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**THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING  
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN SCHOOLS OF  
TRANSCARPATHIA WITH HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION**

Master's Thesis

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## ЗМІСТ

ВСТУП.....	8
РОЗДІЛ 1 ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ВИБОРУ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ НА УРОКИ.....	12
1.1 Література та викладання.....	13
1.2 Придатність літературного матеріалу .....	16
1.3 Використання історій у навчанні.....	19
1.4 Література на уроках англійської мови як іноземної - підходи до викладання .....	22
1.5 Використання віршів у процесі навчання .....	24
1.6 Використання новел та романів у навчанні .....	27
1.7 Навчання молодих школярів.....	29
1.8 Навчання підлітків.....	31
РОЗДІЛ 2 ТРУДНОЩІ НАВЧАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ ЯК ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ .....	34
2.1 Мотивація учнів.....	34
2.2 Навчання чотирьом основним мовним навичкам.....	38
2.3 Навчання читання та письма за допомогою літератури.....	41
2.4 Визначення “якісної” літератури.....	43
2.5 Використання літератури на уроках англійської мови - потенційні проблеми .....	45
2.6 Методи навчання .....	46
2.7 Труднощі викладання англійської мови як іноземної.....	50
2.8 Методи оцінювання досягнень учнів .....	52
2.9 Управління роботою класів з різними рівнями учнівських здібностей .....	55
2.10 Викладання англійської мови в школах Закарпаття.....	58

РОЗДІЛ 3 ДУМКИ ВЧИТЕЛІВ ТА УЧНІВ ПРО РОЛЬ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ ПІД ЧАС ВИКЛАДАННЯ ТА ВИВЧЕННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ.....	61
3.1 Методологія дослідження .....	61
3.2 Учасники дослідження .....	62
3.3 Аналіз даних .....	63
3.3.1 Ставлення вчителів до використання літератури на уроках.....	64
3.3.2 Роль літератури та мотивації у вивченні англійської мови.....	76
3.4 Інтерпретація та аналіз результатів .....	84
3.4.1 Використання автентичних матеріалів на уроках.....	85
3.4.2 Вплив літератури на учнів .....	86
3.4.3 Значення мотивації під час вивчення мови.....	87
3.4.4 Мотивація учнів на уроці .....	88
3.4.5 Ставлення до творчих завдань .....	89
3.4.4 Педагогічні аспекти дослідження.....	90
ВИСНОВКИ .....	93
СПИСОК ВИКОРИСТАНОЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ .....	96
РЕЗЮМЕ.....	101
ДОДАТКИ .....	104

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	8
PART I THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF USING LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM .....	12
1.1 Literature and Teaching .....	13
1.2 Suitability of the Material .....	16
1.3 Using stories during teaching .....	19
1.4 Literature in the EFL classroom – teaching approaches .....	22
1.5 Using Poetry .....	24
1.6 Using short stories and novels .....	27
1.7 Teaching young students .....	29
1.8 Teaching adolescents .....	31
PART 2 CHALLENGES IN TEACHING EFL .....	34
2.1 Motivating Learners .....	34
2.2 Teaching the Four Basic Skills .....	38
2.3 Teaching reading and writing through literature .....	41
2.4 Defining “quality” literature .....	43
2.5 Using literature in EFL classroom – possible issues .....	45
2.6 Teaching Methods .....	46
2.7 Difficulties in the EFL Classroom .....	50
2.8 Assessing learners .....	52
2.9 Dealing with Mixed-ability classes .....	55
2.10 Teaching EFL in Transcarpathian schools .....	58
PART 3 TEACHERS’ AND PUPILS’ OPINIONS ABOUT THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH .....	61
3.1 Research Methodology .....	61
3.2 Participants of the research .....	62
3.3 Data analysis .....	63

3.3.1 Teachers' attitudes towards using literature in the lesson .....	64
3.3.2 The role of literature and motivation in learning English .....	57
3.4 Discussion and interpretation of the results .....	84
3.4.1 Using authentic materials in the classroom .....	85
3.4.2 The effects of literature on learners .....	86
3.4.3 The role of motivation in language learning .....	87
3.4.4 Motivating pupils in the lesson .....	88
3.4.5 Learners' attitude towards creative tasks.....	89
3.4.4 Pedagogical Implications.....	90
CONCLUSIONS.....	93
REFERENCE LIST .....	96
SUMMARY .....	101
APPENDICES .....	104



## INTRODUCTION

*“Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become.”*

- C. S. Lewis

The preceding quote exemplifies the indispensable value of literature. The importance of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) is unquestionable due to its role in international communication. Teachers focus on the most effective approaches, methods, and techniques when directing their learners to achieve the best results in developing their language skills. Among many other resources, authentic literature is an extremely important source of language learning materials.

English books, tales, stories, poems, rhymes and other literary pieces cannot be neglected in the foreign language classroom. Teachers should try to make the language acquisition process of their learners as successful as possible, so it is advisable for them to incorporate authentic literature into their teaching strategies. With the help of literature, not only reading skills can be improved, but also the writing skills and vocabulary knowledge of pupils, as they frequently encounter new words and phrases in these works. In addition, their communicative abilities and worldview are also developed to a great extent by learning about various topics and the culture of the target language. Moreover, it is a known fact that working with both young learners and adolescences necessitates significant effort; therefore, as previously said, teaching is definitely not an easy task. Based on the existing literature concerning the topic, it is vital to get to know the learners and understand what works best for them before selecting a teaching approach.

One of the key components of learning a foreign language is motivation. It is a difficult task to keep every pupil or student motivated and concentrated on the topic of the lesson, especially if it is hard for them to understand or speak English. Literature and authentic materials can be useful tools for making learners engaged

during an English lesson, involving them in the course of the lesson, and facilitating interaction between the learners and the topic itself.

Integrating literature in the process of English language teaching had been addressed by a great number of researchers. Hadway, Vardell & Young (2002) identified three main advantages of using authentic literature in language teaching: contextualisation of the language, social factors and meaningful application of the language. Duff & Maley (1991) add to this list the importance of creative tasks in developing learners' critical thinking and the motivational power of literature or any other authentic material. According to Lazar (1993), teachers should keep in mind that the chosen literary pieces or stories have to be suitable for the learners, paying special attention to their cultural background, proficiency and reading habits.

