given that the teacher is able to promote scaffolding for the student to interact successfully with the text, we argue that the use of literature should be encouraged in high school language learning environments as another source, together with other genres such as news and advertisements, traditionally used. In order to do that, it is possible that teacher development courses in this area could be proposed, so that educators can get familiar with successful experiences such as the ones described by Kim (2004) and Viana and Zyngier (2020). As Shanahan claimed in his 1997 study on the topic, "our fundamental goal as language professionals is to expand and enrich the lives of our students and the society in which they live," (p. 173), which is clearly possible with the presence of literature.

Author's contribution

Elisa Seerig – Elaboração de instrumentos para geração de dados, geração de dados, pesquisa bibliográfica, análise dos dados e redação do artigo.

Christine S. Nicolaides – Inserção da proposta ao projeto de pesquisa, orientação para elaboração de instrumentos e geração de dados, pesquisa bibliográfica, orientação para análise de dados e redação do artigo.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

204

Acknowledgements

References

ARAGÃO, R. Emoções e pesquisa narrativa: transformando experiências de aprendizagem. *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, v. 8, n. 2, p. 295–320, 2008.

BARKHUIZEN, G.; BENSON, P.; CHIK, A. *Narrative inquiry in language teaching and learning research*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

BLOEMERT, J. et al. Students' perspective on the benefits of EFL literature education. *Language Learning Journal*, v. 47, n. 3, p. 371–384, 2019.

BLOEMERT, J.; JANSEN, E.; PARAN, A. Student motivation in Dutch secondary school EFL literature lessons. *Applied Linguistics Review*, p. 1–24, 2019.

BLOEMERT, J.; JANSEN, E.; VAN DE GRIFT, W. Exploring EFL literature approaches in Dutch secondary education. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, v. 29, n. 2, p. 169–188, 2016.

CANDIDO, A. O Direito à Literatura. In: *Vários Escritos*. Rio de Janeiro: Ouro sobre Azul, 2011. p. 171–193.

DEWAELE, J. M. et al. Foreign language enjoyment and anxiety: The effect of teacher and learner variables. *Language Teaching Research*, v. 22, n. 6, p. 676–697, 2017.

DÖRNYEI, Z.; RYAN, S. *The Psychology of the Language Learner Revisited*. New York: Routledge, 2015.

EUROPE, C. O. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Strasbourg: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

FIORIN, J. L. Linguagem e interdisciplinaridade. *Alea*, v. 10, n. 1, p. 29–53, 2008.

FLEER, M.; REY, F. G.; VERESOV, N. *Perezhivanie, Emotions and Subjectivity: Advancing Vygotsky's Legacy*. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2017. v. 1

JOUVE, Vincent. *Por que estudar literatura*? São Paulo: Parábola, 2012.

KIM, M. Literature Discussions in Adult L2 Learning. *Language and Education*, v. 2, n. 18, p. 145–166, 2004.

KOZULIN, A. The Mystery of Perezhivanie. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, v. 23, n. 4, p. 356–357, 2016.

LANTOLF, J. P. Introducing sociocultural theory. In: *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. p. 1–26.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

205

LANTOLF, J. P.; SWAIN, M. Perezhivanie: the cognitive-emotional dialectic within the social situation of development. In: AL-HOORIE, A. H.; MACINTYRE, P. D. (Eds.). . *Contemporary Language Motivation Theory - 60 Years Since Gardner and Lambert (1959)*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2020.

LIBERALI, F. C.; FUGA, V. P. A importância do conceito de perejivanie na constituição de agentes transformadores. *Estudos de Psicologia (Campinas)*, v. 35, n. 4, p. 363–373, 2018.

NICOLAIDES, C.; ARCHANJO, R. Reframing Identities in the Move: a Tale of Empowerment, Agency and Autonomy. *Trabalhos em Linguística Aplicada*, v. 58, n. 1, p. 96–117, 2019.

