

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH:

“THE INCIDENCE OF THE LITERATURE COURSES ON THE STUDENTS
LEARNING PROCESS IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR”

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF:

LICENCIATURA EN IDIOMA INGLÉS OPCIÓN ENSEÑANZA

PRESENTED BY:

GILBERTO ANTONIO ROMERO MORAN RM 01064

YUNIOR MEDARDO GOMEZ ALFARO AA 06106

LEADY DIANA LOZANO VILLALOBOS LV 03013

ADVISOR:

LIC. JORGE HUMBERTO AGUILAR

MAIN CAMPUS, FEBRUARY 26TH 2014

AUTHORITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

ING. MARIO ROBERTO NIETO LOVO

PRESIDENT

MTRA. ANA MARIA GLOWER DE ALVARADO

ACADEMIC VICE PRESIDENT

DRA. ANA LETICIA DE AMAYA

GENERAL SECRETARY

AUTHORITIES OF THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

LIC. JOSE RAYMUNDO CALDERON MORAN

DEAN

MTRA. NORMA CECILIA BLANDON DE CASTRO

VICE DEAN

LIC. ALFONSO MEJIA RIVERA

SECRETARY

AUTHORITIES OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

MTRO. JOSE RICARDO GAMERO ORTIZ

HEAD OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

MAESTRO EDGAR NICOLAS AYALA.

GENERAL COORDINATOR OF THE GRADUATION PROCESS

LIC. JORGE HUMBERTO AGUILAR

ADVISOR:

Abstract

There is plenty of information about the English teaching and English learning practice available around the world. There are also many sources of information as scholars who have written books in English as a second language teaching. Still, we, English language students, do have the need for data sources which answer specific questions concerning our educational contexts. The following research was developed with the specific objective of becoming a source of information for future ESL teachers and students who will deal with the necessity of having studies conducted about their peers and partners on the road to good English language teaching and English language learning. This investigation deals with the inclusion of literature topics and literature materials in English language teaching in the majors of “*Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés*” and “*Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas*” syllabuses and curriculum designs in the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. It took a year and a half to collect, analyze and conclude on the many data that appear in the following pages. Moreover, it took the collaboration of many sources whose insights and points of views are presented here. This work also is meant to be a starting point for further research on the topics that appear on this investigation and by no means pretends to have the ultimate truth about our research topic but to pave the way for the next generation of researchers interested in continuing this work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE
Introduction.....	6
CHAPTER 1.....	7
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	
1.1 Statement of the problem.....	8
1.2 Significance of the problem.....	8
1.3 Purpose of the research.....	10
1.4 Research question.....	10
1.5 Assumptions.....	10
1.6 Limitations of the study.....	11
CHAPTER 2.....	12
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	
2.1 Antecedents of the investigation.....	13
2.2 Theoretical basis.....	15
2.3 Definition of the research question.....	38
CHAPTER 3.....	39
METHODOLOGY OF THE INVESTIGATION	
3.1 Kind of Investigation.....	40
3.2 Design of the Investigation.....	40
3.3 Population and Sample.....	41
3.4 Techniques and Instruments for Data Gathering.....	41
3.5 Procedure.....	42
CHAPTER 4.....	44
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS	
4.1 Analysis and interpretation of students' questionnaire.....	45
4.2 Analysis and interpretation of key informants.....	51

CHAPTER 5.....	66
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	
5.1 Major findings.....	67
5.2 Limitations.....	70
5.3 Recommendations for future investigation.....	71
5.4 Conclusions.....	72
5.5 Final words.....	74
CHAPTER 6	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
6.1 References.....	77
CHAPTER 7.....	78-154
ANEXXES	

INTRODUCTION

The use of literature in English Language Teaching in general seems to be beneficial in many aspects of students learning process since it is said that literature represents a real use of language. Even so, authors as Donald Topping state that the inclusion of “out of context” literature based excerpts might produce just the opposite on students (Topping, 1968). He argues that literature does not contribute to the goal of achieving linguistic proficiency (Topping, 1968). This brings us to the question of what kind of literature should we, English language teachers, include in English teaching course based on literary works? On what amount and how should they, students, receive it? Should we have a “literature history” course where students memorize dates and names of authors? Or should we have a course design where students are free to get something out of literary works to stimulate their own creativity? This work aims to shed some light on this subject in order to have a theoretical basis for further application of the findings and conclusions reached through this investigation. In the following chapters a research on how literature is implemented on real local ESL classrooms takes place in order to answer these and other important questions about that topic.

CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In Latin America, we can find literature based courses implemented in higher educational programs or in the syllabuses of Universities; and El Salvador is no exception. Even so, there is little or no investigation done so far about the impact of literature-related topics on students learning process at the University of El Salvador. This research is intended to fill this gap between what we know about literature in teaching and what real Salvadorian students experience in real classrooms at ESL teaching centers. The Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador has implemented a series of literary topics on the syllabus of the two majors in English language careers. These are arranged in two courses labeled as “Literature I and Literature II”. This brings us not only to the question of how are these subjects organized?, but also how are they implemented? And most importantly, what is the impact of these topics and activities on the overall ESL students learning process at the University of El Salvador in the majors of “*Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés*” and “*Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas*” at the Foreign Language Department?

1.2 Significance of the Problem (and historical background)

English Language Teaching in non-English speaking countries around the world in recent years has been gaining momentum due to the great number of careers and occupations where speaking, writing, reading and listening in English language is a priority, nonetheless to mention a prerequisite for most job opportunities. Among the many methods for language acquisition and learning theories developed in the last 100 years, among them, behaviorism and the resulting *audio lingual method* which

emphasizes grammar drills and cognitive based approaches (i.e. *Mentalism*) where human brains function as a “decoder” of grammatical rules of a language to humanistic approaches (i.e. *community language learning, suggestopaedia, the silent way, total physical response*) which emphasizes that students should be more than just taught a new language but helped to develop themselves as people (Harmer, 1987).

Since then, Scholars and teachers seem to be in constant search for ways to incorporate all these approaches and techniques into a syllabus which make the ultimate objective of getting students to learn English as a Second Language possible. There were attempts to incorporate literature in language teaching. The use of literary works of art as a means to language teaching has been around for years but in the past, the student was told literary terms and the meaning of words and was asked to analyze the subject of a literary piece, which was something too abstract, as a task for non-native speakers. The process of analysis then took the form of repeating the material mostly by memorization (Turker, 1991).

All this brings us to the use of literature in the “Communicative Language Teaching” Approach, which gives credit to the use of “authentic materials” as it is used in real life (Turker, 1991). More recently, authors as Alexander Baird have added that the use of literature in Second Language Teaching, especially English Language Teaching, pose a series of advantages and disadvantages. According to him, some of the most important advantages of using literature in Second Language Teaching are: 1) to expand students’ cultural consciousness and 2) to stimulate students’ creativity and imagination among others. In addition, authors as J. Povey states that the connection between imaginary characters found in novels and the reader helps the students’ language acquisition

process (Povey, 1967). As important as teaching and learning through literature seems to be in ESL teaching, there are justifiable reasons to the necessity of having a serious research done when concerned with learning and teaching through literature in our country. Moreover, it is necessary to validate, with the scientific method, any investigation as this one, which is aimed to future generation of English language learners and English language teachers in our country.

1.3 Purpose of the research

The main objectives of our research are as follows:

General objective:

- To Identify ways in which literature courses impact students learning process.

Specific objectives

- To Know how taking literature courses works for ESL students at the University of El Salvador.
- To Identify the way literature is implemented to impact the learning process of ESL students at Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

1.4 Assumptions

The authors consider the following as the main findings to encounter through the course of this investigation. First of all, the researchers will have the opportunity to find out whether or not the literature courses have an incidence, being this positive or negative or not existent, on students' learning process. And secondly, at the end of this

research, the authors will have enough information about our hypothesis as to clarify the real benefits, if any, obtained by taking the literature subjects I and II on ESL students at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The research team considers that the main limitations for this research will be time schedules and access to subjects of our investigation. Having this in mind, the authors are going to delimitate our research to ESL students from the literature courses at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. The samples for the present research are going to be current and past students of the literature courses I and II at the majors of “Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés” and “Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas”. This research is going to be developed through semester II 2012 at the University of El Salvador main campus. Another limitation to this work will be team crew in charge of developing it. It is going to be conducted by a 3 - students team all undergraduate students from the major of “*Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés*”

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the researchers will take a deeper look at the many theories that have informed the practice of second language teaching and how literature has gained recognition as a pathway for language learning and language teaching. Besides, the research team will answer some basic question about the concepts of language learning through literature and language teaching through literature. Finally, the researchers will also take a look at how these teaching and learning strategies are implemented in real ESL classrooms in our educational context in order to have a theoretical basis for further analysis of our research topic.

2.1 Antecedents of the investigation

Definition of basic terms

What is literature?

According to Alexander Baird “literature is the use of language effectively in suitable conditions” (Baird, 1969:203) On the other hand, Moody (1971:1) states that literature is an umbrella term giving information in every business. It can be defined as expressing a specific subject so that we have e.g. literature for medicine, literature for raising children, literature for construction etc. In addition, according to the Macmillan dictionary, literature is a piece of text like poems, novels, plays that have a value of art and not just as entertainment. According to The Merriam Webster’s Dictionary literature is the production of written works having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest. The written works produced in a particular language, country or age. On the other hand, Authors like John McRae (1994) make a distinction among literature from the classics and literature as fiction in song

lyrics and fables. For the purpose of this research the authors will define literature as any form of written language or any type of creative writing as fiction or poetry.

Language: The words, their pronunciation, and the methods of combining them used and understood by a community.

-Legal form or style of verbal expression.

-A systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, sounds, gestures or marks having understood meanings. (The Merriam Webster's Dictionary)

Learning: Modification of a behavioral tendency by experience (as exposure to conditioning) (The Merriam Webster's Dictionary)

Process: A natural phenomenon marked gradual changes that lead towards a particular change. (The process of growth) The Merriam Webster's Dictionary)

Teaching: To guide the studies of (The Merriam Webster's Dictionary)

Foreign: Situated outside a place or country; especially: situated outside one's own country.

-Born in, belonging to, or characteristic of some place or country other than the one under consideration.

-Of, relating to, or proceeding from some other person or material thing than the one under consideration.

-Alien in character: not connected or permanent.

-Related or dealing with other nations. (The Merriam Webster's Dictionary)

Local:

A) Of, relating to, or characteristic of a particular place: not general or widespread.

B) Of, relating to, or applicable to part of a whole.

ESL: English as a Second Language.

2.2 Theoretical basis

Why is it necessary to use literature in the ESL classrooms?

Due to the versatile nature of the different genres literature offers to us, the use of these in language learning classrooms has gained much interest in recent years. But what kind of literature is the best and in what level should it be used? There are so many varieties of forms of literature that finding the reasons why it is so important nowadays could help us pave the way for a better understanding of its rightful implementation in our syllabus design. Collie & Slater (1990; 3) tell us of four main reasons for using literature in the classrooms. First, literature is “authentic material” that is literature in the forms of magazines, cartoons and pamphlets expose learners to actual samples of real life/ real like settings. Besides that literature in the forms of novels, short stories and plays, present a colorful world where characters and places develop social and cultural interaction with each other, thus exposing learners to what can be called “cultural enrichment” through literature (Hismanoglu 2005).

Another reason for using literature in ESL classrooms is “language enrichment”. Here students learn to use a variety of possible language structures, different ways of connecting ideas which develop and enrich their own writing skills. In addition, literature can be useful in the language learning process because it fosters “personal involvement” in the reader. The selection of a text in relation to the needs, expectations, interest and language level of students is very important (Hismanoglu 2005). This seems to be one of the most important aspects when dealing with implementing local literature in the foreign language students’ learning process. This “personal involvement” feature prompts teachers to use relevant and appealing material to learners through the use of activities that promote readers’ response and a solid integration between language and literature (Banegas 2010).

Authors as Carter & Long (1991) use what they describe as models to justify the use of literature in ESL teaching. First, the cultural model in which literature helps students understand different cultures and develop artistic appreciation in general. Secondly, the language models that present literature as an instrument for teaching specific vocabulary and grammar structures. And finally, the personal growth model which states that the student’s involvement with the reading of literature prompts them understand how culture and society work as well as understand our own role as human beings living within the social matrix. Besides, these authors present some guidelines when thinking about the models mentioned above. They describe to us the cultural model as a teacher centered approach assuming literature as an expression of cultural attitudes and aspirations of individual societies where texts are taken as finished products, the

language model as a student centered approach where literature is taught for the promotion of creative usages of language and the personal growth model as a learner centered approach that uses literature to promote individual evaluation and judgment as individuals carter and long (Carter & Long. 1991).

Why using local literature in ESL courses?

According to Murat Hismanoglu (2005) literature can be beneficial to students learning process due to the personal involvement it fosters on students. He continues saying that the choosing of materials according to students' needs and expectations is prominent in a literature based course. In addition, he states that choosing books according to real life experience and emotions is very important in order to enhance students learning process.

The pleasure of encountering ones own thoughts in situation exemplified clearly in a work of art (...) equal pleasure of noticing those same thoughts, feelings, emotions, or situations presented by a completely new perspective: all these are motives helping learners to cope with the linguistic obstacles that might be considered to great in less involving materials (Collie & Slater 1990:6-7)

Taking this into consideration, we can fairly say that the inclusion of local literature and translations into a literature based class is of great importance since these stories create a sort of interest in the minds of children and adult learners (S. Elangovan, 2009). Essentially local literature becomes in a way to engage students and capture their interest. Local literature according to slogavan severs as a bridge to connect mother

tongue and English (S. Elangovan, 2009). Finally, another important factor in favor of using translations from local literature in ESL teaching is the minimum effort this involves and the maximum results that we teachers can obtain from that (S. Elangovan, 2009).

What are the benefits of studying literature for ESL students?

Using literature for learning English as a second or foreign language has a very important benefit since studying the literature from our mother tongue helps a lot to improve our language skills and areas of the target language. According to Murat Hismanoglu, literature has many benefits for ESL students. But in order to give a better explanation in this introduction to the benefits obtained, the authors will present the benefits of Different Genres of Literature in language teaching as follows:

Benefits of Using Poetry to Language Learning

Poetry can pave the way for the learning and teaching of basic language skills. It is metaphor that it is the most prominent connection between learning poetry. (Saraç 2013) Because most poetry consciously or unconsciously makes use of metaphor as one of its primary methods, poetry offers a significant learning process. There are at least two learning benefits that can be derived from studying poetry:

- The appreciation of the writer's composition process, which students gain by studying poems by components.

- Developing sensitivity for words and discoveries that may later grow into a deeper interest and greater analytical ability.

Saraç (2003:17-20) also explains the educational benefits of poetry as follows:

- provides readers with a different viewpoint towards language use by going beyond the known usages and rules of grammar, syntax and vocabulary,
- triggers unmotivated readers owing to being so open to explorations and different Interpretations,
- evokes feelings and thoughts in heart and in mind,
- makes students familiar with figures of speech (i.e. simile, metaphor, irony, personification, imagery, etc.) due to their being a part of daily language use.

As Çubukçu (2001) mentions that poetry is a rewarding and enjoyable experience with the properties of rhyming and rhythm both of which convey “love and appreciation for the sound and power of language.” At this juncture, it can be stated that students become familiar with the supra segmental aspects of the target language, such as stress, pitch, juncture, intonation by studying poetry.

Through poetry, students can also study the semiotic elements in the target language. Semiotic elements constitute a cultural training as well. As Hiller (1983:10) states, poems should be seen as hyper signs of which constituents, “semiotic signifiers”, come together in their common relationship and lead to the “symbolic level” and this level is the one inclined to be signified in a poem. This notion can be described as follows:

Signifier

Semiotic level -----

Signifier

POEM-HYPERSIGN -----

Symbolic level signified.

Moreover, poetry employs language to evoke and exalt special qualities of life. It

suffices readers with feelings. It is particularly lyric poetry which is based on feelings and provides still another emotional benefit. Poetry is one of the most effective and powerful transmitters of culture. Poems comprise so many cultural elements — allusions, vocabulary, idioms, tone that are not easy to translate into another language (Sage 1987).

Benefits of Using Short Stories to Language Learning

Short story is a supreme resource for observing not only language but life itself. In short fiction, characters act out all the real and symbolic acts people carry out in daily lives, and do so in a variety of registers and tones. The world of short fiction both mirrors and illuminates human lives (Sage 1987:43). The inclusion of short fiction in the ESL / EFL curriculum offers the following educational benefits (Arioğul 2001:11-18):

- makes the students' reading task easier due to being simple and short when compared with the other literary genres,
- enlarges the advanced level readers' worldviews about different cultures and

different groups of people,

- provides more creative, encrypt, challenging texts that require personal exploration supported with prior knowledge for advanced level readers,
- motivates learners to read due to being an authentic material,
- offers a world of wonders and a world of mystery,
- gives students the chance to use their creativity,
- promotes critical thinking skills,
- facilitates teaching a foreign culture (The closing paragrph serves as a valuable instrument in attaining cultural knowledge of the selected community,
- makes students feel themselves comfortable and free,
- helps students coming from various backgrounds communicate with each other because of its universal language,
- helps students to go beyond the surface meaning and dive into underlying meanings,
- Acts as a perfect vehicle to help students understand the positions of themselves as well as the others by transferring these gained knowledge to their own world.