Various genres can be applied in the foreign language classroom, but the three most frequent ones are stories (Cameron, 2002), poetry (Maley & Duff, 1991), and short stories (Carter, 1986). These authentic sources play an essential part in creating a learner-friendly and motivating environment in the classroom. Harmer (2007) states that motivated learners have a higher success rate in learning languages. Furthermore, literature is useful in developing all the four basic language skills (Nunan 1991, Stern 1991). However, the use of literature in the English lesson is not a frequently observable phenomenon, for the following issues: lack of availability of authentic texts in school libraries, lack of confidence from teachers, misbeliefs about the content and difficulty of stories, the necessity of careful planning (Bland 2018, Ellis & Brewster 2014).

*The object matter* of the study is the description of the possible ways of involving literature in the process of language acquisition and the exploration of the connection between authentic materials and motivation in the classroom.

*The subject matter* of this research is the role of literature and motivation in English language learning, based on the perceptions and experience of foreign language teachers and secondary school pupils.

*The aim of the thesis* is to investigate the importance of using authentic literature in the development of English language skills and to examine the

motivating effect of literature on young learners. Based on these criteria, the main research questions were determined as the following:

- What is the connection between literature and language teaching?
- What are the most important authentic materials that can facilitate language acquisition?
- How can we use literature to develop the four basic language skills?
- Do authentic materials have a motivating effect on young learners?
- How can we teach mixed-ability classes effectively?
- What is the attitude of pupils towards learning English poems and tales?
- What are the most engaging creative tasks in the English lessons?

In accordance with the research questions, the hypotheses of the study include:

- 1) Literature plays an essential role in the development of all the four basic language skills;
- 2) Reading stories and learning poems enhance the creativity of learners;
- 3) Authentic materials are considered as useful teaching aids in the EFL classroom;
- 4) Literature has a motivating effect on young learners of English;
- 5) By learning poems and rhymes, students will remember the new material better.

The applied research methods are both theoretical and empirical. A large body of academic literature was collected and analysed concerning the main approaches of integrating literature into language teaching and the importance of motivation in learning English. In addition, questionnaire studies were designed to collect information from teachers of English and secondary school pupils regarding their attitudes and opinions about the necessity of reading authentic materials and literary works in English.

*The theoretical value* of the present study is that it provides an extensive summary of the possible uses of authentic literature in the English classroom while emphasising the relationship between creative tasks, literary pieces, motivation and language learning.

*The practical value* of the thesis consists of discussing the advantages and disadvantages of involving literature in the foreign language classroom, which could be helpful for teachers of EFL in designing their classroom strategies and guiding their learners in their way of acquiring better skills in English. In addition, meaningful ways of creating motivation for young learners are summarised in the research, which should be taken into consideration by teachers.

*The novelty of the research* is based on the excessive amount of the analysed scientific literature about the possibilities of involving authentic materials in language teaching, exploring the main trends among English teachers in this respect. Furthermore, language learners' attitudes towards literature and creative tasks are also analysed in details.

*Concerning the structure* of the thesis, it has been divided into an introduction, three main parts and a conclusion. The first part of the study deals with the description of the role of literature in language teaching and the main types of authentic materials used in English teaching, including stories, tales, poems and short stories. The main criteria for selecting appropriate literary works are discussed, together with the most important approaches in the use of EFL in classrooms.

In the second part of the thesis, the characteristic features of a successful language acquisition process are collected, including motivation, methods of teaching the four basic language skills, and assessment. Moreover, the most serious problems and issues are enlisted in relation to the involvement of literature in foreign language classrooms in Transcarpathia and those challenges of English teaching which emerged in the last decades.

The third and final part of the thesis contains the description of the applied research methods and the participants of the study. Two different questionnaires were designed for English teachers and young learners of the language, focusing on their opinions and experience in connection with authentic literature, motivation and creative tasks in the English language classroom. The main results and findings are also analysed and presented in this section, together with the pedagogical implications of the study.

# **PART I**

## **THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF USING LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM**

There has been substantial growth in the number of EFL learners in recent years. Due to the fact that learning a second or foreign language is a great way to broaden one's horizons.

There are many benefits of introducing children to literature as it not only fosters a love of reading, but it also aids in the development of cognitive skills and increases the likelihood of success in school or at work, not to mention the fact that stories play an essential role in the development of emotional intelligence. The first section of the thesis addresses theoretical issues that may occur when teaching young learners and adolescents. This study aims to look at how stories have the potential to become a helpful aid for all students in school.

This section introduces several different approaches and strategies that educators can use in their classrooms, as well as helpful tips for teaching the four fundamental skills.

This part also covers many of the essential aspects of teaching. The most common issues when using children's literature or stories in the classroom are choosing appropriate content, what stories to use, and so on.

One of the most pressing issues of using stories in the classroom is the key obstacles educators face.

The core benefits of using literature, as stated by the current thesis's writer, are explained in this section of the writing: it promotes language learning, has positive effects on reading achievement, improves students' creativity, increases student motivation, and even helps learners strengthen their speaking and writing skills.

Finally, in this part, advice is provided on how to evaluate students, which strategies are the most successful, and how a teacher can handle classroom management, weaker students, and discipline issues.