PARAN, A. *The role of literature in instructed foreign language learning and teaching: An evidence-based survey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. v. 41

PINHEIRO, M. S. O letramento multimodal crítico: o discurso discente sobre política nas aulas de espanhol. *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, v. 19, n. 3, p. 455–476, 2019.

ROSIEK, J. Emotional Scaffolding: an exploration of the teacher knowledge at the intersection of student emotion and the subject matter. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 2003.

SHANAHAN, D. Articulating the Relationship between Language, Literature, and Culture: Toward a New Agenda for Foreign Language Teaching and Research. *The Modern Language Journal*, v. 81, n. 2, 1997.

SLATER, S.; COLLIE, J. Teaching literature: why, what and how. In: MICHAEL SWAN (Ed.). . *Literature in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. p. 3–10.

SWAIN, M. The inseparability of cognition and emotion in second language learning. *Language Teaching*, v. 46, n. 2, p. 195–207, 2013.

SWAIN, M.; KINNEAR, P.; STEINMAN, L. *Sociocultural Theory in Second Language Education: an introduction through narratives*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2015.

SWAIN, M.; LAPKIN, S. A Vygotskian sociocultural perspective on immersion education. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education*, v. 1, p. 101–129, 2013.

TAYLOR, Eric K. *Using Folktales*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

TSANG, A.; PARAN, A.; LAU, W. W. F. The language and non-language benefits of literature in foreign language education: An exploratory study of learners' views. *Language Teaching Research*, 2020.

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

206

VASSILIEVA, J.; ZAVERSHNEVA, E. Vygotsky's "Height Psychology": Reenvisioning General Psychology in Dialogue With the Humanities and the Arts. *Review of General Psychology*, v. 24, n. 1, p. 18–30, 2020.

VIANA, V.; ZYNGIER, S. Language-literature integration in high-school EFL education: investigating students' perspectives. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, v. 14, n. 4, p. 347–361, 2020.

VYGOTSKY, L. *Mind in society*: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

VYGOTSKY, L. S. The Socialist Alteration of Man. *The Vygotsky Reader*, p. 175–184, 1994.

XI, J.; LANTOLF, J. P. Scaffolding and the zone of proximal development: A problematic relationship. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, v. 51, n. 1, p. 25–48, 2021.

ZILBERMAN, Regina. O papel da Literatura na escola. *Via Atlântica*, n. 14, 2008. Disponível em: <http://www.revistas.usp.br/viaatlantica/article/view/50376> Acesso em: 09. set. 2020.

Appendix I – Questionnaire (This questionnaire was originally delivered in Portuguese and was translated into English to match the language in the paper).

Literary practices in the language classroom

      This questionnaire aims to investigate your impressions about the activities that involved the literary text in English language classes. It consists of a few questions about your relationship with the English language and literature, and then explores your memories of the classes we had together. It should take you about 20 minutes to answer. Please be as honest as possible. If you prefer, you can also remain anonymous. Thank you so much for your help in this investigation!

    (1)   Concerning your proficiency level in English you consider yourself: basic, pre-intermediate, intermediate, advanced, fluent

    (2)   What do you relate your knowledge of English to? Select all the alternatives that apply to you (one or more alternatives may be chosen)

        α.   Regular school, Private courses outside school, My experiences apart from formal classes: movies, songs, games, etc., Other

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

207

(3)   Make comments on question 2.

(4)   Reflect on your English language learning in school. Describe a positive experience that you recall from this context. Justify your answer (why was it positive)?

(5)   Still related to the English learning context in your school describe a negative experience (if there is one) that you recall from this context. Justify your answer (why was it negative?)

(6)   Do you have the habit of reading literature (poetry, novels, short stories and chronicles)

(7)   Yes, in Portuguese and in English. Yes, in English. Yes, in Poruguese. No

(8)   If you read literature (in any language) out of the school context, how often does that happen? Always, frequently, sometimes, rarely

(9)   Make comments on your answer to questions 6 and 7.