In brief, the use of a short story seems to be a very helpful technique in today's foreign language classes. As it is short, it makes the students' reading task and the

teacher's coverage easier. An important feature of short fiction is its being universal. To put it differently, students all over the world have experienced stories and can relate to them. Moreover, short fiction, like all other types of literature, makes contribution to the development of cognitive analytical abilities by bringing the whole self to bear on a compressed account of a situation in a single place and moment (Sage 1987:43).

Benefits of Using Drama to Language Learning

Using drama in a language classroom is a good resource for language teaching. It is through the use of drama that learners become familiar with grammatical structures in contexts and also learn about how to use the language to express, control and inform. The use of drama raises the students' awareness towards the target language and culture. In this context, the use of drama as a tool rather than an end gains importance in teaching a foreign language. Yet, there is one obvious danger: cultural imposition should be severely avoided since it results in the loss of language ego and native language identity in many cases. To put it differently, language learning should be culture-free but entirely not culture-biased. For this reason, the new language and the context of the drama should fuse into a language learning process with high interest, relevance and enjoyment. Learners should make use of drama to promote their comprehension of life experiences, reflect on particular circumstances and make sense of their extra linguistic world in a deeper way (Sarıçoban 2004:15).

The educational benefits of drama, according to (Lenore, 1993), are as follows:

- stimulates the imagination and promotes creative thinking,
- develops critical thinking skills,

- promotes language development,
- heightens effective listening skills,
- strengthens comprehension and learning retention by involving the senses as an integral part of the learning process,
- increases empathy and awareness of others,
- fosters peer respect and group cooperation,
- reinforces positive self-concept,
- provides teachers with a fresh perspective on teaching.

Some other educational benefits of using drama in a foreign language class can be listed as follows (Mengü 2002:1-4):

- bringing authenticity into the classroom,
- exposing the learners to the target culture as well as the social problems a society may be undergoing,
- increasing creativity, originality, sensitivity, fluency, flexibility, emotional stability, cooperation, and examination of moral attitudes, while developing communication skills and appreciation of literature,
- helping learners improve their level of competence with respect to their receptive and productive skills,

- providing a solid basis for the learners to bridge the gap between their receptive and productive skills,
- offering students the space and time to develop new ideas and insights in a range of contexts,
- Enabling students to develop new understandings and forms of knowing not accessible in other more traditional ways of learning.

In other words, the use of drama seems to be an effective technique in today's communication-based and student-centered foreign language teaching methods. Since it is an authentic material, it helps students to promote their comprehension of the verbal / nonverbal aspects of the target language they are trying to master. Particularly, teachers, who wish to make language learning more colorful, motivating and interesting, can make use of drama in their language classes. Since drama is the reenactments of social events, students improve their personality and code of behavior. Thus, they can achieve more meaningful and realistic teaching from which students can benefit to a great extent.

Benefits of Using Novel to Language Learning

The use of a novel is a beneficial technique for mastering not only linguistic system but also life in relation to the target language. In novel, characters reflect what people really perform in daily lives. Novels not only portray but also enlighten human lives. Using novel in a foreign language class offers the following educational benefits:

- develops the advanced level readers' knowledge about different cultures and different groups of people,
- increases students' motivation to read owing to being an authentic material,
- offers real life / real life like settings,
- gives students the opportunity to make use of their creativity,
- improves critical thinking skills,
- paves the way for teaching the target language culture,
- enables students to go beyond what is written and dive into what is meant,

Helton, C.A, J.Asamani and E.D.Thomas (1998:1-5) expounds the educational benefits of novels as follows:

- stimulates their imagination,
- helps students to identify the emotions of the characters so that they can learn how others cope with situations and problems similar to their own experiences,
- helps them master the skills that will enable them to acquire information, process this knowledge, identify problems, formulate alternatives, and arrive at meaningful, thoughtful, effective decisions and solutions,
- develops oral and written language skills,
- serves as a springboard for a multitude of holistic learning and critical thinking activities beginning with basic comprehension and writing,

- presents a unique way of teaching reading by getting students involved and excited about the reading process,
- Motivates students to become a lifelong reader.

What is a literature course at the Foreign Language Department from the University of El Salvador?

A literature course at the Foreign Languages Department is one of the mandatory subjects that students must take in English in order to get degree in both majors offered by the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador; “Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés: Opción Enseñanza” and “Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas”. In order to take this course, student must have already taken all the basic English subjects, the pre requirement is Advanced English II, which is taken in the first semester of the third year, which means that the literature course is taken in the case of the “Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza”, in the last semester of the third year and for the case of the “Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas”, they take it in the first semester of the fifth year.

There are two literature courses for the students of the “Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza”, which are taken one after the other. Each course of Literature gives the students 4 credits or (Unidades Valorativas). The courses are focused on the Linguistic Area of the major. Each of these courses lasts 80 hours or 16 weeks. This is the length of the semesters for all these subjects at the Foreign Languages Department.

The following are the descriptions, contents and units of the literature course I and II based on Licenciado Jorge H. Aguilar's syllabus design, (from now on Lic. Aguilar). He is the current teacher in charge of the literature courses at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

- **LITERATURE I COURSE DESIGN**

The first course of literature for the "Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza" is meant to extend students' knowledge on the English language as well as their appreciation on different genres of literature. It is intended to be reached by expanding the students' English proficiency by means of readings and discussions of literary works, promoting students' fondness for literature in order to increase their cultural background, and by awaking the students' interest in reading and writing as part of their everyday life.

Literature is a subject in the Foreign Language Department that builds on educational background and personal experiences of the students based on the topic of the literature. It provides opportunities for peer cooperative learning. It enhances critical thinking and judgmental abilities. It develops the writing abilities and creativeness.

CONTENTS OF THE LITERATURE COURSE I

UNIT ONE. INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD OF LITERATURE

In this unit, the students will be introduced to the world of literature by means of knowing its importance, the different genres, how writers relate their works with the

reality, by reading some samples of each main genre of literatures of well known writers of different periods of time.

UNIT TWO. SHORT STORIES, SHORT NOVELS, AND OTHER WORKS OF FICTION.

This unit will engage students into the reading of more literature selections of different issues and different trends (short stories). Students will read, comprehend, discuss, analyze, and write about the different literary selections for fiction. Also their creativeness will be promoted by writing their own short stories guided by the instructor.

UNIT THREE. DRAMA (PLAYS)

In this unit, the students will continue expanding their proficiency in the knowledge of literature by analyzing, discussing, performing and enlightening themselves in the cultural and literary fields through the reading of some plays of well-known playwrights of different periods.

- **LITERATURE II COURSE DESIGN**

The second course of literature is meant to expand the students' knowledge on the English language as well as their cultural appreciation on the genres of non-fiction and poetry. It is intended to reach this expansion through readings, discussions, analysis of selection of poetry, biographies, autobiographies, articles, essays, etc. students will also be encouraged to write their own poems, essays and a journal among other things.

This is a second subject that sinks the students deeply into the knowledge of non-fiction and poetry as a follow up after taking the first course where they studied fiction and drama in depth.

CONTENTS OF THE LITERATURE COURSE II

UNIT ONE. NONFICTION

This unit is for students to know a different literary genre which deals with real aspects of life, data and facts.

UNIT TWO INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

This unit introduces, and develops poetry, a literary genre which is considered the mother or the core of all literary genres.

UNIT THREE READING AND UNDERSTANDING POETRY

This unit is the sequence of unit two about poetry. Different techniques for writing poetry will be studied.

How are the literature courses implemented at the University of El Salvador?

The literature courses are implemented at the University of El Salvador in more than just the Foreign Language Department. There are courses of literature in other majors such as “Licenciatura en Letras” and others carriers where they learn something with different educational perspectives depending on the major they are interested in. But, coming down to our interest at the literature courses of the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador, students learn literature as part of their general knowledge on the target language. The courses are implemented at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador in order to provide students with

inputs based on language learning through literature models focused on culture, language and personal growth.

According to Glower de Alvarado Ana María, former teacher in charge of the literature subjects and current vice president of the University of El Salvador, the cultural model used in literature courses aims at getting the students to build up their knowledge on general culture, especially in the target language. This is obtained by reading different kinds of literary works where they discover the cultures and the history during the different times where the texts were written.

“The cultural model views a literary text as a product. This means that it is treated as a source of information about the target culture. It is the most traditional approach, often used in university courses on literature. The cultural model will examine the social, political and historical background to a text, literary movements and genres.” (Glower de Alvarado, Ana María 2012)

Through The language model she states:

“Learners proceed through a text, and they pay attention to the way language is used. They come to grips with the meaning and increase their general awareness of English. Within this model of studying literature, the teacher can choose to focus on general grammar and vocabulary (in the same way that these are presented in course books for example) or use stylistic analysis. Stylistic analysis involves the close study of the linguistic features of the text to enable students to make meaningful interpretations of the text.” (Glower de Alvarado, Ana María 2012)

The personal growth model:

“This model encourages learners to draw on their own opinions, feelings and personal experiences. It aims for interaction between the text and the reader in English, helping make the language more memorable. Learners are encouraged to “make the text their own”. This model recognizes the immense power that literature can have to move people and attempts to use that in the classroom.” (Glower de Alvarado, Ana María).

According to the sources consulted on this investigation the literature courses are implemented on the syllabus of the majors of “Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza” and “Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas” to encourage interaction through discussions after reading the texts and performing different learning activities that will be described later in this chapter.

Literature is authentic material says Ana María Glower de Alvarado, she adds: It (literature) is a source of unmodified language in the classroom because the skills they acquire in dealing with difficult or unknown language can be used outside the class (...) Literature expands language awareness. By asking the students to seek for those sophisticated terms or non-standard examples of language that often occur in literary texts. Finally it is important to say that literature is also motivational. Because, it makes the students discover themselves being able to create their own literature; Literature holds high status in many cultures and countries. For this reason, students can feel a real sense of achievement at understanding a piece of highly respected literature. Also, literature is often more interesting than the texts found in course books.” (Glower de Alvarado, Ana María 2012).

On the other hand, according to Lic. Aguilar, current teacher in charge of the literature courses, when interviewed for this research, the cultural, language and personal growth model are implemented through the literature courses as follows:

“Well, the three ones that you mentioned are the ones that I always choose, because we are speaking about cultural aspects or models. Well, actually literature is something that teaches you cultural aspects and not only talking about your culture, but also about many other cultures and that opens new doors, new windows to knowledge.”

“In the language model of course, since students are learning a new language, this is a real and authentic material. That is what I think, that literary works are authentic because they are not... let’s say taught in a way that they are thinking in the students’ level. When a writer writes something, he or she doesn’t think about the level of English someone has, but what he or she wants to send as a message”.

“And the personal growth of course by knowing cultural things, by knowing the language, by knowing political aspects, by knowing economical aspects, by knowing things related to education you grow as a person. So, all of them are related.” (Lic. Aguilar, 2012)

The following is the description of the role of the teacher and activities performed by Lic. Aguilar during the implementation of literature courses syllabus:

The teacher will guide the class. He/she will prepare the guidelines with all the activities and the material the students have to read in and out of class. As the students likes are discovered, the teacher will select other material to be read throughout the semester. Also, the teacher will prepare quizzes, exams, other activities and their corresponding evaluation. The teacher will assist the students during office hours or as it is required and requested by them.

“The teacher must be a diagnostician, a guide, a facilitator, a friend, a provider, a planner, consultant, adviser, coordinator, providing the students with the information regarding the topics to be studied, guiding class activities inside and outside of the classroom when necessary. The teacher should also find out (as far as consistently as possible) the needs, interests, language difficulties and preferred learning styles of the students; to foster a group feeling (cooperation, liking, common aims, mutual confidence, etc.); to ensure that learners have clear short and long-term learning objectives, to assess the progress of individuals and of the class as a whole, to ensure that learners are aware of this progress and to encourage them to take responsibility for their learning.”

“He/she has to vary patterns of interaction within the lesson according to the precise aims and the nature/feeling of the group, to ensure that the students find their involvement sufficiently challenging, to select and introduce activities and materials for language work and to help them develop positive, individual strategies for learning and most of all to help them to become more independent. Their status is no longer based on hierarchical authority, but on the quality and importance of their relationship with learners for when students take more responsibility, more learning occurs, and both teachers and learners feel more successful” (Aguilar, 2012).

In addition, according to what Ana María Glower de Alvarado expresses in her text *An integrated guide for exploring literature in the classroom* “The literature that is studied in introductory university courses is most often in a written form. This form offers certain advantages, although they may not seem immediately clear” (Glower, 2009). She continues stating this about literature itself compared with other forms of communication and its importance in language teaching:

“When you read, you depend only on your effort and imagination. There are no actors, no settings, and no photographic or musical techniques to supersede your own reconstruction of the author’s ideas. If you wish, you may re-read a passage once or many times. Or you may get up to do something else if you need to. When you return you may pick up your book to continue it just where you left it. The book will always wait for you and will not change during the time you are gone.” (Glower, 2009)

Finally, she adds a word about the importance of literature:

“The idea is that none of us can learn a great deal about the world if we rely only in our own limited experiences in the small areas around us. However, if we read extensively, we can build up our thoughts and our insights. Reading satisfies curiosity and stimulates imagination. It provides knowledge about our own times, and it also teaches us about the lives and concerns of people at other times and in other cultures. (...)Literature accelerates growth and transforms our perception of life in ways that we never predict, or even know for sure. It makes us humans” (Glower, 2009)

What are the teachings and learning strategies implemented in the literature courses at the University of El Salvador?

The teaching/learning strategies implemented at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador are varied in order to engage the students into a great commitment with the subject, making them enjoy the class and come out of the course with a high percentage of the knowledge intended for them to learn.

In addition, the teachers use local-national writers’ texts to promote our own writers and make the students feel that those are commoners that write down their feelings and with creativity and talent, it becomes a piece of art. The students read literary works,

discuss, analyze and criticize them to get as much understanding as possible from the text.

Another relevant strategy is the visits of writers-poets to the class. With this strategy, the student has the chance to listen and to see the writers perform their literary works in the class and afterwards the students are asked to discuss, analyze and write reports about their appreciation of these experiences, about what they have learned from these visits.

As follow up to the previous strategy the teachers also make some visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers with the students. For instance, play performances. In these events, students have the chance to hold a conversation on the backstage with the actors and actresses about the preparation and everything the students consider relevant to ask in order to plan their own preparation for play performances at the end of the semester. The common strategies as many other subjects are: Group work, oral and written reports.

The teachers focus on models for teaching literature, for instance: Cultural model which pretends to give the students all the elements related to culture to awake the students' interest for culture. Since they are learning a second language, the language model is very important to help the students in the areas related to language learning; those are vocabulary, grammar, intonation, writing and also speaking. All of this is developed through the following activities: writing biographies, autobiographies, articles, letters, epistles, journals, diaries, speeches and essays. All of these are considered writing applications which have the same intention. Written material from writers can be either

in English or in Spanish, but analysis and all written reports will be done only in English.

There is also a personal growth model, which seeks to motivate the students to do extraordinary things as personal growth. This is done by choosing and using the materials from the basic to the complex, according to the students' level of development through the course. They practice through creative writing using their imagination, through play performances, writing and delivering speeches, awaking students' interest in reading and writing as part of their everyday life

One important element to mention is the way how the teachers use the social media and substitute the lack of technological equipment. With creativity, they make use of social media to substitute the lack of technological conditions at the FLD. They also perform and act out with the few resources the university can provide them to develop their activities, such as play performances, delivering speeches, poetry reading contests, and go out for more inputs to those cultural literary centers and invite guest speakers to the class.

2.3 Definition of the research question

What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students' learning process in the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In order to obtain the best quality data for our research purposes and taking into account the kind of data necessary for our specific subject of investigation, we decided to carry out a qualitative research by using two different data collection instruments. Hence, it was clear for us as researchers that the kind of data collection items and everything that we could observe during administering these instruments was vital to us. The following chapter sketches the approaches to our research from the point of view of the methodology apply to our investigation.

3.1 KIND OF INVESTIGATION

First of all, the research team started developing what a qualitative research would be about. In order to do this, the team decided to carry out two different types of interviews that were to be administered to the main subjects of study. In this case, the main source of information would be the students in the first place and secondly, the teachers who actually teach the subject to them. From that starting point, the team began building up a set of questions for students from the literature courses based on the theoretical framework concerning the use of literature in the classroom. After that the research team set out to put together another set of questions, this time for key informants (teachers for literature courses I and II), taking into account research objectives.

3.2 DESIGN OF THE INVESTIGATION

The approach that was used in this investigation was qualitative; so that the researchers were able to obtain the best quality data from the subjects of investigation, in this case the students from literature courses of Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. These instruments were to be administered at the end of the

second semester at the University of El Salvador in the main campus in 2012. As mentioned before, the researchers used two different instruments in order to gather the data; these instruments will be described in detail later in this chapter.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

In order to establish the population and sample, the research team decided to take into account the main subject of investigation. The team decided the population to be the students of literature courses, from both majors I and II related to English language teaching at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador. The researchers got them from the target population that was 150 students that had already passed the courses at that time. A sample of convenience of 16 students was taken, representing 10% of the whole population. Besides that, the research team used the interview to key informants technique. The team decided to approach two out of three teachers that had taught the subject at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador since the first time that it was implemented in the curriculum of the majors of “*Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés*” and “*Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas*”.