## 1.1 Literature and Teaching

When it comes to integrating literature into the English lessons, one of the central questions that arise is why. More specifically, why should language teachers use literature in teaching? Numerous reasons explain the advantageous outcome of applying this method (using literature, for instance, stories, poems, novels and so on when it comes to teaching/learning) in the case of teaching English as a foreign language. Hadway, Vardell and Young (2002) enlist three main benefits which come from including literature in the language teaching-learning process. According to them, the benefits are the following: the first is the contextualisation of language, the following advantage is the social factors that are embedded in different genres of literature, and the third is the natural, meaningful application of language which is accomplished with the help of illustrations and the usage of descriptive language in literature. To continue with Obediat's (1997) findings, literature can serve as a helping hand in obtaining competence in the target language, learning the usage of idiomatic expressions and so on. It also contributes to fluency and creativity in the target language. Conforming to Custodio and Sutton (1998), literature opens doors of opportunity and gives learners a chance to ask, criticise, and investigate. In addition, it grants the students a rich source of authentic learning material, and if the pupils learn this material successfully, then their level of understanding of English will rise. Duff and Maley (1991) also highlight three benefits of using literature in English language teaching, they are:

1. Stories, tales, novels and poems provide learners with real examples of language application;
2. Students interpret literary texts individually, in their own way; this means that they have different ideas. The discussion and explanation of these thoughts can usually lead to creative activities and conversations connected to the text.
3. Literature carries a so called "motivational power". Its power to motivate students lies in the text's authenticity because literary works are usually exciting and fun to read for learners. No one can argue with the fact that literature is a so-called authentic

material. This can be explained by the fact that most books and stories are not written for the definite purpose of language teaching – although there are specific books for this reason – and this means that students are exposed to a genuine language. Literature also contributes to cultural enrichment. By reading a book or a story, the students can discover the thoughts, feelings and customs of a specific culture; thus, it increases the foreign learners’ insight into the country of those whose language is being learnt. Moreover, literature provides a rich context in which some lexical or syntactical items may be more memorable, especially for learners who struggle with acquiring the language (Duff and Maley, 1991). It is also worth to mention, that by reading a well-contextualised story, pupils have the chance to develop a sense of familiarity with several features of the written language, for instance, the formation and function of sentences, the variety of possible structures, the numerous ways of connecting ideas and so on – this all contributes to broadening and enriching their own writing skills. If a teacher decides to involve literature in the classroom, he/she needs to consider the students’ personal involvement too. This means that when the learners are fond of the story, it is more likely to motivate them to learn the language. For example, if the pupils are drawn to the book, story, poem or tale, they are more eager to find out what happens next, and by this, they will practice language learning and reading in the foreign language (Duff and Maley, 1991).

In her writing, Ghosn (2013) discusses four good reasons to use literature in school. She argues that traditional and carefully selected materials, such as stories, plays and poems, are more appropriate and helpful in teaching than technical devices. As Ghosn (2013) explains, the first advantage of using literature during English lessons is that authentic literature offers a motivating and meaningful context for language learning. It can be explained by the fact that people are naturally attracted to stories since childhood. Thus, her opinion corresponds with Obediat’s (1997) conclusions. The second reason behind using stories in the classroom is that literature presents a “natural” language or language at its finest and by this, it enriches the students’ vocabulary.

Furthermore, as Ghosn (2013) mentions, literature contributes to academic literacy and critical thinking skills. The fourth and final reason for involving stories, tales, plays or poems in the English learning process is that it can contribute to the pupils' emotional development and intelligence. Ahlquist and Lugossy's (2015) findings support these ideas, especially because, based on their results, stories enhance cognitive and affective development. They propose that tales can be viewed as a fundamental cognitive tool; thus they seek to support and empower the learners' emotions and their imagination. It is highly significant to nurture the pupils' capacity to think of the world in narrative terms. Based on their writing (2015), literature can be used effectively for all ages and proficiency levels with careful selection of texts, assignments and evaluation. Most of the time, learners are inspired by their experiences with the text, they become more motivated, and what is more – they can motivate and inspire each other to study.

The role of the teacher in creating the atmosphere in the classroom is central to everything that happens to promote teaching and learning. Learners will respond to all kinds of activities if the atmosphere encourages them to participate fully in developing their learning. Sharing stories in the classroom helps learners to feel more secure and confident. It is also crucial to point out that pupils may relate to and understand a topic more through literature. Students usually have colourful imagination; this is one thing teachers can use and turn into an advantage. Literature allows learners to share their own opinions, feelings and by this, they can engage meaningfully with each other. On top of this, literature and stories can be used simply for pleasure. This means that since most people (including learners) enjoy good stories, literature can prompt students to be more attentive.

Ahlquist and Lugossy (2015) also propose , that students can enhance their listening skills by hearing stories via audiotapes and from each other, their speaking skills by reciting or retelling stories during the class, their reading skills by reading the books or reading their own stories and the stories of others, and their writing skills by writing stories and essays. This means that learning through tales emphasises the relationships between four language skills.



## 1.2 Suitability of the Material

The first and most critical aspect of incorporating literature into the classroom is selecting the appropriate literary text for learning. Fiction, folk tales, myths, legends, and other narratives, as well as the themes of poetry and novels, are all possibilities. When selecting materials, the educator must consider what type of literature is suitable or appropriate for language learners. This is highly dependent on the learners' age, needs, desires, cultural understanding, and language proficiency levels., as Duff and Maley (1991) explained, it is essential to take into account if the chosen text establishes a personal engagement, including whether the work piques the students' interest or does it elicit positive responses.

According to Collie and Slater (1990), if the chosen text has a significant meaning for the students and they enjoy it, it is more likely to leave a lasting impact on them and contribute to their linguistic and cultural awareness. As a result, it is essential to choose stories or books that apply to the students' life experiences, feelings, or dreams. A good story entices us to turn the page and continue reading.

Storytelling has often been used by cultures all over the world to pass down wisdom from one generation to the next. Encouraging children to read or listen to stories will thus assist them in learning a second language in a way that is both enjoyable and unforgettable.

For students to get the most out of reading stories in terms of language learning, the teacher must carefully consider the literary text's language level. Moreover, as Ghosn (2013) mentions, it is preferable to pick literary texts with universal themes such as courage, love, fear, hope, etc. What is more, the chosen material's storyline ought to be straightforward, easy to understand and comprehend.

Lazar (1993) highlights that when choosing materials, the educator should look for appropriate texts for the majority of the learners in the class. She enlists three 'rules' that a teacher needs to consider in case of using stories:

1. The student's cultural background.

When considering this aspect, teachers must view how much the students' cultural context and their social and political perceptions can aid or hinder their comprehension of a text. Most readers, for instance, will struggle to comprehend Jane Austen's novels without any understanding of the class structure and ideals of the society they depict. This means that teachers should think about how much context information they need to give their learners for them to have a basic understanding of the text.