(10)   Specifically about literary texts in English (poetry, novels, short stories and chronicles), which other experiences/contacts you recall having had in your school besides the ones we had in our English classes at IF? How was your experience?

(11)   Is there a literary text which we have worked together that has touched you? Which one? Why did it touch you? (Think about the feelings towards the text or even related to the way the activity was applied, if you remember)

(12)   Finally, when were you my student in English classes for the last time? 2018/2019

Reflections on experiences with the English literary text.

Below, you will see 5 links to practices that we developed involving English literature. You should rate it 1-5 (Likert scale): 1-not at all important / interesting 5-very important / interesting. You can comment on each of your choices if you wish. If you prefer, answer only the last question, in which you should deepen your reflection on just one of the activities.

(1)   "I keep six honest-serving men" - Rudyard Kipling - Link for the poem and activity description: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mepihNH xzDaV4Cm5fbcqTMxgFv7JloQ/view?usp=sharing (Attention: if you were not present or do not remember, do not answer this question)

LIKERT SCALE

(2) "My name" - Sandra Cisneros - Link for the poem and activity description: https://drive.google.com/file/d/16OvFK7a1NjsKPAYtz2STN5roZT3rsws/view?usp=sharing (Attention: if you were not present or do not remember, do not answer this question)

LIKERT SCALE

(3) Eclipse - Pink Floyd - Link for the poem and activity description: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FLcnc3MGJ2QhlqrpWs68NAS17CzvuW0O/view?usp=sharing (Attention: if you were not present or do not remember, do not answer this question)

LIKERT SCALE

(4) For Katrina's Sun Dial - Henry Van Dyke - Link for the poem and activity description: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Uv9KXOk9TIsPQ15brgcf3V0tOIyLRwJ/view?usp=sharing (Attention: if you were not present or do not remember, do not answer this question)

LIKERT SCALE

(5) Bluebird - Charles Bukowski - Link for the poem and activity description: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PduZ5aQLfrtnCIVcu-rUsaLaS7LLxFH/view?usp=sharing (Attention: if you were not present or do not remember, do not answer this question)

LIKERT SCALE

(6) Your choice on the answers related to the activities before mentioned (questions 1 to 5) is related to: the way the activity was conducted; the text itself; both; other

(7) Choose one out of the five activities/texts above-mentioned that you consider that somehow has affected you: (choose only one activity; later you will be able to comment on other ones if you wish.)

(8) Choose 3 words that can describe your sensations/feelings related to the activity you selected in question 6. They may be positive or negative. If you prefer some other activity which is not above described, you may describe which one you are talking about.

(9) Please explain the selection of 3 words you have done in the previous questions. Think about this relation with the text or about the way the activity was conducted. What caused those sensations/feelings?

(10) If you wish to reflect about the other proposed literary activities we experienced in class, use the space below.

Final reflections:

(1) The teacher tried to switch from English to Portuguese in many moments during class. How did you feel about that? Did that affect your impressions about the text?

(2) Please reflect about the two questions below through a narrative (small text):

(3) In general, how did you feel about the activities in English related to literature? Would your experience have been different with other kinds of text (news or advertisement, for example)? Explain. If you prefer to describe your experience orally, please send an audio to my WhatsApp (54 xxxxx0735).

(4) How do you feel about Literature after the experiences we shared during our English classes?

(5) Besides our literary texts, what has touched you in our classes? I would love to hear from you. :)

(6) Would you like to read and evaluate my analyses of your answers?

(7) If you wish to make a comment about something else, use the space below. It might be related to your feelings while answering the questionnaire, or if you think that there is an important item related to your classes which was not approached here, use the space to mention over here. This includes negative aspects if you wish. Feel free to say anything you want!

Rev. Bras. Linguíst. Apl., v. 22, n. 1, p. 181-210, 2022

210