3.4 TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA GATHERING

This section is dedicated to describe the two main instruments the researchers used to collect the necessary information and data needed to answer the main research question that was “**What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador?**”

The first instrument set up was a questionnaire. This questionnaire had 16 questions (see annexes) that functioned as a starting point for the interviews to the subjects of investigation. In this instrument, it was included some aspects concerning the use of literature for teaching English the research team considered necessary in order to pull out the research, such as skills and sub-skills improvement through literature among others. The team did this taking into account the theoretical framework examination previously done.

The second instrument set up for the research purposes was an interview to key informants. This was of great importance to the investigation since it offered an insight to how teachers actually manage a course syllabus in order to accomplish their educational and instructional goals. The key informant interview had 14 questions (see annexes) that were to be administered to the teachers in charge of the literature courses I and II in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador. Just like the questionnaire to students, the key informant interview format served as a starting point for follow up question relevant to the research.

3.5 PROCEDURE

Once the instruments for data collection were ready, the researchers proceeded to administer them to the subjects of the investigation as follows:

- 1) The students' questionnaire was administered at the end of the second semester at the main campus of the University of El Salvador in four days due to different volunteers' personal occupations and their time schedules. The first day, 2 volunteer students were interviewed. The next day, 4 students were interviewed.

- 2) After that testing on individual interviews, seemed to be way too much time to interview all the students and it was not ok to keep the students waiting to be interviewed. So, the research team decided to use the focus group format in order to avoid time schedule problems. The first focus group interview was carried out the third day with 4 students at the university of El Salvador main campus outside auditorium number 3. The second focus group interview was with 5 students by the research team outside auditorium number 3 at UES main campus. The volunteers were female and male students, all of them current students or former students of literature courses from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador from both majors “*Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza*” and “*Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas*”.
- 3) The interview to key informants was approached in two ways. First of all, the research team approached teacher A, but due to time schedule problems it was decided to carry out the interview by e-mail. Secondly, the team approached teacher B outside the University of El Salvador main campus when classes were over in order to have enough time to develop the interview format and follow up questions. This interview was performed in a fast food restaurant in San Salvador city, December 2012. Both teachers had been in charge of the literature courses since they were implemented until the time when this research was carried out.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In the following pages a qualitative data analysis about the impact of literature courses on students from the major of English language at the University of El Salvador takes place with the objective of summarizing all the information collected through 2 different types of data collection instruments administered to the subjects of our study. First of all, there were many themes that emerged from the analysis of transcriptions from interviews to participants of this study that enclosed the perceptions of the students who participated in our research. Then the opinions and insights of key informants added important details to the comprehension on the incidence of literature courses I and II on ESL students at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

4.1 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Major themes

- **Students' perception about literature before and after taken the literature courses.**

Some of the aspects of the research that show the way in which literature impacts students learning process are what the students interviewed thought about literature before taking the course. Some of them report thinking of literature as a boring subject or having thought of it just as something they have to pass in order to get a degree. In addition, some students perceived literature as a subject where they would be asked to write. In general, the research team can say that most of the students interviewed did not know about the course or felt a little intimidated by it somehow. On the other hand, some of the students interviewed said that after taking the literature courses they considered to have learned more about people and culture, some even said to have

opened their minds through the subject literature. “We can say that the subject opened our mind and things like that to see the way that writers used to write in the past and things like that.” Most of them considered this specific learning experience as a very enriching one, something that has helped them to know more about the topic and too long for further knowledge about literature “In my personal experience, I did not even care about literature before I just took it because it was part of the syllabus and whatever. But then, after going to class, I started enjoying it” said one student. Another participant added this about how he felt after taking the course “Well, now I pay more attention on every document that I get in my hands. I like to analyze any aspect that a story has. I also read more, because since I took literature; I think there are many things I have got to learn through literature”.

- **Difference between students who took this course design (two literature courses and those who took only one).**

Another aspect of this analysis includes what can be perceived among students interviewed as a different way of looking to the subject, according to having taken both literature courses and just one. Some modern languages students said to have taken a comprised version of the literature courses in one semester only, and thus they considered to have overlooked important subjects. Here it is important to notice that the level of English spoken by students from “modern languages” according to career level is supposed to be superior to that of students from “*Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza*”. Being the last ones those who received both courses of literature in a two semesters time. There was also a clear difference among both kinds of language students concerning a general notion of literature topics studied in the course. Finally, it

is important to notice how many students themselves said to having had a difference learning experience according to what teacher was in charge of the course.

- **Students' perceptions about Salvadorian literature before and after taking the courses of literature.**

One of the key elements of the literature courses at the University of El Salvador is the inclusion of local literature as a source for learning. Taking this into account, one of the things that emerged when analyzing students' answers concerning their knowledge of important topics studied in class is how the fact of taking literature previously in high school, influences their current perception about the topic. In the case of Salvadorian literature, the team found students who were not really interested on the topic until very recently, after taking the literature courses, they said that before taking the subjects they did not know much about literature, and in general, They thought about Salvadorian literature as something from the past or something just concerning with Salvadorian civil war. Even though most of the students' ideas about Salvadorian literature were related to or associated to civil war, "(...) with so many books about the civil war and maybe for the new generations if they want to know what happened in that time they can get involved about the Salvadorian literature" an interviewed student said. Most of the students interviewed said to have related to local literature in one way or another at the end of the course. As they said to have found "something that is from your country" in each piece of literature they studied. But one of the things that really helped students get involved in Salvadorian literature was getting to know some local authors and writers in person, according to them this is something that increases their interest greatly.

Some of the students said to have changed their minds about Salvadorian literature. They said that now they feel really identified with writers and authors especially after the visits of Salvadorian authors to the classroom. About this, one student said “I think that there are many, many great people (writers) that have the talent to write and to present very good things “Most of the students interviewed said to have “gained” new interest about local literature after meeting this people personally.”

- **Students’ perceptions about national authors after taking the literature courses.**

One of the things that the students interviewed pointed out was how meeting personally national authors had changed somehow their perceptions about the literature courses and literature itself. “We felt identified with that person and we thought that we could do that too” said one student when asked about the experience of meeting a writer. In describing his experiences of meeting Salvadorian writers, one student interviewed said:

I noticed that I and my classmates got involved with the authors and got very interested listening (to) the different works they presented in the class and everybody realized the hard job writers faced in different times like the civil war and revolution it was an inspiration of men literary works.

These whole new perceptions that came after meeting this people was a positive one according to most of the students interviewed. The students said to have found something more out of these visits that was “personal involvement” with this people, which somehow can prompt them to develop their own creativity. One student said “I

got the motivation to write. So, I can be as great as they are (writers who visited the class), it is like a motivation for me.” This activity seems to be related to the visits to artistic centers where students witness plays and other performances that seem to contribute to motivate students to learn about literature.

- **What the literature courses activities do for students.**

One of the things that caught the attention of the researchers is how each student interviewed on this investigation comments positively about the experience of taking the courses. Moreover, how they felt about doing all the activities such as visits of authors to the class, visits to cultural centers, drama presentations, writing assignments etc. about the latter, one student said “my poems were chosen for that presentation so it was kind of surprising for me and also like a goal accomplished”, expressing delight in saying this. Another student said adding to this “I feel that we can express things” in addition another student said this about the visit of Salvadorian writers to the class “it was very nice because at the end of his presentation we had the chance to ask questions (to them)”, expressing to have some kind of revealing and enriching experience out of this activity. These activities help students to understand how the life in the inspirations writers use in their works is; everything has a reason in their writings. Another student answered about the same activity.

In general getting acquainted with Salvadorian literature, for many of the students interviewed for the first time, seems to be a revealing and positive deed in their learning process to the point this research was carried out. About this one student said “I know about the way we live also because of literature. Because, there are a lot of people that

describe all the beautiful things that we have here in the country”, he added, “(now) I pay more attention to Salvadorian works”. Another student said, “I like the novel that was written by Manlio Argueta, “Un Día En La Vida”, it’s a very nice novel and he is talking about the experiences that the people had “. About the visits to cultural centers one student had this to say, “I only had the opportunity to go to see the play, **Risitos de oro y los tres ositos**, and that was a really nice experience because I had never gone before”. All participants who had the chance to do this activity felt somehow grateful and pleased about it.

In summary, student participants express to have improved their language skills, language areas as vocabulary and grammar and competence in English language as a whole. One student had this to say “Definitely, we have seen that difference before taking the course and after taking it. Well, in my case my vocabulary improved or increased”. Another added “in my personal opinion, I can say that I improved on writing and reading because in some way we are going to write as the theme. As we learned, we have improved in many words like more vocabulary to write”. One student said this about her reading skill after taking the course “Before taking literature I didn’t like reading because I considered it to be very boring and after I feel a little different about the subject”. In addition, another student said, “I considered only the writing because my classmates and I have to write some poems, and speaking through drama.” It is worth to notice how a few students who did not take place in these literature courses activities for one reason or another had little or nothing to say about them.

4.2 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

KEY INFORMANTS' INTERVIEWS

The following analysis is developed by interpreting each and every question included in the key informant data collection instrument, the objective of the key informant interview was to get acquainted with the teaching strategies from the teachers' point of view. In order to avoid using the real names of the interviewees, the research team has decided to code those as teacher A and teacher B respectively.

Question 1: What are the main criteria for choosing literature materials for your classes?

Answer teacher A: Says that a literature teacher “should think of three main areas: The type of course you are teaching, the type of students who are doing the course and certain factors connected with the text itself.” Starting by the first of them—the type of course you are teaching. Further comments: There are many good reasons for using literature in the classroom: here are few:

Literature is authentic material.

Literature encourages interaction.

Literature expands language awareness.

Literature is motivating.

Answer teacher B: Thinks that the first thing to do is to choose the appropriate material for the students' level of English since in the major of teaching option the

course is taught in the third year when the students barely are attending the intermediate level of English. Teacher B also thinks that sometimes there is a doubt if the students are really going to be able to read the texts for the course.

Another element introduced by teacher B was the approach used in class to choose things related to social awareness about common issues such as education, politics or artistic issues.

Teacher B also chooses materials from different authors and some of them can be Latin-Americans, Americans, English, Canadians, and from all the continents. “One example is the Greek mythology in order to get them acquainted with it since most of the times they were asked to read it in high school and they did not do it.”

Interpretation of the data: At the end, it is easy to perceive that both teachers have different criteria to choose the materials for their classes. Teacher A says that it is important to be conscious or level headed to the course that is taught, literature which is a very different and complex one. But it is not possible to know the type of students who are doing the course before choosing the materials because the teacher gets to know the students until the class performance not before and by that time the materials must be already chosen. On the contrast, teacher B tries to choose all the materials that engage students into the social problems they face in the real life, but taking seriously into consideration the level of English they have.

Question 2: On what model do you use literature in language teaching? (Cultural model, language model, personal growth model etc.) Why?

Answer teacher A: Considers that the cultural model views the literature texts as a product. In other words, it is treated as a source of information about the target culture. Teacher A also says that it is the most traditional approach. According to teacher A, this cultural model examines the social, political and historical background to a text, literary movements and genres. “This approach tends to be quite teacher-centered”.

Regarding the language model, teacher A says that it aims to be more learners-centered, because they pay attention to the way language is used. They come to grips with the meaning and increase their general awareness of English. It aims to help learners read and study literature more competently.

Finally, for the personal growth development model, teacher A thinks that it is a process based approach and tends to be more learner centered too. “It encourages learners to draw on their own opinions, feelings and personal experiences.” “It aims for interaction between the text and the reader in English, helping make the language more memorable”. “This model recognizes the immense power that literature can have to move people and attempts to use that in the classroom”.

Answer teacher B: the teacher B says “I use exactly those three models we mention, cultural, language and personal growth models”.

Teacher B says that cultural aspects or models used in the literature courses open new doors and new windows to knowledge.

In the language model, since students are learning a new language and since literature works are authentic materials because when they were written, the writer did not think on the level of the English of the student.

As to the personal growth development model, teacher B says that it is accomplished “by knowing cultural things, by knowing the language, by knowing political aspects, by knowing economic aspects, by knowing things related to education you grow as a person”.

Interpretation of the data: Both teachers, A and B use the same models (cultural, language and personal growth models) to teach the literature course.

Regarding the cultural model, both of the teachers think that it is used because it is a traditional approach that it is treated as a source of information about the target culture. It examines the social, political and historical background to a text, literary movements and genres. And it opens new doors and new windows of knowledge for the student. All of this besides the main purpose of teaching ESL student which is to give them communicative competences, but literature goes beyond that to put students more exposed to the target language culture. These include the writing applications, analysis of pieces of literature, play performances, contests of poetry reading, visits of local authors and writers to the class and the further relationships held between students and writers and the visits to cultural literary centers to get new inputs to the ideas they get in the classroom.

Question 3: What national authors' texts do you use or have used in your classes?

Answer teacher A: Roque Dalton, Manlio Argueta, Masferrer and others.

Answer teacher B: Roque Dalton, Francisco Gavidia, Alberto Masferrer, Alvaro Menéndez Leal, Manlio Argueta, Aída Párraga, María Cristina Orantes, Claudia Herodier, Jorge Vargas Méndez, Otoniel Guevara, Marisol Briones, Xotchil Cabrera, Vladimir Amaya, Vladimir Baiza, Raquel Cañas. In total, if I can make a list, I will tell you that at least I have had 50 or 60 writers in my class, only Salvadorians.

Interpretation of the data: In this question the teacher A just listed some few of the authors used in the class she or he teaches, while teacher B mentions a longer list and says that only Salvadorians could be no less than 50 or 60 authors that also have been invited to share experiences with the students in the classroom. It can be said that the students that have taken the subject with teacher B have had more guest speakers in the classroom.

Question 4: How long have you been using local literature in your classes?

Answer teacher A: "Since I began teaching literature".

Answer teacher B: "I began teaching in 2002, it is 11 years. Since the very beginning I started inviting Salvadorian poets, writers, even actors and actresses, writers of non-fictional works". I did it because I realized that what we have to think mostly is that we have to make students know about our writers.

As far as I know nobody did this before, but it works because it is good to know how they think through their works and it is even better to know them personally.

Interpretation of the data: In this question, teacher A answered the interview via e-mail because of other duties assigned. That fact limited us from getting more detail information since the questionnaire for the interview was just a guide and many other questions came up throughout the interview. For that reason, teacher B's answer is the only one to be considered for the research. Going into the interpretation of the answer it is easy to come up with the conclusion that the approach of using local literature in the subject is something that comes with the teacher personally. They just try to make it fit within the syllabus because there is no rule or command that obliges them to use local literature but still they do it. When the subject was included in the syllabus, it was with the intention to learn only literature written in English from everywhere in the world but originally written in English. But now the subject is very well accepted by the students and the outcomes of it are trustworthy and joyful.

Question 5: What is the literature material (books, texts, etc?) you use the most? Why?

Answer teacher A: Teacher A lists textbooks, books, plays, poems and also some materials found in INTERNET as the literature materials that are used in the classroom.

Answer teacher B: Teacher B mentions a book called *Literature* by McMillan Company, an old book issued in 1989 as the basic book for the course. Also a book that is an introduction to The Greek Mythology and it is used because it contains easy reading versions of the Greek mythological tales and other materials found in internet, etc.

Interpretation of the data: Teachers that have been teaching literature at the Foreign Languages Department do not plan the classes as a team and they individually choose their materials and methodology to teach the subject. Based on the principles of Academic Freedom (Libertad de Cátedra), they use similar activities but performed in different ways. For instance, teacher A plans the play performance in the classroom while teacher B also plans play performances but in an auditorium with an audience from other subjects and open for everybody to come. Giving the change for the students to become more confident with themselves and getting extra skills which are acting and performing for bigger audience than the classmates. At the end of the course are reflected the different perceptions student have of the subject depending on which teacher they took the course with.

Question 6: Who are the national authors you use or have used more in the course of literature?

Answer teacher A: The teacher just answered “the same I mentioned in question number 3” which are the following: Roque Dalton, Manlio Argueta, Masferrer and others.

Answer teacher B: Teacher B came up with a long list, which contains the following names of authors: Roque Dalton, Manlio Argueta, Francisco Gavidia, Álvaro Menéndez Leal, Otoniel Guevara, Vladimir Baiza, Vladimir Amaya, Roberto Deras, David Juárez, Marco Perna Varre, Raquel Cañas, Xotchil Cabrera, Aída Párraga, María Cristina Orantes, Claudia Herodier, and could go on with names but forgot the rest of them.

Teacher B said that the aspects considered to invite them or choose them to come to the class are friendship, willingness to help by the authors, and the level of writers they are.

Interpretation of the data: These answers show that in the class where teacher B teaches the students have more local literature than the one that is taught by teacher A. This is another element that shows the personal input into planning the classes and the academic freedom (Libertad de cátedra). The students might wish that they were given the same chance or options while taking the subject. Also it motivates the student to talk about his/her own culture, identified with the social problems and stories written about his/her own reality as citizens of a country.