## 2. The student's linguistic proficiency.

This is a quite complicated topic. Advanced students may be able to communicate fluently in an English-speaking context. However, they may be unable to cope with the text's vocabulary because it deviates significantly from standard language usage; it contains several archaisms, rhetorical devices, and metaphors, employing dialect or registers. As a result, teachers should consider the interests of their students. Will they find the literary work useful and fun to read, or will the language's difficulties demotivate them?

## 3. The learners' literary background.

The literary background of the students and their linguistic competence have a fascinating relationship, as the two do not always go together. Pupils may have learned literature in their native language and therefore have literary competence; they understand the key gist of the narrative, but the word use of a specific text may be problematic for them to comprehend. They may struggle with comprehending the literary meaning of certain words.

Authentic books are a great help when it comes to teaching English through literature. Simplified storybooks for children learning English are available from a variety of publishers. There are, however, several authentic storybooks written for English-speaking children that are also appropriate for English learners. Effective learning requires exposure to the second language. It is vital to success that learners are inspired, enjoy learning the language, and have as little anxiety as possible. Using authentic storybooks has the benefit of providing examples of "natural" language and bringing the real world into the classroom. In and out of the class, learning from

authentic materials fosters student imagination, exploration, understanding, and growth (Little, Devitt, Singleton, 1989).

Moreover, there are also graded readers, which look and feel like real books. They cater to the needs of today's modern language learners by maximising learning possibilities in a fun, stimulating, and convenient manner. Graded readers are short books in both fiction and nonfiction genres that have been written or adapted specifically for language learners, ensuring that they can find them fast and easy to digest.

Another problem that arises when it comes to using literature in the classroom is the students' age. Is it more advisable to involve literary texts in the teaching-learning process with younger learners or rather with older pupils?

English is one of the most widely spoken languages on the planet. Almost every school nowadays requires the teaching of this foreign language. The rate at which children develop in language learning is an individual preference. There is a disparity in language skills and knowledge levels among the students, differentiated by their age. For successful English teaching in primary schools, teachers need to understand the young learners' characteristics and instincts because these play a vital role in how teachers build lessons. How they can make sure that young pupils are fully involved in the learning process, how they achieve the objectives of a lesson, and how they respond. Younger students tend to be more motivated when they are praised. It is crucial to support their enthusiasm from the beginning of learning. But what does the term "young learners" mean, and how can it be explained? As it was reported by Halliwell (1993), young learners are typically children whose age goes from 6 to 12. Conforming to Ellis and Brewster (2014), young learners are students between 6 and 12. Slattery and Willis (2014) mention young learners are children whose age goes from 7 to 12. Based on these pieces of information, it can be stated that according to professional researchers of this topic, young learners as pupils aged from 6 to 10 or 12 or in other words, the term young learner (YL) can refer to a foreign language learner in preschool through secondary school.

Older learners (aged 13-17) might present challenges for teachers. Learners may feel tired, have mood swings or can be demotivated. Educators should create an environment that is conducive to learning. It would be a great idea to give them chances to influence the flow and the content of the lesson by bringing their hobbies or interests into the classroom. Pair work is also an excellent way of dealing with older learners because adolescent learners benefit from working with each other. The teacher should serve as a guide who helps the students to carry out their tasks.

Recognised experts like Ellis and Brewster (2014), Harmer (2007), and Halliwell (1993) declare that literature and stories are more likely to serve as fruitful tools for teaching if the students are younger. Besides, Halliwell (1993) claims that tales and literary texts can be entertaining for any learner; however, it is the children who can take advantage of learning with the help of stories the most.

### **1.3 Using stories during teaching**

Stories are beneficial because they discuss everyday topics that go beyond the scope of simple dialogues and everyday activities. As previously mentioned, tales, according to the author of this study, often exercise children's imagination. One way to provide children with both comprehensible and exciting input is to use stories. In most cases, tales have multiple interpretations rather than a single one; thus storytelling can be used to evaluate a student's ability to think critically. When a teacher uses stories in the classroom, it encourages students to think, fosters creativity and imagination, and provides them with more opportunities to transform their experiences into stories.

Since children are instinctively attracted to stories, Cameron (2002) argues that literature offers an inspiring, meaningful backdrop for language learning. It may also aid in the acquisition of new languages. Stories show off the language at its best, and they can help with vocabulary learning in a natural setting. According to Ghosn (2013), literature should be used regularly in class because it is an engaging tool for language learning owing to the fact that it includes predictable, repetitive patterns

that reinforce vocabulary and structures while also providing essential themes for young learners. While language teachers cannot teach students emotions, they can help pupils communicate and comprehend them. Stories enable learners to gain an understanding of the complexity of emotional responses too. In their book, Ahlquist and Lugossy (2015) also discuss the importance of stories. Building on their opinion, it allows students to be engaged during lessons and teachers. Instead of being teacher-centred, the classroom becomes learner-centred. Educators play a pivotal role in influencing students' attitudes toward learning, especially in this process, because they are the most powerful motivators. Teachers may find it challenging to create an enjoyable English classroom, particularly for young students. Educators must give students opportunities to creatively use the language to respond personally and individually, expressing their ideas, feelings, and preferences in many different ways. The educator's responsibility is to plan activities that encourage students to read carefully and rigorously, continually remake and build definitions, and extend learning to other areas, such as discussion after reading and comparison with other tales. If students are at ease, they can participate in a variety of events.

An instructor should also encourage students to use the language to express their thoughts by stimulating their creative imagination. For instance, they can draw and explain an animal that lives in a hole or on a tree. As it was investigated by Halliwell (1993), there are so many good language teaching ideas that it is easy to become overwhelmed.

Language classrooms can create a noisy and challenging environment. Teachers must have reasonable expectations of themselves and their students. Storytelling is a living art form as well. It is brought to life in performance, much like music and dance. The storyteller's context will influence the story: his or her choice of setting and detail and the rapport formed with the audience. Simple words, sounds, and language patterns are the storyteller's building blocks. The voice, face, and hands are the instruments. The result is a common human experience founded on words and imagination. Baker and Greene (1987) argue that storytelling is akin

to giving a gift because it heightens the listener's awareness—a sense of wonder and mystery.

In *The Storytelling Handbook*, Ellis and Brewster (2002, 2014) state that tales should be used in the classrooms; it is motivating and fun for the children, not to mention that they create a deep interest and a desire to continue learning.

Moreover, since listening to stories, sharing them, and retelling them is a shared social experience, it elicits a common reaction of laughter, sorrow, excitement, and anticipation. Furthermore, tales allow the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing the children to the language. Stories often bear ideological messages thus, they assist students at all levels in their comprehension of literature.

In addition to this, children's books offer universal truths and moral appeals. According to Dorothy Heathcote (1995), with the help of storytelling a teacher has the opportunity to make time slow enough for inquiry, interesting enough for students to pay attention to the subject and they bring new thoughts, processes into comprehension.

As it was mentioned before, listening to a specific story can be a strange but positive experience for a learner. Especially for younger learners, they find it interesting, hearing all those new words out loud. Listening helps to create and develop vocabulary and understanding of literary devices. There are also benefits in following along in the text while listening to the story.

Another benefit of listening to stories, as mentioned several times throughout the current thesis, is that it develops the students' listening and concentration skills and helps to enhance creative thinking.

When it comes to using stories, there are a variety of exercises that can be applied. Educators, for example, have the option of using the shared reading technique. Shared reading is an activity during which that two or more students share the reading assignment. To continue with, shadow/echo reading may be also applied. The students are asked to read aloud with the teacher. To learn how to pronounce the words correctly, the students' reading should lag slightly behind the teacher's.

## **1.4 Literature in the EFL classroom – teaching approaches**

As it was defined by Irma-Kaarina Ghosn (2013) the body of English language children's literature is quite rich, and it deals with numerous themes and topics that bear a huge relevance to learners of all ages and backgrounds. She also highlights the importance of learning about culture, not only language. With the help of the literature, learners are able to obtain knowledge concerning the customs of the culture, in addition they can also raise questions that they find interesting, hard to understand or not usual. Ghosn (2013) writes about how literature-based instruction and teaching enables pupils to maintain their own identity while working with the story, rather than being forced to unfamiliar exercises and situations as they study the language.

There are numerous approaches when it comes to using literature in the EFL classroom. It can be stated that learning by literature beginner students get a great opportunity to practice the skills they learn in the language classroom; meanwhile , advanced readers explore how they can read for pleasure then use it to their advantage in language learning. Carter and Long (1991) established three main models of literature teaching and learning through literature, which are the following:

### 1) The Cultural Model

For this model it is essential for learners to know and interpret the text's social, political, literary and historical context. It can be explained by the fact that knowing these background information will encourage the pupils to learn about different cultures and ideologies.

### 2) The Language Model

The main focus of this model is to learn about how the language is built; by accessing the text systematically and methodologically, the students will be able to explain and exemplify particular linguistic features. It can be declared that this model is quite disconnected from literary goals, because it reduces the students' engagement with the literary text.

### 3) The Personal Growth Model

The most important agenda behind the third model is that its main focus is the actual use of the language through the literary text, and it also deals with placing the text in a particular cultural context. When using this method, learners have the opportunity to express their own feelings, thoughts and emotions and they also get the chance to make cultural connections between their own cultural experiences and those expressed within the text. Furthermore, this model enables pupils to formulate knowledge and ideas about the language through different themes and topics.

These three models have been incorporated into several different approaches that deal with teaching literature. There are six approaches:

*Information-based approach* – the main purpose of this approach based on Thunnithet's (2011) work is to give as much background information to students, as possible. It can be stated that this approach is teacher-centred since it requires a lot of educator's input in giving students numerous contents of literary text such as the historical, social, political and cultural background. The learners only have a few opportunities to the exercises themselves and they also do not get the chance to express their own opinion.

*Paraphrastic Approach* – the principal idea behind this approach that the text is paraphrased and reworded so it can be understood in an easier way. Educators use simple words and they also avoid the usage of complex sentence structure in order to make the original text easy to comprehend. It is rather teacher-centred.

*Language-Based Approach* – this approach is learner-centred and mainly activity based in order to practice the use of the language. It includes the in-depth analysis of the text so that students interpret it correctly. When using this approach, students tend to pay more attention to how the language is used while dealing with literature. Activities like role play, debates, poetry recital, prediction making and rewriting stories are also included when we are talking about the language-based approach. These texts should reflect the learners' interests in order for them to engage during the lesson.



*Stylistic approach* – it shifts focus mainly on the style of the text and suggests literary critics alongside with linguistic analysis. Using this approach, learners will obtain a deeper understanding of the text, its meaning and be able to develop language awareness.

*Moral-Philosophical Approach* – students learn about moral values while reading selected literary texts. Students will be more aware of moral issues and it also helps them to understand themselves better by dealing with philosophical questions.

*Personal-Response Approach* – as it can be assumed from its name, this approach encourages learners to share their personal experiences, their lives and their view on the text and its topic. This is a great way for pupils to create a link between their personal life and the language they are learning. It increases personal and individual fulfilment and promotes the development of language and literary competency. While using the personal-response approach, the teacher works a mediator who helps the students to interact with the text.

### **1.5 Using Poetry**

Poetry grants an excellent opportunity for those educators who decide to involve it during lessons or in case of learning new material. Numerous researchers deal with the topic of how poetry can enhance language learning for instance Lazar (1993), Duff and Maley (1991) or Hess (2003). Hedge (2000) also writes that poems can be viewed as authentic materials that develop the receptive skill of reading. Incorporating poetry into learning has numerous advantages from both linguistic and literary perspectives. Duff and Maley (1991) enlist the following advantages that come from using poetry in the classroom:

Universality – this means that the themes that poetry usually deals with are quite common and frequent, such as nature, fate, love, etc. This means that the students can relate to it easily. Moreover, even the usage of poetic devices like rhythm, rhyme, metre, alliteration, assonance, figurative speech, etc. are also similar in all languages, thus it makes it easier for learners to understand the language.

Motivation – Many people view poetry as something difficult to deal with, however it is not the case when it comes to foreign language teaching. If learners are given the chance to work with poetry in a foreign language or they even get the chance to write their own poem can be often motivational, not to mention the fact that it gives self-confidence too. Reaction and personal relevance – everyone interprets poetry on his/her own way, this gives room for discussion and learners will be able to share their thoughts and ideas. What is more, poems usually trigger the reader's emotion and by doing so it engages not only on intellectual level, but it also can awaken our feelings, which gives teachers an opportunity to teach emotional intelligence (Duff and Maley, 1991).