Question 7: What literature works do you use for the specific development of each skill from your students?

Answer teacher A: The teacher answers briefly mentioning short stories, novels, plays, poems, essays, biographies and autobiographies.

Answer teacher B: Teacher B answers right straight saying “Reading”, and explains that those readings are taken from the very basic ones to something more complex. Teacher B says that taking it from the basic to the complex works very well because the students are exposed to other aspects to improve like grammar, vocabulary, and by writing applications to develop their writing skills. Another element used in class is the discussions about the literary texts were they can also improve confidence to speak.

Interpretation of the data: In this question, both say different words, but it can be understood that both are creative to make students learn from the class. It is clear that both put special emphasis on reading and writing as the more developed skills during the

course, even though they practice intonation, learn vocabulary, grammar and “it is not only the material, but also the way you use the material to make students participate and use their skills and sub skills”, Teacher B said.

Question 8: How do you get students to practice their skills acquired through local literature?

Answer teacher A: “By making students read the literary works and then discussing them, analyzing them and criticizing them.”

Answer teacher B: Writing applications, grammar and vocabulary because sometimes the students are using new vocabulary in the language when they are writing, even grammar because they realize that in literature you can use many different ways of grammatical issues. The teacher B says that in the classroom the students are taught how to read through contests of poetry reading.

Interpretation of the data: Teacher A focuses more on understanding of the literary works, using more analysis of the how and why facts in the works happen in the way they happened, making them give their own interpretation of the facts through discussion, critics and analysis. Meanwhile, teacher B focuses more on very academic aspects such as vocabulary and grammar. Both of the teachers make students read poetry so they can learn how to read it in a very professional way, not only discovering the magic of the words used by the authors, but also they practice others skills than just reading by discussing, analyzing, criticizing, grammar skills, vocabulary and the skill of word selection used by the authors. All in all, the students of literature really practice their skills due to the methodology teachers of the course use for teaching the subject.

Question 9: According to your assessment criteria, what are the skills that students develop the most at the end of the literature courses?

Answer teacher A: “Thinking skills, language skills and analytical skills”

Answer teacher B: Teacher B answers that reading and writing are the most developed skills in the course, but the teacher B also adds that in a way they improve speaking, intonation and vocabulary too, but less than the main ones mention before.

Interpretation of the data: Teacher A mostly uses the methodology of making the students use their minds because students think and analyze the literature they read during the course. But the teacher B mentions that students developed the most reading and writing. In fact, it is not possible to read without analyzing the pieces of literature. When students read, they try to find out what is the message of the writer to the audience. They also try to find out the context in which the material was written. When students read they read out and they have to pronounce the words in a specific way to make it sound like poetry developing in that way their speaking and intonation. The same when they write they think first what words can express better their ideas and feelings at the moment they are in front of the paper. So, they improve their vocabulary and thinking skills.

Question 10: On what percentage do you consider that your goals regarding the student learning are accomplished at the end of the course?

Answer teacher A: Teacher A considers that the goal is accomplished in an 80 percent in total.

Answer teacher B: Teacher B explains that because of factors like large groups, it is quite difficult to come up with a number but thinks that in general is an 80 percent of accomplishment of the goal of the course.

Interpretation of the data: Both teachers A and B considered that the goals accomplished in the course of literature have the 80 percent. Because regarding the different methodologies the teachers use for the course, at the end, students get to practice the skills by performing or reading and, by the end of the semester, they finish very happy and surprised that they did something they never thought they would. Due to the lack of resources such as equipment and physical spaces to develop this subject to the best, the teachers use their creativity to make it a very great experience for their students.

Question 11: According to your assessments, how relevant were the visits of writers to the class of literature?

Answer teacher A: Teacher A just says that the visits were very relevant but without further explanation, which can be assumed that in the classroom they have visits that work out very well with the students.

Answer teacher B: Teacher B says that it was so relevant that even after finishing the course, some students make and keep friendship relations with some of the writers. Some of them are already writing, interchanging or publishing with the writers that were invited to class.

Interpretation of the data: the teachers A and B agree that the visits of writers to their classes were so relevant for the students, because those were a good motivation to the

students to start writing their own literature. The students felt identified with the writers since they are fellow Salvadorians and try to speak out their mind in a very creative and artistic way. They also got to recognize that even though our writers are not recognized, they write with a very good quality of literature. In some cases, there are students that after these visits they have gotten a very close relation of friendship with some of the poets that after the course or the major they continue involved in literature movements and producing new literature or poetry. After these visits, new talents and writers in this country have been born.

Question 12: According to your assessment, how relevant were the visits of the course to cultural-artistic-literary centers?

Answer teacher A: “They were very relevant” and no further explanation than that.

Answer teacher B: Teacher B says that they were relevant because they are assigned some activities such as performing a play and if they come to see a real actor performing or giving some speeches, students pay attention to the details of the play and then they get hints by observing to prepare their own performances.

Interpretation of the data: for both teachers the visits were so relevant because the students attended some play performances and after the show they got the chance to come up with questions to the actors and actresses about their concerns towards the performances they were assigned to do in the class. Some of them had to perform some plays or read poetry in the classroom and other had to perform plays or read poetry for a broader audience in an auditorium. This made the visit to cultural, artistic, literary centers very relevant for the course.

Question 13: What are the methods to motivate students make their own creative writing?

Answer teacher A: Teacher A says that in the classroom the students get the motivation by reading, discussing, working in groups, making oral and written reports.

Answer teacher B: Teacher B says that the students are taught some very few things related to writing because it is no necessary that the students know how to write an essay, a report or an article, but something more related to creation, the use of imagination. They are encouraged to do that taking into account that the inspiration comes all in a sudden, so they can get inspiration and come up with very good works.

Interpretation of the data: Teacher A motivates students by reading and then discovering what they like and would write about, discussing it in groups in order to get more inputs from the group and then reporting it written or orally. Teacher B motivates students by teaching them some techniques about writing emphasizing on creation and usage of imagination because it is the basis of writing but also letting the students know that inspiration comes in a sudden and when it happens, students can come up with very good works. Students also get inspiration and motivation to create their own writing after having met some writers that come to the class and notice that if they feel something and they want to write their feelings down on paper they are producing literature.

Question 14: How do you use audiovisual and technological resources in the literature courses?

Answer teacher A: Teacher A says that in the classroom, technological resources are used a lot and turns out to be very relevant to use them.

Answer teacher B: Teacher B says that in order to make use of audiovisual and technological resources, it is necessary to look for movies related to literary works to be projected in class, in other times audios of literary works, it is used technological equipment such as computers, projectors, CD players, the board, markers and basic resources. The teacher also mentions the lack of technological equipment at the Foreign Languages Department, where there are only two multimedia projectors, and a pair of computers which make it very hard to get them at least the teacher books for them some weeks before since there are around 50 teachers that need them in the different other subjects. Another resource used according to teacher B is the internet, blogs and social media but it is quite difficult since there is no wireless connection in the Foreign Language Department.

Interpretation of the data: the teachers use a lot of different audiovisual and technological resources. It depends on the teacher's creativity because for literature they use movies or audios related to literary works. Many other resources used in literature classes like, computers, multimedia projectors, CD players can be found at the FLD but very limited. The board and the markers are the most accessible resources. Internet is a very important resource in these times but there is no access to it in the FLD. Because of the lack of resources like this, the teachers still make use of social networks and blogs to

keep the students connected in a way with the flow of the course. The visits of writers and visits to cultural centers also help to overcome the lack of technological resources at the Foreign Languages Department. Besides the visits of writers, poetry reading contests, and everything the teachers use for the course, the access to audiovisual and technological resources regarding question 11, could make the teacher's goal to be accomplished to a 100%.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

So far we have seen some of the theories that have informed the practice of teaching and learning through literature. We have already taken a look at the reasons many authors state in favor of the use of literature to enhance the students learning process. We have also clarified some basic concepts about our topics. In addition, we have talked about the benefits of including local literature in second language teaching. We have come down to our educational context in order to study the lack of serious systematic research on how the implementing of literature on the syllabus design benefits or hinders ESL students. Finally, we have pulled out a research and gathered vast amount of data making use of the resources at hand with the objective to satisfy our main research question: **What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?** The following chapter represents the summing up of all this work done so far in the form of major findings, conclusions and recommendations for future research on the subject.

5.1 Major Findings (discussion)

Skill development and motivation

The key finding encountered in this investigation is that after taking these courses students seem to be highly motivated towards literature according to their answers when interviewed for this research. This may be related with what they experienced in many of the activities performed in class. After performing these activities, the students feel identified with what they read. They are more interested in reading because now they analyze things (readings and books in general) more than they did in the past or before taking the subject. In general, students seem to be motivated towards literature.

According to this information, the literature courses are highly motivating for students when it comes for them to describe what they consider to be the key elements they have learned may then be tools for better comprehension of any written text or methods of self expression.

Powerful learning and motivational activities

The learning activities that can be considered to be more motivational are drama presentations (plays), writing poetry, visits of writers to the class and the visits to cultural artistic centers. During the course of each interview the research team had the chance to witness the different perceptions expressed by students who had the chance to perform these activities and those which for one reason or another they did not. First of all, the students interviewed on this investigation who did partake on drama presentation activity like it and thought of it as a good learning experience regardless of the grade (even though grades obtained were not asked on the interviews) or overall outcome achieved by them individually on the activity. According to their answers, this activity is so well implemented that the students come back to the campus even after they graduated, for witnessing the performances in order to enjoy themselves.

Motivation through personal involment

Secondly, students got involved in writing by making poems themselves. This was highly motivating for them and may have been the result of having a chance for self-expression, something that does not seem to be present in other courses. In addition, another activity that seems to be a motivational factor for students is the visits of writers to the class. The “bringing Salvadorian writers to the class” strategy really impacts

positively on students' motivation about literature and learning. This may be the result of personal involvement this particular activity fostered on students. There seems to be an emotional factor that comes from meeting new people per se or a real sense of admiration towards figures of authority in a particular field of knowledge. This seems to be so much a factor as to motivate them to write themselves. This may be related with having contact with the writers. According to their answers, this gives them the opportunity to understand the context in which these writers develop their work. The visits of writers to the classroom are beneficial in terms of students' motivation to learning literature. The visits to cultural artistic centers seem to have a similar effect on students. The research team may fairly say that it is one key element for students' learning process and teachers teaching process alike. Finally, according to students' answers this motivation is the result of the activity itself. The effects on students' motivation produced by these specific activities seem to be there, especially when developed by an experienced teacher.

Different perceptions

Another mayor finding encountered on this research is that taking two literature courses and not just one, affects students' perception about literature. It may be related with the fact that the learning of all the topics included in the two semester version of the literature courses is essential to students' response to the subject. This may be the result of the fact that taking two literature courses gets students to practice their language skills through a wider variety of activities, which reflects directly on students perceptions about literature. This might be considered to be one of the advantages of taking the two or more literature courses in the learning process, since by studying all

the topics, many skills are developed at the same time. Moreover, this may be the result of the wide range of beneficial aspects derived from literature-based activities through these specific two literature courses.

5.2 Limitations

Even though the research team was able to carry out most of the plan for the present research, there were also some hard times in pulling off this investigation. Here are some of the limitations the research team faced during the course of this work. Firstly, there was a great amount of time in the preparation stage expending almost a year in making and remaking the outline and changing several times the research question in order to find the better research option for a consistent contribution to educational processes. There was also an amount of time spent in the making of data collection items. Secondly, once the data collection instruments were completed, there were some limitations in the implementation stage too. The research team had to coordinate with teacher in charge of literature courses many times before starting interviewing the subjects of this research. Besides that, the research team took the decision of combining the personal interview with the focus group format in order to accommodate time schedules to that of the student participants. When these interviews finally took place, there were also some problems with the environment at which these interviews were taken place with a lot of noise pollution interrupting and making it really hard for the research team in the transcription stage. There were also limitations concerning the sample and population due to difficulty in accessing the whole of the subjects for this research. For the interviews to key informants, the research team took the decision of carrying them out one by internet, due to lack of time on the part of one of the key

informants, and the other one outside the university main campus when semester was already over. There were also limitations related with personnel in charge of this research due to personal occupations.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Investigation

Taking into consideration all the lessons learned by the research team in the course of this investigation, there are some useful recommendations to point out for future researchers. Firstly, any researcher interested in continuing this investigation should take care of the preparation stages in order to avoid wasting too much time in the elaboration of data collection instruments. It is important to think beforehand in the construction of these instruments in order to avoid weaknesses or failures in connecting research objectives with the actual information that the researcher seeks to obtain from the subjects. Secondly, during the implementation stages the research team recommend to interview the subjects, in case the researcher intends a quantitative investigation, in a quiet place in order to avoid noise pollution as much as possible. Thirdly, future studies should employ different stages of observation to subjects to validate information between defferent generations of students. He research team also recommends expanding the population and sample of future studies to have a wider variety of points of views to contribute to the research. In addition, it is also important to do enough schedules planning in order to avoid time problems as the ones mentioned above before the implementing of data collection instruments. Finally, if possible the team recommends getting a larger team crew for future researches on the subject in order to avoid some of the problems presented in this investigation.

5.4 Conclusions

The three major conclusions that can be made from this study are: Firstly, all the activities (drama presentation, writing poetry, speech, visits of writers to the class, etc) performed by students of the literature courses are a source of extrinsic motivation for most of the students at least. Besides that, these activities seem to stand alone so to speak in terms of the effects they produce on students. The motivation these activities foster on students impacts directly on their learning process with trays that can be a perceived way after they have been accomplished. This is something to take into account when planning the syllabus and lesson plans of future subjects related to literature or even any subject that could post a chance of using any similar activity in classrooms where English as a second language is being taught. The research team recommends the implementation of these or similar activities in other courses on the basis of all the information in favor of this gathered and analyzed on this study.

In the second place, another major conclusion is that there is a different perception about the motivation of students who take the two literature courses that the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador offers. In this case, the students form “*Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza*”, from those who take just one literature course. The researchers strongly recommend the implementation of two or more courses of literature for both majors in order to cover all the topics thoroughly. Since, this could help to avoid the apparent gap of motivation and interest between the two kinds of students. The researchers also emphasize the inclusion of all, if not more, the topics and activities above mentioned on the syllabus for these possible future literature courses.

Thirdly, another conclusion the team reached through this investigation is that the topics included and taught so far on the syllabus of literature courses at the Foreign Language Department are an important part in the development of the students' language skills and language areas. This research team was able to testify students' knowledge of basic concepts about literature during the administering of the personal interviews and focus groups. Adding to that, the team found that teachers in charge of the literature courses, past and current ones, said to have accomplished their educational goals on the same percentage (about 80%) which may indicate in the first place that this course design presents topics and subjects that are ideal for students to acquire new knowledge so much as to do well in formal testing according to course objectives and to develop their language skills. According to the observation, they have already grasped the main concepts taught through both courses which seem to corroborate teachers' claims concerning students' assessments. All this information speaks in favor of including literature based activities and literature related topics in future courses at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

5.5 A final word

On this research we have studied the main concepts, which deal with the inclusion of literature topics on the teaching of English as a Second or foreign Language. The authors have also carried out an investigation to find out how these theories of learning apply to our educational contexts. The research team have analyzed the data and reached some important conclusions. The researchers have also overcome, somehow, the difficulties a work like this one imposes on the researchers. In addition, during the course of this research it was found that the literature teachers at the FLD are very creative to accomplish the concept of literature. They do this by asking the students to “live the experience of literature” by reading literature, by writing literature, by inviting writers and poets to the class and by taking the students to literary-cultural-artistic centers, by challenging the students to write and deliver speeches with a larger audience than their classmates, by asking them to perform literary works such as plays or making poetry readings contest with a jury board made of real poets and writers. They do all this based on a specific learning model dealt with on previous chapters. The authors also found how the teachers had the students experience literature by themselves through all these activities. The researchers have also looked at how these activities are able to change students’ perceptions about literature as a whole. Finally, in answering the research question of **what is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador?** The research team can say that according to the evidence gathered and analyzed in the present investigation, the students and teachers’ perception and response towards these specific classroom activities and syllabus design is positive. It may also

indicate that all the activities performed in the course increase students' motivation and interest at the same level. The researchers can say that they alone DO have an incidence on students' learning process specially when concerned with students' motivation towards literature and learning in general.

CHAPTER 6

BIBLIOGRAPHY

6.1 References

- Baird, Alexander (1969) "*Teaching overseas: the question of linguistic competence*".
ELT vol 23, no 4
- Collie, J. and S, Slater. (1990). "*Literature in language classroom: a resource book of ideas and activities*". Cambridge CUP.
- Harmer, Jeremy. "*The practice of English language teaching*". USA. Oxford University press. Third edition.
- Hismanoglu, Murat. (2005) "*Teaching English through literature*". *Journal of linguistics* .vol.1 no 1
- Merriam- Webster's collegiate dictionary, eleventh edition (2003)
- Glower, Ana Maria. "*An integrated guide for exploring literature in the classroom*"
ESA. Universidad de El Salvador (2009).
- Markwardt, Albert H. (1981) "*What literature to teach: principles of selection and class treatment*" English teaching forum, 19,1,
- Moody, H.L.B. (1971). "*The teaching of literature*" Longman
- Povey, J. (1974) "*Literature in TESL programs: the language and the culture*".
- S, Elangovan. (2009). "*Using local literature in English or translations for English teaching*".
- Topping, Donald M. (1968) "*Linguistic or literature: An approach to language*"

CHAPTER 7

ANNEXES

PRE- PROPOSAL

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The lack of serious systematic research on how the implementing of literature on the syllabus design benefits or hinders ESL students learning process at the University of El Salvador.