Memorability and rhythm – most of the times people often memorise words or sentences of a literary text because they truly like it or the way it sounds, the message it carries. This is a case with poems and songs or chants too. When teaching poems in class educators can help the learners to absorb the foreign language unconsciously. Thus, it can be used to enrich vocabulary by learning new words, collocations or even short phrases (Duff and Maley, 1991).

Another amazing feature that makes poetry useful and attractive for pupils is its rhythm and stress. Rhythm is beneficial when students learn how to say the words in the right way, because reading poems out loud can improve pronunciation. It can be said, that poetry gives students the opportunity to explore the foreign language and to play with it as well.

Maley and Duff (1991) also highlight, that poetry serves as a great asset in the EFL classroom, due to the fact that it incorporates the creative use of the language along with teaching form and content. Not to mention the fact, that with poetry an educator can choose from various exercises that can be linked to it: the learners can read the poems aloud, they can write their responses to it and so on.

According to Hanauer's (2010) findings, poetry is rich in content, therefore teachers can use it to introduce new words in context and it is also beneficial for students, because it is an amazing way to practice pronunciation, rhythm, and stress patterns. There are two main pedagogical approaches that deal with teaching EFL with poetry,

they are the following: the stylistic approach and the reader-response approach – they both were mentioned before by the writer of the current thesis.

Based on Parkinson and Thomas' (2000) findings, teaching poetry in the EFL classroom is beneficial, considering the following facts:

1. Poems are easy to understand and paraphrase – learners can indicate what the poem is about according to them, they can state their thoughts and learn new words, the teacher can carry out paraphrasing exercises with the learners.
2. The linguistic features of poems – students can easily learn about the linguistic features of the language with the help of poems.
3. Personal reaction – educators can also analyse the poem with the students and by doing it so, the learners will have the opportunity to voice their opinion, thus it is a great way to practice speaking (Parkinson and Thomas, 2000).

When it comes to poetry, there are various ways to assess the learners' literary competence in, for instance: group discussions, writing exercises, portfolios, drawing, role-play or self-assessments. A decent method to ease learners into a poetry focused lesson is to give them an overall inclination for the ideas presented in the poem by carrying out a warm-up exercise. For instance, the students can brainstorm and express their opinions about the themes of the literary work based on its title. Teachers can stimulate a fruitful speaking session with tasks like this. Educators should ensure that the pupils understood the language of the poem precisely. However, using poetry in the EFL classroom is still a widely debated topic, due to the fact that according to experts such as Parkinson and Thomas (2000), poems as selected authentic texts were not primarily written or intended to language teaching, meaning educators usually have to adapt and research materials that suit to their teaching goals and aims (Parkinson and Thomas, 2000). Taking everything into consideration, it is clear, that poetry indeed can be an effective tool for teaching English as a foreign language, since it is a valuable authentic material. Moreover, poetry can be linked to several other classroom activities, that develop both receptive and productive language skills like reading and writing and in addition, it also develops the students' creativity or critical thinking (Parkinson and Thomas, 2000).

## 1.6 Using short stories and novels

The usage of short stories has indeed been extensively debated and recommended, particularly in circumstances where English is taught and learned as a foreign language. This is because EFL learners face many challenges in learning and mastering foreign language skills due to various factors such as a lack of target language exposure, ineffective methodology, poor teaching and learning materials. Because of the different educational aspects, scholars such as Brumfit and Carter (1986) promote the use of short stories as one of the best ELT strategies that a teacher can use. Short stories, according to them, help students improve their language skills more effectively. They are simple to complete in class and easy to comprehend.

Based on Lazar's (1993) views, including short stories during teaching provides rich, inspiring, genuine, and educational instruction and learning content. Short stories aid in the understanding of another culture and pave the way for language learning. They also facilitate the development of students' interpretive skills and the expansion of their language knowledge. However, she also notes that when reading or learning a short story, students may face three challenges: comprehending the plot, comprehending the language in which the story is written, and comprehending how the type of narrator who tells the story may shape or influence the way the story is being told. For these reasons, the teachers should choose and use the story very carefully.

Another proponents of short stories are Collie and Slater (1990), who claim that when teachers use stories in language teaching, they do something far more significant and more important than language teaching itself. They teach culture, feelings, emotions, universal truths, critical and creative thinking and so on.

Short stories include several linguistic benefits, such as the simplicity of sentence structures and vocabulary used in context, making learning foreign language skills simple and convenient. They assist in the development of EFL learners' vocabulary and encourage active participation. Moreover, according to Collie and Slater (1990), short stories are useful in ELT classrooms since they are

long enough to be covered completely in one or two class sessions. They are simple enough for students to deal with independently and aid in developing self-reliance when studying a foreign language like English.

Collie and Slater also highlight that (1990) in short stories, the language is much richer and more varied than the language samples used in textbooks. Several genuine features of the written language are posed at various levels of complexity. Additionally, they suggest that short stories are the best literary genre to use in English classes because of their short length (Collie and Slater 1990). Not to mention the fact that short stories cater to a wide range of different interests and preferences.

Short stories can also be a motivational and effective way to teach both speaking and listening skills. Oral reading, dramatization, improvisation, roleplaying, re-enactment, and debate are useful learning exercises that EFL students can use to improve these two skills by focusing on a short story.

Lazar (1993) claims that novels can also serve as great teaching aids in the case of EFL learners. Different literary genres, primarily and especially novels, aid students in comprehending how people from various countries interact with one another. Her research emphasised the importance of novels in broadening students' cultural horizons.

In addition, the pupils can learn about different literary genres, they can learn about historical events through novels, what is more by reading and learning from/about novels the students have the opportunity to 'travel back in time' and read about how people lived ages ago. For instance, from reading Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, learners become familiar with the regency culture.

In her book, Lazar (1993) enlists numerous exercises, which can be linked to a novel, for instance: '*Imagine that you were asked to explain or define what a short story is, perhaps to a Martian. What would you say?*' (Lazar, 1993 p.73)

This exercise is a great example of how incorporating literature into language instruction helps students become more knowledgeable of the language and allows them to experience and use it more creatively. They also become more conscious and expressive of their emotions, feelings, fears and thoughts.