2. OBJECTIVES

General objective:

- Identify ways in which literature courses impact students learning process.

Specific objectives

- Know how taking literature courses works for ESL students at the University of El Salvador.
- Identify the way literature is implemented to impact the learning process of ESL students at foreign language department at the University of El Salvador.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION:

What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Subsidiary questions:

- What is literature?
- Why is it necessary to use literature in the learning process of Foreign Language students at the University of El Salvador?
- What are the benefits of taking literature courses for ESL students at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador?
- How is the literature courses implemented?
- What is the teaching and learning strategies implemented in the literature courses at the University of El Salvador?
- Do taking literature courses improve ESL students' macro skills?
- How is literature perceived by students before and after taking the literature courses?

4. JUSTIFICATIONS

- The necessity of having a research on the subject that allows teachers to find ways of implementing literature in their curricula.
- The lack of serious in-depth research about literature and its impact in teaching.
- The fact that local literature is not included in the learning process of ESL students at the University of El Salvador.

5. DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

- 4) We are going to delimitate our research to ESL students from the literature courses at the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador.
- 5) This research is going to be developed through semester II at the University of El Salvador main campus.

6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

ANTECEDENTS

- The role of literature in English language teaching.
- Research in using literature with ESL teaching.

Data Collection instruments
(students Questionnaire)

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: Identify ways in which literature courses impact students learning process.

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

- 1- **How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?**
- 2- **In what way have your macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking etc.) improved after having studied the literature courses?**
- 3- **How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures?**
- 4- **How do you consider that the study of short stories have helped your reading skill?**
- 5- **How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in an emotional level, taking into consideration the selective use of words to convey the real meaning?**
- 6- **How do you think the studying of Salvadorian literature helps students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?**

- 7- **How did you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadoran literary works studied in the courses?**
- 8- **In what way did you improve your writing skills after taking literature courses?**
- 9- **How did you benefit yourself from creative writing (producing literature) in your personal development?**
- 10- **How do you think the reading of novels helps students understand the target language culture?**
- 11- **How do you think your creativity and sensitivity is developed by studying drama in the classroom?**
- 12- **How do you consider the visits or writers to the class?**
- 13- **How do you consider the visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers?**
- 14- **How do you think studying literature helps develop critical thinking?**
- 15- **After taking the literature courses, what do you think about local literature?**
- 16- **How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited or not after taking the literature courses?**

Data collection instruments
(key informant interview)

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department



KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: To learn about the reasons why teachers use local literature in order to teach English as a foreign language.

Instructions: interviewer gets key informant to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

- **What are the main criteria for choosing literature materials for your classes?**
- **On what model do you use literature in language teaching? (Cultural model, language model, personal growth model) Why?**
- **What national author's texts do you use or have used in your classes?**
- **How long have you been using local literature in your classes?**
- **What is the literature material (books, texts, etc.?) you use the most? Why?**
- **Who are the national authors you use or have used more in the course of literature?**

- **What literary works do you use for the specific development of each skill from your students?**
- **How do you get students practice their skills acquired through local literature?**
- **According to your assessment criteria, what are the skills that students develop the most at the end of the literature course?**
- **On what percentage do you consider that your goals regarding the student learning are accomplished at the end of the course?**
- **According to your assessments, how relevant were the visits of writers to the class of literature?**
- **According to your assessments, how relevant were the visits of the course to cultural-artistic-literary centers?**
- **What are your methods to motivate students make their own creative writing?**
- **How do you use audiovisual and technological resources in the literature courses?**

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department
Students Questionnaire 1



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: Identify ways in which literature courses impact students learning process.

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis

1-How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?

Well, now I pay more attention on every document that I get in my hands. I like to analyze any aspect that a story has. I also read more, 'cause since I took literature; I think there are many things I got to learn through literature.

2-In what way have your macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking etc.) improved after having studied the literature courses?

Well, I think that I speak better than before, before taking the literature course.

3-Interviewer: why?

I think that now I know many words and I also speak fluently. I used to speak very slowly and now I think I speak faster than before.

4-Interviewer: do you think that speaking is the macro skill you improved the most?

Yeah, that's what I think...

5-How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures

Well, when you read a story, you know about the culture of the place where it has been made right? So when you read a short story or a story that you know you can know the culture of the people that have made that story or that piece of literature.

6-How do you consider that the study of short stories have helped your reading skill?

First, that I increased my vocabulary, and I also speak better, ahh inclusively I improved grammar also because you know the structures and all those things.

7-Interviewer: so do you think that has helped you read better?

Yeah I think so...

8-How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in an emotional level, taking into consideration the selective use of words to convey the real meaning?

Through poetry you express your emotions, your feelings. I was the kind of people that didn't like poetry, but after being studying literature, I learned a lot and now how to analyze a poem. Now I understand better, well, at least I understand what the poem says in the poetry works.

9-Interviewer: is there any new grammatical structure that you learned studying poetry?

Hum, well, not specific, what I liked the most from poetry is that you can be free in the way that you speak. The principal idea is that you express yourself being creative through the use of words.

10-How do you think the studying of Salvadorian literature helps students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?

Now I know many people I didn't have any idea that they were here in El Salvador right? I know about the way we live also because of literature. Because, there is a lot of people, that describe all the beautiful things that we have here in the country.

11-Interviewer: did you feel involved in the reading knowing that it is a Salvadorian who wrote that story?

I paid more attention to Salvadorian works. I used to analyze the works more than the other ones from another country. I like to look for other materials also; I tried not to care about the names of the poems or the people that makes it, but I try to understand better the poems and also to look for information the poems are made of.

12-How did you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadoran literary works studied in the courses?

Well, I am sure I have to learn more, every day I discover new people and many young people that are writing. Here for example, at the university we have some of people in the literature course that are doing really good job. Not only because they are from this major but also because they have the talent for writing poetry.

13-In what way did you improve your writing skills after taking literature courses?

Well, I pay more attention the way I write, I try to use synonyms for example that I didn't do before. I also try to express my ideas in the way it can be easily understood for other people.

14-Interviewer: Did you find yourself using some of the things that you have read in your own writing?

Yeah in some way, because when we were asked to write poetry for me it was very difficult at the beginning, but then I just let myself flying with the words.

15-How did you benefit yourself from creative writing (producing literature) in your personal development?

Well, when I want to express something I practically do writing. I think it a very good way to express yourself, and then you can also modify your words and get other ideas about what you write.

16-How do you think the reading of novels helps students understand the target language culture?

Basically, through vocabulary, through phrases and idioms that we learn when we are reading any kind of material, especially those that are very extends.

17-How do you think your creativity and sensitivity are developed by studying drama in the classroom?

I pay more attention on different words I try to get not only the meaning but also the feelings that are behind those words.

18-How do you consider the visits or writers to the class?

I liked them, because I learned a lot from every poet that came into the class because you don't see only the book but also you know the person that is behind those written words.

18-Interviewer: so for you it was very important also to know the poet or the writer that came to the class?

Yes, 'cause when you know that person, you have an idea why this person writes these pieces of work and the way they did it.

19-How do you consider the visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers?

I think they are very important because you improve what you know you learn more about those things that you know. I met some people that said it was a waste of time but don't think because you always learn something from those experiences.

20-How do you think studying literature helps develop critical thinking?

I think it helps you a lot since you have to analyze and you have to care about all the elements that are part of a written piece.

21-After taking the literature courses, what do you think about local literature?

Well, now I pay more attention to them. There are many people that I didn't have the simplest idea that they were written and that they were writing right? And I do it because I now all my origins, I now the way people live and then there are many things that I discover when I read their works.

22-How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited or not after taking the literature courses?

Particularly, I think that my level of English has increased. Ummm, first and that is something that for me it's very, very important is the vocabulary. I know more words through reading. And also the way I speak, because it is true that you read and that you write, but it can be also reflected in the way you speak.

23-Interviewer: How would you compare the literature course that you take, you receive here at the university to other courses that you may have had in your high school?

Well, the first thing and probably the most important for me is that you read, you are asked to read. That's something I didn't do in high school. For me, was very boring to be reading something, but now I try to read four big books a year besides the material I have from the university, right? That is something that I really enjoy now. In the first, it was very difficult for me because that was something I didn't like it, but now I love it.

24-Interviewer: Do you think you didn't like that because you didn't understand the parts of it? Like, what was the beginning, the falling action, the rising action? How is it fiction construct and e very thing?

Yeah, and basically because I didn't know why I had to read those things. I read them because I was asked to do it; nobody told me all the methods or all the beautiful things that you discover through reading.

So, for me it was very nice (the course).

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department
Students Questionnaire 2:



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: Identify ways in which literature courses impact students learning process.

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

1- How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?

Well for me in a very different way, before taking the literature course for me it was boring, but after taking this, I realizes that so many things that I can learn from literature...like ahhh you know...another cultures...and new vocabulary as well...you know it's a good way for me to improve my speaking as well as my reading skills.

2- Talking about that...in what way have your macro skills? Reading writing, speaking etc improved after taking the literature courses?

Well... by studying literature by reading...you going to improved your vocabulary as well as you speaking... like in this presentation where you are performing a play you are improving your pronunciation as well...your speaking...also listening and reading of course because you have to read the dialogues in order to play the play haha.

3- How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures?

Well you know... in every play there's a different short story in which you can realize about the context...Another culture another country...by studying that by practicing.... you are learning a new culture and putting into practice.

4- How do you consider that the study of short stories has helped your reading skill?

Well I can see that I read a little bit faster than I did before taking literature classes... This literature course...ahhh I like it more I guess...

5- How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in a n emotional level?

You know...sometimes we fell something that we don't really know. we are not really sure about how to say it. But by studying poetry you learn a way to express yourself ...your emotions using the exact word you want to use in order to express you know the exact meaning.

6- How do you think the study of Salvadorian literature help students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?

When you are reading you own culture...by reading Salvadorian literature. It's a good way to realize society...how people in your country are and how they were...to know how they are...you need to know how they were...and how they going to be...you know by studying your culture you can make like predictions about it.

7- Have you found some of that in the literature works that you've read? By reading

Salvadorian writers you realize the different ways the can write...all of them write about the same thing, which is society, form different Perspectives.

8- How you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadorian literature works study in the courses?

Well...I identify myself with the people who descry the writer ...and the writer himself who describe social problems ...Salvadorian writers present problems nowadays we have the same problems...nothing has been done to solve this problems. You look solutions... It helps you to understand society and also to do something to improve it.

9- Do you think that thing that you tell about...that would happen to you if you read other authors...from the states or from Europe?

I don't think so...people from other countries write about their own countries...their own culture but yeah you can learn something from their culture but here we are facing another reality...thru reading Salvadorian writers you are reading your own story and in this way you can understand it better.

10- In what way have you improved you writing skill after taking the literature courses?

You know the teacher ask us in this course to write a short story, in order to do that first you have to read a lot and then you have to make up a story, you have to check vocabulary check the spelling, check you grammar and it helps you a lot improving you writing skill and you know there's always a mistake that you didn't realize before and you are improving and improving you story until it becomes a piece of art I guess haha.

11- How did you benefit yourself from that creative writing producing literature in your personal development?

Well you know as a teacher I guess in the working part it's a very good way in order to teach vocabulary, you make up a story and present it to the students and it helps you a lot... I am a teacher and it helps me a lot just for presenting vocabulary from you know taking the story into my own storyif I have not learn this in this course...what could I do?

12- How do you think the reading of novels helps the students understand the target language culture?

Novels give the students the opportunity to get involved a little in the long story, and the vocabulary and the sequence functions are different from ours here in the country ...they think that and they realize. Well this thing does not happen here in El Salvador but maybe it does in other country.

13- How do you think you creativity and sensitivity are developed by studying drama in the classroom?

You know I only can say that showing emotions ...in this course you learn how to show your emotions ...and you show feelings in the drama when you are performing the play you have to show emotions if not its becomes a flat character and you have to be emotional in order to convey meaning.

14- How do you consider the visits of writers to the class?

It's a source of knowledge there's been people that have been writing they have create important stories poems and by talking to them we are learning and realize.

15- How do you consider the visits to cultural artistic centers?

As I told you before one thing is to read about something and other is to have your own experience with it ...you grow up with that experience.

16- It seems that you have used your knowledge that you've encountered in this literature courses in order to grow like in your teaching but what about your critical thinking ...how do you think studying literature helps develop critical thinking?

It helps you a lot in the way that you have to think a little bit more about things about what is the environment of the story, what's the drama of the story what is happening ... you are like taking risks about what is going to happen you know like predicting things and in the story when you read you think ahh maybe this is the bad guy ...he is the killer to say something and you are criticizing that.

17- Do you think that from knowing that from knowing the characters of a novel or the parts of a novel that will help you understand life for example...because they say literature is a reflection of life?

Exactly, those stories in literature they came from real life if you understand the stories you are able to understand real life as well.

18- After taking the literature courses what you think about local literature?

Local literature... well it's true that we have a lot of things to learn I guess we are in a very good level we have talent here in El Salvador we have writers but what we have to do in order to help them is to encourage them by buying their writings their novels their poems the thing here is to encourage them.

19- How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited if so, after taking the literature courses ...do you think your competence in English is better now than before that you didn't know anything about literature?

Absolutely, it has improved my English skills comparing before taking this class. Before it was a little bit poorer and also I didn't know about literature and now I guess it's an art ...I am really happy for being part of this class I am very anxious to write poems.

20- How would you describe literature courses in one word?

Fantastic!

**University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department
Students Questionnaire 3:**



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: Identify ways in which literature courses impact students learning process.

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

1 How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?

Well, let's get to the point; in my case it was not difficult because I enjoy reading and writing literature is interesting.

2 In what way have your macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking etc.) improved after having studied the literature courses?

I improve my writing skills because I had to write some poems and we had to analyze some literature about social problems, identifying through the dramas.

3 How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures?

Remember when we talk about other countries we talk about culture the way they behave and interact within the citizens, at the moment you connect with the literature from other countries, you are learning unconsciously.

4 How do you consider that the study of short stories have helped your reading skill?

Whenever you read you learn especially reading the stories coverer in the class, whenever you read you learn specifically you increase your vocabulary.

5 How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in an emotional level, taking into consideration the selective use of words to convey the real meaning?

I consider student invent when they write so it is not much healthy for them.

6 How do you think the studying of Salvadorian literature helps students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?

7 How did you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadoran literary works studied in the courses?

It helps a lot that we didn't study deeply the Salvadorian literature so we didn't develop in a personal level. I could not identify with Salvadorian literary works because it wasn't the opportunity for studying in the class.

8 In what way did you improve your writing skills after taking literature courses?

I have to say that is necessary to think at the time of writing. After taking the literature I am a better thinker.

9 How did you benefit yourself from creative writing (producing literature) in your personal development?

I began writing poems and I enjoyed because I liked writing previous to the class and I consider it was an opportunity to practice.

10 How do you think the reading of novels helps students understand the target language culture?

Now I believe the target language is better understood at the moment I read and write because there is a reason for the writers to create novels.

11 How do you think your creativity and sensitivity are developed by studying drama in the classroom?

I learned a lot, but I consider the creativity is not developed on the students because they memorize many things and many words at the moment they perform the drama.

12 How do you consider the visits or writers to the class?

I learned some techniques to improve my writing skills when the writers explained to the class that was very helpful.

13 How do you consider the visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers?

Unfortunately the day of the class visit to the cultural artistic center I couldn't come to the class. I don't know how the opportunity was, but in fact, my classmates said it was amazing.

14 How do you think studying literature helps develop critical thinking?

In my personal case, literature helped me to express my feelings and the opportunity for sharing through the writing assignments.

15 After taking the literature courses, what do you think about local literature?

In other courses, everybody begins studying and covering literature from other countries, but it is important to know first our literature enhancing our culture.

16 How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited or not after taking the literature courses?

Yeah, it has benefitted me since the beginning of the course because I was learning vocabulary in all the materials I read.

**University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department
Students Questionnaire 4:**



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: To prove that students of the literature courses obtain benefits in the English learning process thru literature.

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis

1 How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?

My perception about literature is that it is a subject that permits students express their feelings that in other subjects you can't. It's very different show the way that you are when it's time to study writing as a subject.

2 In what way have your macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking etc.) improved after having studied the literature courses?

Before taking literature I didn't like reading because I considered it to be very boring and after I feel a little different about the subject. It was not a pure thing.

3 How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures?

My facility was in literature in general. but in deeply not only short stories face the culture from another country, but also the plays acted and performed with different situations.