## 1.7 Teaching young students

When it comes to teaching, there is a difference between teaching young learners and older students. It can be explained by the fact that the students' language skills and knowledge levels vary, and this can be determined by their age. Above all, having a thorough understanding of young students' characteristics and instincts is necessary for effective English teaching in primary schools. It influences how the teacher constructs a lesson, how he or she ensures that young learners are completely engaged in the learning process, how the educator achieves the lesson goals, and how the pupils will react.

When young children are rewarded, they become more inspired to learn. It is vital to encourage their passion for learning right from the start. Gail Ellis and Jean Brewster (2014) refer to young learners in elementary school, aged between 6-12 and 9-10. They also imply that young learners are more inspired if they learn about something they like, such as their hobby. Ghosn (2013) advocates for the use of children's literature in the case of young learners. She defines children's literature stories written for children's enjoyment rather than for educational purposes. It includes nursery rhymes, contemporary realistic fiction, fables, poetry, humour and so on.

Young children, according to Jeremy Harmer (2012), an expert on the topic, show an enthusiasm for learning and a curiosity about the world around them. Children, he claims, are typically eager and enthusiastic learners. Harmer (Harmer, 2012) also draws attention to the fact that since young students have a limited attention span, they can quickly become bored after 5-10 minutes.

As a result, teachers should provide a diverse repertoire of activities to assist young children in gathering knowledge from a variety of sources, and they should plan ahead a wide range of activities for a specific time span. He also highlights that drilling and group work should be included in the classroom, because they are incredibly effective when it comes to working with young learners. Involving pair or team work is especially a good idea because young students prefer to be

accompanied by someone while doing exercises or playing. The majority of them dislike working alone. However, the teacher should also keep in mind that in some cases children tend to distract each other while working in pairs.

Moreover, the lesson itself should be colourful with plenty of space for various activities. Young students enjoy learning new ideas, creating or drawing things, using their imagination, moving from one location to another, and solving puzzles. This is a benefit that a teacher can use when teaching a new subject through literature. For instance, students can draw the weather while learning about it through a poem. Such an exercise helps students to remain concentrated, and it also assists them in remembering the learnt details better.

Based on Ahlquist and Lugossy's findings (2015), the way young learners learn is influenced by their communicative needs. Games and role-plays continue to be important in language learning because they enable students to explore their own personalities and abilities. In cognitive teaching and development, stories should also be included.

Kids have difficulty distinguishing the real world from the fantasy world, according to Scott and Ytreberg (1995). Teachers may find it difficult to cope with it and apprehend their students' perceptions of reality; therefore, educators should pay particular attention to thoroughly explaining the content. This is a vice versa problem, meaning the students themselves do not understand the world of adults in many cases. The teacher must provide adequate directions and use appropriate language and phrases so that the children understand the message.

Teaching English as a foreign language to young learners is not easy; it certainly comes with challenges. Several important concerns have been described in the literature that deals with teaching English to young learners. One of the essential issues centres on using the right textbook. Owing to the global importance of early English learning, it concerns that suitable books are not accessible in several countries or are not used in the classroom, as Nunan (2003) points out. Moreover, teachers are constantly expected to create innovative learning materials and maintain effective classroom management, putting a lot of pressure on the educator.

## 1.8 Teaching adolescents

Teaching adolescences differs from teaching young learners. Adolescences are older learners, aged between 13 and 17 years, according to Ahlquist and Lugossy (2015). The way that teenagers think and reason undergoes certain changes. They begin to comprehend abstract concepts, improve language skills, and learn how to express their thoughts, allowing them to communicate in a more extensive manner (Ahlquist and Lugossy, 2015).

Teenagers are often stigmatised as being the most challenging students, according to Ur (1996). Despite having higher capability than young children, they seem to lack motivation, are less receptive to teacher support, and are challenging to inspect. The educator must earn the students' appreciation and trust over time. Adolescent learners are eager to take part in actions directly connected to the lesson material and learning program. English classes, like other school subjects, are not high on a youngster's list of concerns. Learners are famously difficult to please, meaning educators must always be on the lookout for interesting exercises that will catch and retain their attention (Ur 1996).

While young learners tend to get bored easily because of their short attention span, teenagers, on the other hand, get bored quickly due to their quickly changing interest. In case of teaching adolescences, Scrivener (2011) enlists the following problems:

- they might reject carrying out exercises because they feel embarrassed or silly;
- the motivation of teenagers is limited, particularly if they feel compelled to participate in anything they may not want to;
- they often become outspoken and share their dislikes;
- teenagers are more likely to have discipline problems;
- common and easy things might come across as an issue for them.

In order to solve these problems, a teacher should be willing to listen and in certain cases, when it is possible, the educator should share the responsibility with the learners in case of important decisions such as topics, work rate, homework, tests



and so on. Adolescents also need a feeling of security in an often perplexing world. Therefore teacher's job is to figure out a way to combine a more versatile, cooperative, and inclusive approach with an orderly, organised, yet non-threatening setting (Scrivener, 2011). Harmer (2012) also suggests that educators should involve students with content that is both meaningful and engaging. At about the same time, they should do whatever they can to boost the learners' self-esteem and be aware of their need for belonging at all times.

It is also important to note that adolescents, as a complex class of learners, require standardised instruction. Due to this, it is highly advised that at this specific age, teachers use teaching approaches that reinforce all four learning skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), with a particular emphasis on communicative competence.

Numerous teachers agree that what students read and how they discuss texts should provide a range of critical viewpoints and broaden students' awareness of race, class, and gender. This is a difficult task, particularly when the teacher has to work with the most vulnerable learners in such discussions - adolescents. Even when the educator attempts every effort to choose writers and characters that embody a diverse range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, there is still the issue of time and resources. Owing to these reasons, when choosing a story to use in the classroom, the educator needs to select it carefully (Beach, Appleman, Hynds, Wilhelm, 2006).