4 How do you consider that the study of short stories have helped your reading skill?

Explanation: The interviewer avoided tis question by mistake.

5 How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in an emotional level, taking into consideration the selective use of words to convey the real meaning?

My class studied poetry in general due to the short time the class was developed. As a contrast, in the other carrier they study the poetry in a second course of literature.

6 How do you think the studying of Salvadorian literature helps students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?

I noticed that I and my classmates got involved with the authors and got very interested listening the different words they presented in the class and everybody realized the hard job writers faced in different times like the civil war and revolution it was an inspiration of men literary works.

7 How did you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadoran literary works studied in the courses?

In fact, I can identify personally with one of the works written by Roque Dalton because of the persecution he suffered at that time and I have never doubted maybe the reason of his death was the writings in which he proclaims injustice in our society.

8 In what way did you improve your writing skills after taking literature courses?

Ok, one of my improvements was the writing of my own biography using and analyzing the important situation that happened in my life and I learned that the information was relevant for me because I was talking about me in real life.

9 How did you benefit yourself from creative writing (producing literature) in your personal development?

My development was creating literature like short stories and after that I was able to identify all the parts that a short story has and before I read no paying attention to those details.

10 How do you think the reading of novels helps students understand the target language culture?

Reading novels help to relate to the different situations and the opportunity for the authors to express maybe their dreams or their illusions in their lives.

In one way, to present history through their writings.

11 How do you think your creativity and sensitivity are developed by studying drama in the classroom?

It's incredible my own experience when I studied drama if an actor is able to cry without feeling in that sense and also, express happiness even if he feels sad.

12 How do you consider the visits or writers to the class?

The visits of the writers to the class was helpful because they shared advises how to perform in a better way taking their own experience in the theater.

13 How do you consider the visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers?

Our teacher give us the opportunity to visit a theater to watch actors performing a place, this visit was very interesting because we could get ideas how to perform in a better way. So, the experience was very enriching to the last activity we are doing, performing plays.

14 How do you think studying literature helps develop critical thinking?

Unbelievable, now I learned to criticize a piece of literature and tried to uncover the message the writer tries to say to the readers in the pieces of literature.

15 After taking the literature courses, what do you think about local literature?

My personal opinion about local literature is that we cannot ignore our history in one way to learn more it is reading the locals authors before the ones that are from other cultures.

16 How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited or not after taking the literature courses?

Is great because now I am able to express I a different and better way besides the lots of materials we cover in one semester, we have to run reading the materials from one class to the next as a big difference of our classmates of the “licenciatura opcion enseñanza.

**University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department
Students Questionnaire 5:**



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis

1 How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?

Definitely my total perception about the has changed since I study the literature

I really like writing so I say the Literature is very important in my life now.

2 In what way have your macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking etc.) improved after having studied the literature courses? I considered only the writing because my classmates and I have to write some poems, and speaking through drama.

3 How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures?

It is a fact that at the moment you connect with literature from other countries you learned unconsciously.

4 How do you consider that the study of short stories have helped your reading skill?

Whenever you read you learn specially reading short stories.

- 5 **How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in an emotional level, taking into consideration the selective use of words to convey the real meaning?**

His opinion is that students invent when they write so it's not so much helpful.

- 6 **How do you think the studying of Salvadorian literature helps students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?**

I made emphasis that I didn't study Salvadoran Literature maybe a reason is that the subject is too much saturated and the time is not enough.

- 7 **How did you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadoran literary works studied in the courses?**

I can't identify with Salvadoran literary works because in the class it wasn't the opportunity to study. But in a way I feel connection with The Literature of Roque Dalton.

- 8 **In what way did you improve your writing skills after taking literature courses?**

Because I have to think what I have to write for the assignments, I considered I developed my critical thinking in big way after I read any literature.

- 9 **How did you benefit yourself from creative writing (producing literature) in your personal development?**

Let me tell you that enjoyed writing poems. And my advantages were that I like writing previous to take literature as a class so he considered a great opportunity to learn more tips about this.

10 **How do you think the reading of novels helps students understand the target language culture?**

Its helps me to understand at the moment I read the novels in the target language.

11 **How do you think your creativity and sensitivity are developed by studying drama in the classroom?**

I learned a lot, and I considered the creativity is developed in the students because they perform as if they were living the situation stated in the plays.

12 **How do you consider the visits or writers to the class?**

In my personal case the visits were very helpful because we as students learned many techniques to improve the writing skills in the literature.

13 **How do you consider the visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers?**

I didn't go when the teacher take the students to visits those centers.

14 **How do you think studying literature helps develop critical thinking?**

No so much. I don't have the opportunity to express my feelings.

15 **After taking the literature courses, what do you think about local literature?**

I considered that is better to know first our local literature.

16 **How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited or not after taking the literature courses?**

Yes, it has benefited because I was learning vocabulary in all the materials I read.

**University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department
Students Questionnaire 6:**



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

1 How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?

As a good student I love reading and I considered the approach used by the teacher was the best.

2 In what way have your macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking etc.) improved after having studied the literature courses?

Almost all my classmates have problems with reading, but in my personal case I do not have problems with reading, I considered my problem was with speaking.

3 How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures?

Reading in general facilitates the learning of other cultures so I learned many aspects when I read the literature of foreign authors and national as well.

4 How do you consider that the study of short stories have helped your reading skill?

He learned a lot vocabulary many new words.

5 How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in an emotional level, taking into consideration the selective use of words to convey the real meaning?

Well, with poetry the students can express the feeling and emotions through the poems they have to write.

6 How do you think the studying of Salvadorian literature helps students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?

Poets and writers share a lot of important things and this motivate me and inspire other students to begin writing.

7 How did you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadoran literary works studied in the courses?

No, because we as students don't have the opportunity to study the Salvadorian literature.

8 In what way did you improve your writing skills after taking literature courses?

I was forced to be creative to use my creativity in the writing assignments something that was impossible to do before in other subjects that I took.

9 How did you benefit yourself from creative writing (producing literature) in your personal development?

Well, I never thought that I was able to write poems about topics that are no important for others, but were relevant to me in my personal life.

10 How do you think the reading of novels helps students understand the target language culture?

No, because the way of writing in novels, no always is the way we used to learn the language as students in a class, but I guess it also has relation with the students learning strategies.

11 How do you think your creativity and sensitivity are developed by studying drama in the classroom?

In my personal case it helps me a lot because I was pressure to get involved in the character that I had to represent in the play. It was a grateful experience that I never going to forget.

12 How do you consider the visits or writers to the class?

These activities help students to understand how the life in the inspirations writers use in their works is; everything has a reason in their writings.

13 How do you consider the visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers?

OK in my case it was a great experience not only for me but also to my classmates to realize the real professional performance of the actors in the play they presented.

14 How do you think studying literature helps develop critical thinking?

In the way of thinking to begin writing something is so much helpful for all the students.

15 After taking the literature courses, what do you think about local literature?

I going to mention that in the class I didn't use local literature in the course of modern languages.

16 How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited or not after taking the literature courses?

I didn't feel boring about reading because I enjoyed reading. I was motivated with the class and make the suggestion for the future courses of literature to continue developing activities that motivate students to read and learn about the culture.

**University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department**



Focus group number 1:

What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: Identify ways in which literature courses impact students learning process.

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

1- How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?

I think it's very important for all professionals to have at least one course of literature, especially in humanities area, because in that way we can learn, in an internal way and not only in a technical thing, you know. It's like very important for us because we learn culture, about people, and also about history through literature.

Interviewer: so you think it's important for us as students?

As students, it is in all the fields. That means that it's not necessary only in the field of languages, but also in all the fields, mathematics, and physics.

2- What about before, what did you think about literature before taking the course?

At first, I thought it was very boring, because I had another concept of the subject. I thought it was only reading, reading, reading and reading and for a person that doesn't like to read so much, I think it's kind of boring, but after taking the subject, I realized that is not only reading but interpreting, also the subject gives the chance to be creative like preparing for plays and all those things are creativity for us.

Interviewer: so, do you think the same?

For me at the beginning, before it was kind of intimidating, I mean, I was like it is about reading or something like that, but after taking it my perception about this subject something completely different, I mean, it was very interesting because we read of course, but also we analyzed, also we shared feelings and thoughts in very creative ways, like for example when we were at the unit of poetry. It was very interesting to express your feelings and your thoughts.

3- In what way have your macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking etc.) improved after having studied the literature courses?

Definitely, we have seen that difference before taking the course and after taking it. Well, in my case my vocabulary improved or increased, it is a sub skill but it is an important part of the macro skill, which is speaking and also writing. My classmates were talking about that we analyze, we read, we learn about culture and everything, but also we improved the writing skill because we have as we read we realize the way that people, professional people do it. So, we can incorporate those styles to our own style.

I agree on what she says, in my case well, we had to read a lot and also we had to analyze to read their own interpretation of the things that we were reading. So in my case, I read like paying attention on the styles, different styles of writing of the authors, right. And then, the time when we have to produce our own writing things, poems, short stories and all that kind of things. In my case I had like examples.

Interviewer: reading gave the tools to writing?

For sure it is, it is in that way.

4 How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures?

Yes it is, definitely it is. Well, I think that a piece of reading, it is just a piece of culture because it also involves the context in the country where people is living at that time. If you read that, you will understand why people are writing that kind of stuff. It is because what they are living, the way they feel and everything that is going on around them.

I remember when we were taking the literature 1, because we took the two of them. So, I remember we were asked to look for the setting, the context about all the story. So, sometimes we are not able to understand a part of the story because we were researched about the context. So, when we research about the context we can understand and realize what the author wants to convey in the reading and the message that the author wants to convey to the people that are reading.

5 Interviewer: What is the kind of literature that helps you the most to develop the reading skill?

In my case, all of them, I took a little bit of all them and I make my own way of writing.

I think all of them because I take as my partner says, I take the most important of each kind of literature, so. I think all of them.

6 How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in an emotional level, taking into consideration the selective use of words to convey the real meaning?

Yes, I loved, because I think that we develop with poetry to be creative, all things, and fantasies, and feelings, and thoughts, and all kinds of stuff we can develop with poetry. And also know new ways to express out.

7 How do you think the studying of Salvadorian literature helps students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?

Yeah, you feel identified because you know more about your culture by reading and also especially if you try or do read something that is from your own country. I think it develops your, like it's easy to know and to analyze the other cultures or other books or books from the country, if you know from your own country.

8 How did you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadoran literary works studied in the courses?

Well, in my case, sometimes yes, myself, but also I think about other that feel like that. For example, I like the novel that was written by Manlio Argueta, "Un Día En La Vida", it's a very nice novel and he is talking about the experiences that the people had. Well, I didn't live in that

part of our country but many people did. So, when they read that kind of stuff, well, they say well that's what they felt at that time. It is also included that.

9 In what way did you improve your writing skills after taking literature courses?

Well, I can give you a clear example, well, I will go back again to poetry. When I was writing, poetry, I didn't realize at the moment when I was writing, but at the end when I read what I had done. I realized that I was using words that I didn't know that I already knew. Yes, because the feelings and the thoughts that I had in the moment were just in my writing. But I didn't realize until I read it. Yes, I didn't realize that writing poetry or short stories or things like those pieces of literature, really help you to improve your writing.

Interviewer: I remember that when I took the subject we were writing a diary, did you do the same? Did you write a diary? Journal was called, yes?

No we didn't do that but we were asked to write a set of poems, like 20 poems I think. So, we had the opportunity to express our ideas through those ones. Short stories were another activity that we had.

10 How did you benefit yourself from creative writing (producing literature) in your personal development?

Well, I think that writing, having the opportunity to write, it's a nice strategy to find out if you are a good writer or not. Because there are a lot of people that can write very nice writing and they didn't even know that they can write very nice If you have the opportunity to do it or if you are pushed to do it. Because sometimes when we have home works we say it will do it because I

have to, but at the end you realize that you are very good at that and you didn't know that. So it is a very nice way to discover that, your abilities.

-Interviewer: Did it happen to someone else her?

Yes, in my case, yeah, I agree on what she says. I was complaining sometimes when we were asked to write those poems, but at the end I remember I enjoyed it a lot writing. As Barbara says, I wrote things that I didn't even know that I was going to write. When I was reading it I said, well, that sounds like great and at the end I remember that in the subject, the teacher closed the subject with a recital, and my surprise was that my poems were chosen for that presentation so it was kind of surprising for me and also like a goal accomplished, satisfaction. Because even though at the beginning I didn't want to do it, at the end I did it and I did it great. So it was kind of nice experience.

-Interviewer: How did you feel after your writing application?

I feel that we can express things, because we are always expressing a message that we want to convey, but when you write poetry you do it maybe in a sort of way, in a way that is not understandable for everybody, you have to be very careful to notice what's the message is wanting to communicate with the message.

Read between lines, in poetry to give a message like that. And also by writing you know yourself. Also you analyze your own culture because when you have to write about poetry or short stories, you think of your reality and you think about that and then you try to adapt those things and then you write about that. So, it is also a way to express how you feel.

11 How do you think your creativity and sensitivity are developed by studying drama in the classroom?

Yeah, definitely, because when you get involved in a play or something you become a character. So, you can be a person that is totally different than you or even similar, but you transform in somebody else. So, that gives you a different perspective or different point of view of that person's life. So, it helps you to sensitize yourself and also to be creative to show the personality of that other person.

12 How do you consider the visits or writers to the class?

I think it was a great experience to meet people that we even know that they exist; they were like the kind of person they were. So, I think is a good way to motivate students to read, to know about the culture. Not just to read but also analyze what you are reading. In my personal case, it helped me to know not just the person but the personality of some authors. I liked that experience.

Interviewer: How did you think after meeting this people, after seeing them in person?

The thing is that we had the chance to meet this writer and it was very nice because at the end of his presentation we had the chance to ask questions. And some of the questions were: at what age did you start writing? Did you go from Nicaragua I guess? And then, we were very interested in knowing that experience and maybe because we felt identified with that person and we thought maybe I can do that too. So, it's a very nice experience.

13 How do you consider the visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers?

*I only had the opportunity to go to see the play, **Risitos de oro y los tresositos**, and that was a really nice experience because I had never gone before. It was a nice experience and I think that to be part of that group because it was a selected group. It was a nice experience because I met the characters, it was nice because at the end of the presentation, we also had a round of questions and it was really nice.*

14 After taking the literature courses, what do you think about local literature?

Well, in my case, I think that there are many, many great people that have the talent to write and to present very good things, but I think that here in our country we don't have the culture of appreciating the effort they do. That's what I think. Actually in my case, before taking the literature I was like all the Salvadorian authors that are good, they are already dead or most of them are already dead. But when taking literature, after the visits of the poetry writers and people like that, I realized that yes, there are a lot of talents here but you don't know it because we don't have as she says, we didn't have that artistic culture in our country.

I agree with my partners because I knew that there were many artists, many authors, but for me was maybe the person that lives many experiences. For example, war or something like that. And with literature, I realized that there are many young authors. We met about 5 or 6 young persons that they were at our age and they are in the process of writing books. They have many poems that are so great that I started to admire them. So, I think that it helped me develop the sense of criticizing all the things that are around me and say for example, why can't I be like that? I got the motivation to write. So, I can be as great as they are, it is like a motivation for me.

15 How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited or not after taking the literature courses?

Absolutely, it helped me a lot, I was thinking about the other question you did about if it helps us to be creative and of course it does. I remember one of the shortest stories in the world I think. It says: “y cuandodesperto, todaviaestabaahi”, that’s a short story and when I read that, I was thinking what happens in that? Then you start thinking and your creativity is like ok, ok I need to have an idea yes. So, it is very interesting and very nice, also when you have to present plays, you have to be very creative and also you have the opportunity to write because you have to adapt. When I was watching these guys right now (the presentation 2012) we saw they were very creative and they were adapting the play to our time. So, it was very nice and then people were laughing. They had the opportunity to write and also to speak. So, their participation was very nice, their English was very fluent, and I am sure that they are learning new vocabulary from that activity. Personally, I think that it helps you a lot in all the possible ways, if you want to speak and if you want to write of course you will have to read.

Interviewer: so you have a new competence now, that you can perform a play?

Yeah, I enjoyed it, I remember when I did a presentation it was very nice.

Well, I think that as far as you read, you have information in your brain right. You will be able to produce; you will be able to think. Also you can through the reading acquire more vocabulary and that helps you because at the end that contributes to your oral performance, because if you forget a word you can look for synonyms. So, you are creating your own dictionary inside your brain or something like that. So, it helps you a lot.

Interviewer: I got another question: what about the structure of the courses? Do you think it's correct to have all the subjects taken in on semester? Or do you think it could be better to have more courses like 1, 2 or 3 literatures? Do you think that it would help you as students?

Personally, I study modern languages and I just received only one course in total. So I think it's important that in modern languages people have other courses like that. Because we learn in a different way it's very interesting all the stuff that we get out of that.

Interviewer: I say this because you already said that you like the course right?

In my case, actually I like the distribution that first we see the fiction genre, short story, novels, etc. and in the second one, the non-fiction, and the poetry, but for example in my case, I would like to have a subject only on poetry. I mean it's very interesting and another only for fiction, I mean, it's very interesting and there are many, many things that we can learn in those subjects. I mean, we see it but I think that we really learn in those subjects but I mean we could learn even more if we had more subjects like literature.

I think that there should be an specialty (major) because there is a lot of persons, in modern languages there is a lot of people that write and are very interested in reading a lot of literature, not only in English, but also in French and Spanish and that could be a good decision if the authorities think about having the literature as specialty at the end of the career

**University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department**



Focus group number 2:

What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: Identify ways in which literature courses impact students learning process.

Instructions: Interviewer gets students to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

1-How do you perceive literature after taking the literature courses?

Ok, in some cases you can say it has changed in the way that you think, why? Because in some cases we cannot appreciate the way that some writers wrote in the past and things like that, but the things is that after we have taken that class, in this case, literature. We can say that the subject opened our mind and things like that to see the way that writers used to write in the past and things like that.

In my personal experience, I didn't even care about literature before I just took it because it was part of the syllabus and whatever. But then, after going to class, I started enjoying it because I could see it and even start creating something right like we started boring and we said it's something I cannot do but then, they tell you that there are some things that are not that sophisticated and we can do then it doesn't matter if the quality is not that very good and yeah, in a way learning like the way you see the subject itself is better after taking the course. It

sounds boring at the beginning but then when you are taking it you feel the difference. You find it interesting, especially there is a connection between what you do or what you see.

I can say that in my personal opinion, I can say it was very interesting at the beginning. Before taking it I was curious, first of all I said: Maybe we have to write something or we have to read a lot. But then, I realized when I was there, that we learn many things, vocabulary, which was very important, because there were many words that we didn't know but later, we realize in some way for what we are going to use each word, because there were some words that I don't know if you have heard of the Old English, so, there were words like that.

In my personal opinion, I didn't know anything about literature at the beginning. To be honest, for literature yes, as my partner said, in that subject we learn a lot of vocabulary, but especially for me, I don't like to read so much. So literature for me, at least for me it was not a good experience. Because poetry, I don't like poetry, I didn't and I still don't. So, for me it was just a subject.

2-In what way have your macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking etc.) improved after having studied the literature courses?

Well, I can say that for the macro skills, I can say that not all of the skills I have improved in the class in that subject. The only skills I can say are reading and writing because we have to read a lot in that subject and things, literature itself. You have to read all the things related about that subject. Writing because you have to write so many things, like poems and things like that. In that case we have learned so many vocabularies, new vocabulary. Nowadays, yes, I can say that I have learned grammar but if I take into account the themes that poems used to write, it's very difficult to say that I have improved grammar because of them. No because it's old English

and sometimes the sentences and things like that, in many cases they don't have a concrete meaning. For that reason, I can say that for me only reading and writing I have improved.

In my personal opinion, I can say that I improved on writing and reading because in some way we are going to write as the theme. As we learned, we have improved in many words like more vocabulary to write.

Well, I improved a lot of writing honestly because in reading it is true that I read more but doesn't mean that I became a better reader. Because if you want to be a good reader is not meaning that you read more info but knowing how to read it and it did help in order to understand what I was reading I had to read it carefully and read between lines and things like that. But there are some other courses on how to become a better reader, different techniques. Literature is more applying those techniques that you are expected to know already. So, I read more but in writing I did learn a lot.

I have different opinion than my partner because he said you don't learn grammar, but I think you learn grammar inductively because you see how sentences are formed you see how structures are formed. I think grammar is a skill you can improve by taking literature.

Interviewer: do you think that the samples, conversations that you find in novels are real language?

It depends on what kind of plays you are reading because most of them are fantasy, but as my partner said also, the vocabulary you find there is mainly vocabulary you don't use every day, but it can help you to improve a lot.

3 How do you think studying short stories facilitates learning about other cultures?

I can say that in deed yes, we can learn about other cultures why? Because, the short stories are exactly about fantasy or things like that, about fables, and about any specific culture. Why? Because short stories, it is more common to find like if everybody is telling a short story for example to your kinds, then for your grand kinds and later and later. And while you are reading those kinds of short stories you are learning in some way what exactly the culture is about. At least you have an idea.

Yeah... they are about things that took place in other countries. So, they are written in that context and since it's very hard to get there in person, through books you get to know a little better what those countries or those times were like.

I can say in this case when you read this kind of paragraphs or stories you can imagine also. Your imagination is very important in that case because you can imagine how the things were in that moment and that place. You can see how was in that country and nowadays how are the things, the difference how the things have changed.

4-How do you consider that the study of short stories have helped your reading skill?

Interviewer: But not only short stories, let's say, what is the kind of literature that you consider to be the one that helped you the most in reading? You know the one that keeps you reading and reading, novels, drama, poetry, short stories?

In my case I can say that the one that really caught my attention was science fiction.

Interviewer: those are novels right? Yes, why because in my case I can say that I want to know what is next and the only way to find it out is keeping me reading and reading it.

In my case, the one that caught my attention was poetry because you can express yourself. You can know the people and how they felt in that moment. You can see the feeling and the context; in this case that was poetry.

Interviewer: When we talk about short stories we mean they are short but poetry is shorter.

Do you think this short literature helped you get involved in the reading?

It depends on the person, if you like it you can do it, but if you don't like it you can't.

Interviewer: in your personal opinion?

In my personal opinion, to me it was a very nice experience right.

Interviewer: But you consider that the short length of the piece helped you?

If I consciously take that thought as you said, I can say no, but if you like it maybe yes because if there are directly things that catches your attention, you will do it, but if not you won't. you have to read about?

Interviewer: do you consider no matter how long a book is, the most important thing is how interested you are in reading that?

Yes.

5-How do you think the study of poetry benefits students in an emotional level, taking into consideration the selective use of words to convey the real meaning?

I think that poetry is very touching because even though we might not be capable of creating something such as elaborated pieces of art. The fact is that when we read that is very well selected and well created and produced, and then you get to enjoy it. God you say this guy is

feeling exactly like I am feeling right now. You get a connection and it does feel good being reading poetry.

-Interviewer: what about you? You said before that you didn't like literature, but what do you think about poetry?

Well, at least for me it is not interesting because as I said before I don't like poetry. I don't feel identified with poetry actually. So I think as my partner says it all depends on the person, on each person because some people are??? What? More emotive! So they like to read poetry, they like to feel identified with that but in my personal case I don't.

Interviewer: interesting, what is the kind of people you think are more interested in poetry?

Maybe the people that like to read, people that like that art. What? They like to express their feelings maybe I am not sure.

6-How do you think the studying of Salvadorian literature helps students get involved in literature materials in a personal level?

I can say that maybe if you are reading or studying Salvadorian literature, it is related with your culture, with your country. I think that it is one way that people can get involved about the Salvadorian literature. We so many books about the civil war and maybe for the new generations if they want to know what happened in that time they can get involved about the Salvadorian literature.

Interviewer: Did you read some Salvadorian literature in the courses?

To tell you the truth, I don't remember but I don't think so, maybe...

Interviewer: what about Un Dia en la Vida did you read that?

I read it, not in this course but I did read it. It explains a lot how the mothers in that time and all of that.

7-How did you identify yourself personally with any of the Salvadoran literary works studied in the courses?

I can say that maybe talking about civil war we were not in that...

Yes, I consider that yes because they are talking about our reality every day, we can say that it is true that we already passed that, we have our own opinion.

I agree with her and I believe that yes we are, and I consider that we must be the target audience for that. Maybe some other people like it but it's not about them. This is some from our country and things that have happened to us or some people we know who are around us. And not only about the war because as you said we were not there by then but there other books about Salvadorian culture.

8-In what way did you improve your writing skills after taking literature courses?

Well, I got to write because it was mandatory to write poems, to write short stories and many things like that and I didn't keep writing after taking the course honestly, but I consider I learned how to do it and if I were to write again I wouldn't be scared.

In my case, I learned writing too; also we learned the punctuation that was very important. We can say that we have to be very careful about that not just to write because we want it or because is to express ourselves, but we have to take into account the punctuation that nobody cares in that moment but it is important too.

Interviewer: that means it was very good for you to write, what about you?

In my personal opinion, I think the same as my partner because in that moment before taking literature, we didn't care about punctuation but after taking literature it was very important to take that into account. Especially for the ones subjects like readings and conversation, so punctuation is a skill that I would say that I have improved after taking the literature courses.

Interviewer: What about in your personal development, do you think that writing helped you?

You know putting down or writing down all the things you feel.

Well, as I said before it is not just to write, you have to put your imagination and have to be creative, you have to see the things faraway not just seeing the things you have here and you have to keep in mind the things also that if you did this you can add another situation too.

Interviewer: How did you feel when you wrote a poem, what was your sensation in that moment?

I can say that in that moment it was because teacher Glower told us to write those themes of the poems, something like that. I remember that I had to be alone first in order to get concentration because with noise you might not, in my personal opinion I have to be alone, second, the themes and the feelings had to be stronger in that moment. Sometimes, the writer says that you have to write things that are sad if you are sad, if you are happy, you can write about it or you can mix them.

Interviewer: what about you? Was it joyful to write poems or was it “I have to do it but I don’t want to do it, I hope this ends soon, and so on?”

Having deadlines, and being asked to write like a large number of poems maybe doesn’t help you much about being or feeling comfortable but I did feel that I was expressing myself, because some points could be about love but I remember once I wrote a poem that was about not having money, because one day I didn’t have money for the bus. It was when I was in the third year. I didn’t have many friends and I didn’t know who to ask so I walked from here to downtown and that is something that I will never forget and then I thought, “maybe I should write about this” and I wrote something not actually a poem because it didn’t have any rhyme but more like a short story, and I said well, I didn’t expect that is experience could be useful for something, but I did use it for that. Maybe somebody else did it too. This is something that I had never done before.

9-How did you benefit yourself from creative writing (producing literature) in your personal development?

This question was skipped by the interviewer by mistake.

10-How do you think the reading of novels helps students understand the target language culture?

I think it helps a little but not completely or maybe not as much as you would expect because just reading itself doesn’t tell you a lot of the place, you get to know the name of the place, and things like those. I remember for example, the teacher told us about some books or stories from Roque Dalton, he went you know to Europe and Asia and he wrote things about the wine form those countries, you know the streets and some kind of temperature (weather). Things that were

very meaningful in those places and maybe they have become meaningful for him, because he has been there, but not for us. Maybe if you get a kind of explanation or assistance in those areas then it can be helpful. Maybe the book helps you get to know something I mean something that is completely strange for you now it becomes new because you get to know but not that much. The book helps to present you the new situation since they are not self-explanatory.

11-How do you think your creativity and sensitivity are developed by studying drama in the classroom?

I can say that in the case when you have to create something creative like a drama or sketch, something like that, you have to think first and you plan we are going to do this, this and this, but what about the next day you come up with another idea and also you can also do this, this and this. I can say that creativity or with imagination you have to be like in a big way, because for me I can say that is the only way to create something, to have a huge imagination in this case, but if you are studying drama or things like that, it would be like a useful tool in this case this subject or this kind of literature because it helps you a lot to see the things in another way in order to create something.

Interviewer: Did you already do the drama presentation?

No, we are just expectators because we already passed the course.

Interviewer: Did you present?

No because we took it with another teacher, teacher Glower.

I presented in 2009...

I did it only once, and I had to be a child and I started to think how come I am supposed to do this because I never did things like that but the teacher told me you have to and gave the character and said you have to be the character and I was I don't want to teacher then I realized that I had to do it and I did it and it was really interesting because I said I have to be like that and I have to believe that I have to be that because if I don't believe or in that case I don't trust myself that I can do it, I won't do it and nobody else will be satisfied with what you are doing in that moment. So it was very nice and challenging.

Yes, I can say it is a big challenge in some way because at the beginning you are like oh my god we have to do this. In my case I did drama, so in a sketch where my character was a woman two times. In the first one, it was a fairy tale and I had to play the role of snow wife and in the second drama I was a junky girl you know we got to sleep together and you know I got pregnant and some things like that.

Interviewer: Did you learn something out of that?

Yes, I can say yes. Understand women's behaviors.

Laughs out loud!!!!

12-How do you consider the visits or writers to the class?

Well, with Lic Glower we didn't have.

With teacher Jorge we had visitors and well, you hear and you read about writers but you never get to meet them, but it was a great detail from him bringing them to the class for us to have the chance to talk to them and them a lot of questions, to know that they are people like us and all of that. Another things that was very interesting was that maybe in another country you would

expect that people could make a living out of writing but they don't as a matter of fact that one of them is a production manager you know at Diana snacks and she lives in Soyapango and she is a poet too. She told us that she enjoys literature and she is poor and that is what makes her happy but unfortunately she lives from that job at Diana.

Interviewer: so from that you discovered that there is no way you can live from arts in this country?

Probably no., there is not enough support.

Interviewer: so is a matter of self-satisfaction to keep you doing it?

And the things is that when you get in touch a lot with arts you know writing, painting, sculpture, music and all of that, that makes you a better person. Maybe you don't see it at the beginning but you become more sensitive, you understand. More humanistic if we can call it that way, so it is a lot of help and a lot of satisfaction. I didn't understand the writer who went to the classroom that time, but now I understand it because I have a job and I work. I still think is a good thing but the days that made me happy were those when I was a student here (UES) and that is something that you never want to finish. At least from my point of view and that writer said that he enjoys it more writing that he enjoys the money from a job.

13-How do you consider the visits to cultural-artistic-literary centers?

Well, it was at the university, there was a theater group performing, here was where we went to watch some shows and after performance we went through questions and answers with them and they told us how did they prepared and they told us it took like three or four months to

make a good number and to get the costumes and all of that, I think it helped us better to understand the literature.

14-How do you think studying literature helps develop critical thinking?

Believe me it helps us a lot because you have to think what are you reading in this case because you are going to read something but you are not going to say the first thing that comes to your mind no you have to think first what the authors is trying to give the idea about you have to internalize what is that exactly and after doing that you can say your opinion. I think it helps you a lot in that way.

It think the same as him, that it helped us a lot because we are not the first person to criticize what someone else is doing but first of all, we to analyze what is going on there then we have to feel and try to understand what that person felt in that moment (that he or she wrote it) then we must have a positive opinion about it no matter if it is good or if it is bad. So, it helped us a lot in this case to have an opinion, we developed this kind of things.

Ok as they were saying you have to read not just for reading you have to understand what are you reading because is going to help you.

Interviewer: you got that from reading by yourself or from the teachers that teach us this kind of things?

I think it is not because of the teachers, because even if you are only reading to answer a question on a test you read it and have to understand what you are reading. That's my opinion

I think it helped me a bit but is not something I learn in that moment or just after taking literature because I already had this point of view that always comparing while watching news,

you watch one TV channel and they will say their way, you watch another TV channel there is another way if you read the newspapers you will read maybe even worst. When you read a book maybe you are going to see the counter part

15-After taking the literature courses, what do you think about local literature?

I think that nowadays we are far from maybe the golden age of the literature that we had in the 40's and the 60's. There were very good writers, maybe there are still but they are not as famous as the other people were. So, that is very sad.

Unfortunately, as he was saying before, they are not famous as much as they want and because of that we don't know what kind of work they are doing or it is behind them. So, I think it is a big way for them in order to get into this environment and present their works to the world.

I think they have to survive and they can't survive out of it. Here in our country is not possible.

Interviewer: is that an opinion that you already had or you picked it from the courses of literature?

Yes, because it is a situation we have in our country and it's not going to change. Imagine if that time (40's or 60') they were famous and if they thought I don't know if they live in this time there must be the same I guess.

Maybe because most of the people prefer watching a movie than reading a book, instead of reading the original story they go to the cinema and then they consider they already know everything in the story. I think that is the problem.

Our culture is not one where people like to read...

Interviewer: I need your honest answer to this question would you read a national author's book?

I think it depends on what. The genre maybe... I can say that I really like the themes related to the civil war because I like to understand what happened and why happened.

Interviewer: so the subject is very important? Yes and believe me I have read many things that I have found interesting.

16-How do you think your competence in English language in general has benefited or not after taking the literature courses?

Summarizing, it could be like a lot more reading, a lot more writing and a lot more vocabulary and a lot more confidence, especially after the performances and all of that.

After reading a book you rely on something you read and it's not only your opinion but you support what you say with the text.

Believe me, when you read you always have something to talk about, when people is talking sometimes you know participate because you don't have any idea about their discussion and everybody is talking except me and that is uncomfortable.

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW B



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: To learn about the reasons why teachers use local literature in order to teach English as a foreign language.

Instructions: interviewer gets key informant to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

- **What are the main criteria for choosing literature materials for your classes?**

Well, first of all, is that you have to choose material that are appropriate for the students' level of English because unfortunately, literature in the teaching option is in the third year and students in that level don't have the appropriate level yet, so, that's the first thing.

Something that I can imagine and I say imagine, because I cannot be sure until they read it. Something that I can imagine that they will like a lot.

The other thing is that I choose things related to opening awareness in society in the way people think, in education, in political issues, things like those, and of course beauty as something that it is for the artistic point of view, which is the aesthetical aspect. So, those basically are the things that I always choose for doing the things, the

other thing is that I choose materials that can be like from different authors some of them can be like Latin-Americans', Americans, English, Canadian, well, from all the continents and the classic ones, because sometimes you have the witness let's say that students have never read anything that is classical or a basic piece of literature and that's why many times I give them, for example, the Greek mythology so they can get acquainted with it, which is something they were supposed to read in High School, but since they didn't do it I'm the one that is obliged to do it. So, those are basically the aspects that I choose.

- **On what model do you use literature in language teaching? (Cultural model, language model, personal growth model) Why?**

Well, the three ones that you mentioned are the ones that I always choose, because we are speaking about cultural aspects or models, well actually literature is something that teaches you cultural aspects and not only talking about your culture, but also about many other cultures and that opens new doors, new windows to knowledge.

In the language model of course, since students are learning a new language, this is a real and authentic material that's what I think, that literary works are authentic because they are not let's say taught in a way that they are thinking in the students' level. When a writer writes something, he or she doesn't think about the level of English someone has, but what he or she wants to send as a message.

And the personal growth of course by knowing cultural things, by knowing the language, by knowing political aspects, by knowing economical aspects, by knowing things related to education you grow as a person. So, all of them are related

- **What national author's texts do you use or have used in your classes?**

I will see if I can remember all of them, because they are many; well, let's say that the ones that are not alive, but I have used their texts is Roque Dalton, Francisco Gavidia, Alberto Masferrer, Álvaro Menéndez Leal, Manlio Argueta, well, he's alive, who else, I have invited to my class and they have shared material with my students like for example, Aída Párraga, María Cristina Orantes, Claudia Herodier, Jorge Vargas Mendez, Otoniel Guevara, let me see who else Marisol Briones, Xochil Cabrera, Vladimir Amaya, Vladimir Baiza, Raquel Cañas, there are many but they are the ones that mostly used to go to my classes and share their knowledge with my students. The majority of them of course have been poets. I have invited people and we have read, well, this semester we have read a short story by René Pineda, who is the chairman of the School of Social Sciences at the university. He writes short stories too. So there are many of them and I have skipped many of them because I can't remember. So, in total if I can make a list I will tell you that I have at least had 50 or 60 writers in my class, Salvadorians.

- **How long have you been using local literature in your classes?**

Since I began, no, I began teaching literature in 2002, let me see, yes, 2002, it's ten years if you count from that, but if you count including all the years it's 11 years ok. So I have been teaching that for 11 years and since the very beginning I started inviting people from salvadorean poets, writers, even actors and actresses, writers of nonfictional works. From the very beginning so, it's because I realized that what we have to think mostly is that we have to make students know about our writers. Because

sometimes students get to know writers from other countries but they never know Salvadorian ones. So, it's 11 years now.

Interviewer: where did you get the inspiration to use this approach in the literature class, were there other teachers that used this before?

I don't know if somebody did it before, as far as I know, nobody did it before, it came to my mind when I was a student. Because when I was a student I was beginning in the field of writing poetry outside the class, not inside the class. Then I realized that there was something that was needed but I was not the teacher anyway I didn't say anything, but in the moment I had the chance to teach that subject, then I said well, I am going to make use of all my influence, all my friends, all my fellows that are writers. And then, I said well, one thing is this, sometimes you get to know what you think they are, by their text, but it is better when you get to know their texts, and themselves personally. So, this is a mixture of something that is really appealing for students because they open new kinds of knowledge and also poets and writers, sometimes they also help them understand texts in a better way. So, that's why I chose it and even I changed something else, because at the beginning it said that the texts and everything was going to be only in English. So, I modified that, saying the texts and the people invited to the class are not exactly those that speak English. So, that's why poets go to my class and read the poems in Spanish. Of course, we speak Spanish in the whole class, but in the next class we start analyzing things for making reports and things like those in English. So that's the other change I made in the approach.

- **What is the literature material (books, texts, etc.?) you use the most? Why?**

Well, I only let's say a text book which is called Literature and it's by McMillan Company, which is an old one, it's like from 1989 something like that. It's issued from that date. But why? First, here in our country books like this one are very, very expensive. Second, they will never bring them here because it's not a market for people who sell books, why? Because this books are more than one hundred dollars each and students are not going to buy them, so I keep a copy and I use that, only for technical things and then I get copies from all the books that get to my hands and I begin searching for poems, for fables, for short stories, from any kind of artists that I can think it is a good one. But my base text, let's say, is that book called Literature, and the last name of the author is (Hawking) I don't remember the name and it's by McMillan Company, that's the basic one. But I make use of everything that can be even on the net, but that can be proved that it is a real one because you know that on the net sometimes you find books that are not real ones.

Interviewer: what about The Greek Mythology? I know you use that one, but why do you use it? Is it easier to learn, or cheaper, don't you think so because it is quite expensive, so why do you choose that kind of literature for your classes?

Well, that book is Introduction to Literature, and sometimes you choose it according to the level of English of your students and those Greek Mythologies for example are not the original ones, they are like easy reading versions, yeah and that's why, because students even when I am teaching that material for example, there are students that are very surprised, amazed of the kinds of texts. And I ask them haven't you ever read this?

and they say no, and it is something that even people use trends like narcissism for example which is something that we use in common life but they don't know where it comes from so that's why I choose all of these materials too. In that way I make them aware of the language they have been used for a lot of years but they don't know where it comes from, so that's why I choose them too.

- **Who are the national authors you use or have used more in the course of literature?**

Hoo! That would be difficult. Well. Roque Dalton, Manlio Argueta, Francisco Gavidia, Alberto Másferrer, Álvaro Menéndez Leal, Jorge Vargas Méndez, Otoniel Guevera, Vladimir Baiza, Vladimir Amaya, Roberto Deras, David Juárez, Marco Pernavarre, Raquel Cañas, Xochitl Cabrera, Aída Párraga, María Cristina Orantes, Claudia Herodier. Well, it's very difficult, what we can do is, to answer that question I will send you a list, where you can have them together.

Interviewer: why you invite them or choose them to come to your class?

Simply there are three aspects, one is friendship, they are my friends, second is willingness to help because you know that you never give them anything, and the third thing is the level of writer that they are. It is not necessary that I only choose the best, this is very hard for me to say it, but sometimes they are not so good, there are people that are not so good, that's a point of comparison I am not going to be the one to say that my students' visitors are the best ones or the good ones, etc., so they get to know the different kinds of literature that they create. I remember that at once, we were reading there were two poets invited to read in my class and everybody was enjoying, but then a

student asked one of the boys why he was reading narrations and not poetry? Everybody got like surprised, I didn't say anything to him, but that's what they got after hearing what poet is a good one. So, at the end those are the three aspects.

- **What literary works do you use for the specific development of each skill from your students?**

So, the first one is reading, you know by means of reading and as I said at the beginning I choose from the basic ones to something more complex. I made an experiment let me tell you before, I made an experiment with a short story once that I was teaching literature I and I said this is a complex short story, it was "The Witches of Salem", but it was in archaic language and I said to myself, well, read it and I said this is going to be heavy, I am going to give it to them and I am going to see the reactions. And of course, the reason was immediately pictured, give us something else to read, we don't understand this. We don't enjoy it. We don't know what is this talking about. So, then I started again from things that were really easy until we can get to very complex things. So, in that part of developing reading, even grammar because they get to know the use of different kinds of ways to use grammar and vocabulary, by means of the writing applications we use to get the development of the writing skills and from the discussion, from the sharing with other points we get also to know some or to the development of listening and speaking. So, at the end they are like connected. And all the materials help to develop all my class. It's not the material let me say it, it's also the way you use the material and the way students participate in the class.

- **How do you get students practice their skills acquired through local literature?**

Well, maybe I answered in the previous one, writing applications, writing, grammar, vocabulary, because you get to know that sometimes they are using new vocabulary in the language when they are writing, even grammatical aspects because they can realize that in literature you can make use of many different ways of grammatical issues. They get to know for example that for classical grammarians is not recommended to start a sentence with a prepositional phrase. Authors can use it, writers can use it, etc. They do it like that and by reading the different materials they get. And the other thing also is that I check the reading pace, which is how they read the language. Sometimes I tell them have been reading this?, not because I cannot read but because I want to see how they are reading. When you are reading a poem, you don't have to read in a plain way. So, I teach them how to read. So, that's why when they are in the contest of poetry, people say hey teacher how did he or she learn to read poetry, no it was in the course.

- **According to your assessment criteria, what are the skills that students develop the most at the end of the literature course?**

The most, reading and writing. Oh let me see, reading, writing and in a way speaking. Those are the three ones. I didn't mention listening because we are not using it, even though sometimes I take some stories that are recorded, we are reading and listening at the same time, but it is not that well developed like the others I mentioned. Vocabulary is another one, but that's a sub skill, intonation in a way, too.

- **On what percentage do you consider that your goals regarding the student learning are accomplished at the end of the course?**

It is difficult, but I would rather say 80%, but there are students that since they are in large groups, you cannot control them and sometimes there are students that do not come to class and you don't realize because they are many students. But maybe an 80%.

- **According to your assessments, how relevant were the visits of writers to the class of literature?**

(They are) so relevant that some students have made and kept a friendship relationship with some of them. Some of them are already writing or asking them for help out of the class, belong to literature workshops. The most important aspect of the visit is that also increase the curiosity, the willingness of the students to produce and to read different kinds of literary works. In that way it has helped a lot, and of course it helps with the assignment that they are doing at the classes. Unfortunately, as I said to them many times, they are pushed to go to events like this because it is a class, but we have discovered that by pushing them at the beginning they can see that at the end is something really, really, what can I say, really beautiful for them, they enjoy it and then they don't go like pushed, they go voluntarily. They are inspiration for the students.

- **According to your assessments, how relevant were the visits of the course to cultural-artistic-literary centers?**

Well, I'm just going to give an example, from this semester that I have already finished. When we went to see "Risitos de Oro y los Tres Ositos" en el Centro Español by Grupo Hamlet", it was a coordination between me and my friend Aída Párraga which is also

an actress, a poet, an actress and other many things. Well, we got a discount to say something; the discount that we got was a 40% for the entrance fee. And then, the students went because it was cheaper for them but they could also that what they thought it was complex and difficult. When they saw the play that they were performing the Grupo Hamlet, they got new ideas in order that they could create the scenery, the customs that they were going to use and the way they were going to act out. So that's how this visit to different places can help students in order that they can perform something really good. I can tell you, I dare to say that after this experience they can go individually to different things. We also develop on the student the art of writing and giving speeches which is another art and it is part of literature too.

- **What are your methods to motivate students make their own creative writing?**

Let me tell you that this is an approach that is called literary genre, no let me see, genre's analysis and writing approach, which means that we analyse by means of genres, the four genres of literature that exist in teaching English, which are: Fiction, Drama, Non-Fiction and Poetry. So we teach them all these genres and then the way they have to write. I have just read some very few things related to writing a creative writing which is even a master's degree in other countries. So, I have taken some ideas from it. Because at the end is not only necessary that the students know how to write an essay, an article, a report, but also something that is related to creation, and when we speak about creation, we speak about the use of imagination, which is something that they are also, let's say, encouraged to do. And at the end I make use of my experience as a writer. I know how you get the inspiration; I know what you have to do when the

inspiration comes all in a sudden because sometimes it comes all in a sudden and things like those.

At the end, I will say that we can call it, or we can say it is also an eclectic approach of teaching literature.

- **How do you use audiovisual and technological resources in the literature courses?**

Well, this is something that I forgot to say before, I am all the time looking for movies that are related to classical literary works like for example “El Principito”, or Don Quixote, there are movies related to these classical works or arts and I take them to my class. So the students can see the kind of imagination the authors had. Another thing is that if sometimes I can get the audio of a literary text I take it because it helps with the pronunciation which is another skill that I forgot to mention before, which is also developed in literature works. For example, I have a book by Edgar Allan Poe’s fictional works and I take sometimes for example “The Black Cat”, “The Murders of the Rue Morgue”, “The Tell-tale Heart” stories like that, those that students not only learn but also get to know the correct pronunciation of words and intonation. Another thing is that I make use of computer projection, projectors and the computer itself but sometimes you know that the difficulties we have with these technological things at the university is hard. And sometimes you have to be in the cord waiting for these devices to be free. Let me tell you that there are only three computers in the whole department and two multimedia projectors and we are more than fifty teachers. Sometimes they are really busy and nobody can make use of them. So you have to be postponing things. Of course, I make use of CD players; I don’t know... the board which is the basic thing, the marker.

Sometimes I take charts, basically, well I didn't mention internet, and there is no access to it.

Interviewer: do you use the social media?

Yeah that's what I do, sometimes I recommend then look for things, some other times I just post things on the literature web site page that I have, even on my Facebook profile.

So but the thing is this one... sometimes you don't have access to it and internet connection at the university is really, really slow, even sometimes slower than in my house. So, well, I just can tell that there was a conference of the university that was about those technological resources and there was a conference that didn't work. The person was going to use internet and he couldn't connect and he was from another country, this person and we were going to have a conference related to these internet resources and it was not able to be used and that was one of the paradoxes or contradictions we have at the university,

And for example if I am teaching at an auditorium like I was doing the last semester there is not even wireless connection, it's really difficult that's why sometimes we don't use it. Sometimes make use of "blogs" and it is basically what we use.

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW A



What is the incidence of the literature courses on the students learning process in the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: To learn about the reasons why teachers use local literature in order to teach English as a foreign language.

Instructions: interviewer gets key informant to answer the following questionnaire, interviewer records interview to further transcriptions and analysis.

1-What are the main criteria for choosing literature materials for your classes?

In choosing a literary text for use with your students, you should think about three main areas. These are: the type of course you are teaching, the type of students who are doing the course and certain factors connected with the text itself. We begin by thinking about the first of these – the type of course you are teaching.

2-On what model do you use literature in language teaching? (Cultural model, language model, personal growth model) Why?

All of them.

3-What national author's texts do you use or have used in your classes?

Roque Dalton, Manlio Argueta, Masferrer and others.

4-How long have you been using local literature in your classes?

Since I began teaching literature!

5-What is the literature material (books, texts, etc.?) You use the most? Why?

Textbooks, Books, plays, poems and I used them all. And also I use materials found on internet

6-Who are the national authors you use or have used more in the course of literature?

The same I have mentioned in question 3.

7-What literary works do you use for the specific development of each skill from your students?

Short stories, novels, plays, poems, essays, biographies, autobiographies.

8-How do you get students practice their skills acquired through local literature?

By making them read the literary works and them discuss, analyze, and criticize.

9-According to your assessment criteria, what are the skills that students develop the most at the end of the literature course?

- *Thinking skills, language skills, analysis skills*

10-On what percentage do you consider that your goals regarding the student learning are accomplished at the end of the course?

80%.

11-According to your assessments, how relevant were the visits of writers to the class of literature?

They were very relevant.

12-According to your assessments, how relevant were the visits of the course to cultural-artistic-literary centers?

It was very relevant.

13-What are your methods to motivate students make their own creative writing?

Reading, discussing, working in groups, making oral and written reports.

14-How do you use audiovisual and technological resources in the literature courses?

I use them a lot and I think that it is very relevant to use them.

OTHER COMMENTS:

There are many good reasons for using literature in the classroom. Here are a few:

- *Literature is authentic material. It is good to expose learners to this source of unmodified language in the classroom because the skills they acquire in dealing with difficult or unknown language can be used outside the class.*
- *Literature encourages interaction. Literary texts are often rich in multiple layers of meaning, and can be effectively mined for discussions and sharing feelings or opinions.*

- *Literature expands language awareness. Asking learners to examine sophisticated or non standard examples of language (which can occur in literary texts) makes them more aware of the norms of language use Literature educates the whole person. By examining values in literary texts, teachers encourage learners to develop attitudes towards them. These values and attitudes relate to the world outside the classroom.*
- *Literature is motivating. Literature holds high status in many cultures and countries. For this reason, students can feel a real sense of achievement at understanding a piece of highly respected literature. Also, literature is often more interesting than the texts found in course books.*

MODELS FOR TEACHING LITERATURE

There have been different models suggested on the teaching of literature to ESL/EFL students (Carter & Long, Lazar). How the teacher will use a literary text depends on the model they choose.

The cultural model views a literary text as a product. This means that it is treated as a source of information about the target culture. It is the most traditional approach, often used in university courses on literature. The cultural model will examine the social, political and historical background to a text, literary movements and genres. There is no specific language work done on a text. This approach tends to be quite teacher-centered.

The language model aims to be more learner-centered. As learners proceed through a text, they pay attention to the way language is used. They come to grips with the meaning and increase their general awareness of English. Within this model of

studying literature, the teacher can choose to focus on general grammar and vocabulary (in the same way that these are presented in course books for example) or use stylistic analysis. Stylistic analysis involves the close study of the linguistic features of the text to enable students to make meaningful interpretations of the text – it aims to help learners read and study literature more competently.

The personal growth model is also a process-based approach and tries to be more learner-centered. This model encourages learners to draw on their own opinions, feelings and personal experiences. It aims for interaction between the text and the reader in English, helping make the language more memorable. Learners are encouraged to “make the text their own”. This model recognizes the immense power that literature can have to move people and attempts to use that in the classroom.