When teaching adolescences, teachers should pay special attention to the stories and books they choose to work with. For instance, classics are always a good idea. There seems to be an explanation why most classic texts are studied over and over again. Class after class, teachers choose to assign classics since they know what classics have to offer. The themes and circumstances presented in these books continue to captivate students. These widely used stories/books include classics such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Kill A Mockingbird*, etc. Moreover, the real motivation behind choosing a classic text is that it creates an opportunity for students to talk (Beach, Appleman, Hynds, Wilhelm, 2006).

To sum everything up, the first section of the thesis offered an in-depth analysis and description of the importance of literature in case of teaching English. It explained the factors that should be considered when a teacher decides to use literary texts in the classroom. This segment also examined the approaches that experts associate with teaching English through stories, tales and poems. Furthermore, it described the differences between teaching younger and older students.

## **PART 2**

### **CHALLENGES IN TEACHING EFL**

It is not an easy task to teach English as a foreign language. Teachers are often confronted with issues such as motivation, student discipline, lesson planning, and so on. This section of the thesis focuses on the challenges that educators face when teaching EFL in schools. Furthermore, there are many approaches for teaching English that can assist both teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. The thesis' second section discusses various teaching methods. What is more, the writer of the current thesis will explain the essence of using these teaching methods and techniques.

Commonly used methods such as the Total Physical Response are thoroughly described. It is also crucial to highlight that assessing learners is a difficult job, especially given the fact that a teacher has to deal with mixed-ability classes in most cases. Due to this reason, the author of the study will provide possible solutions on how to assess mixed-ability classes and how to overcome or solve possible problems based on the existing literature concerning the topic.

#### **2.1 Motivating Learners**

One of the most difficult tasks educators encounter is encouraging and motivating pupils. Although it is evident that teachers have little power over external factors that affect students' behaviour, attitude, and involvement, Ellis and Brewster (2002, 2014) argue that teachers do have a significant impact on what happens in their classrooms. In fact, how a teacher chooses to teach and motivate students to learn can have a positive impact on their attitude towards studying. Educators need to take a more active role in attempting to increase the enthusiasm and motivation of their students. In all cases, educators must consider age-appropriate personal preferences when encouraging students to use a foreign language effectively. Still, what exactly is motivation, one might wonder. Gardner (1986) defines motivation as a

combination of a motivation to know a language, optimistic attitudes toward learning a language, and effort put forth in mastering it. Referring to Saville-Troike (2006), individual motivation is another aspect that is often cited to understand why some EFL learners are more enthusiastic or competitive than others. Motivation is a major factor in learning. The psychology of second language acquisition dictates how much effort learners put in at different stages of their L2 growth, which is often a determining factor in their eventual level of competency. Motivation is characterised in a variety of ways, but it is typically thought of as a construct that includes at least the following elements (Dörnyei, 2001):

- Important goal or need;
- Desire to achieve the aim;
- Belief that mastering L2 is necessary to achieve the goal or satisfy the need;
- Belief in the likelihood of learning L2 progress or failure;
- Value of possible outcomes/rewards.

According to Zoltán Dörnyei (2001), even people with exceptional abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals without sufficient support and motivation. Motivation has an essential role in teaching since teaching someone who is extremely motivated is easier than working with a relatively motivated or resistant person. Furthermore, motivated students will remember what they have learned more explicitly and, ideally, for a longer period of time.

There are two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. When it comes to language learning, intrinsic motivation is crucial. Intrinsic motivation, according to Dörnyei (2001), entails engaging in a behaviour because it is personally satisfying, or, in other words, conducting an action for its own sake instead of for the sake of receiving an external reward. For instance, if someone wants to participate in a sport because they find the activity enjoyable or is similar to solving a world puzzle, it is fun and exciting. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation happens when pupils are inspired to learn to perform a behaviour or participate in an activity to receive a reward or escape punishment. For instance, if some learners feel the need to study for a good grade or competing in a sport in order to win an award

they are driven by extrinsic motivation (Dörnyei, 2001). Most teachers understand that encouragement is important because it makes a difference; nevertheless, motivating learners, especially young students, is not easy. According to Cameron (2002), it is difficult because young learners most likely do not have a say in whether they want to learn English or attend classes. They do not understand the importance of learning English as a foreign language. Moreover, the attention span of younger students is also a lot less than that of adults. On the other hand, motivating teenagers and adolescences might be even more challenging. What is more, many adolescents lack the desire to do things that do not matter to them, they do not see it as something essential, and they do not care about fulfilling an agenda that has nothing to do with them. Despite these facts, Scrivener (2011) states that involving the learners in the decision-making process might be a good way of motivating them to learn. Teachers should also create a welcoming and safe environment. Adolescents can quickly understand that not only does the teacher care about them as people, but that the educator is also enthusiastic about how much they can accomplish in the limited time they have with them if they combine a supportive atmosphere with a purposeful approach to task facilitation (Kidd & Czerniawski, 2011).

Kidd and Czerniawski (2011) also describe three attitudes that an educator, or as he put it, a facilitator, should possess in order to aid the learning experience. Empathy (viewing the situation from the perspective of the learners), honesty (being yourself), and acceptance (of the students' thoughts and opinions) are the three.

Harmer (2007), another expert on the topic, also writes about how important motivation is. He indicates that learners who might not be truly inspired find learning challenging, while motivated students have a higher success rate. Furthermore, Harmer (2012) also puts an emphasis on the significance of integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation describes a condition in which a language learner wishes to integrate into the target language community somehow. When a language learner wants to learn English for the sole purpose of getting a better job or for some other more materialistic motive, this is known as instrumental motivation. In his research (Harmer, 2012), he found and proved that integrative

motivation positively affects students and their studies than instrumental motivation. The motivation of students is likely to be influenced by their own, individual learning experiences too.

Various approaches can be used to encourage children or any student to learn the language. According to Cameron (2002), setting realistic goals for what students want to be able to do in English by the end of the semester is a fantastic strategy. Educators should also inspire students to search for examples of how English is used outside the classroom and use what they discover. Asking students questions like, "Would you have more work opportunities with a decent proficiency in English?" would also be a smart option. It will encourage students to see English as more than just another subject, but rather as a tool to help them achieve their long-term objectives. Cameron (2002) recommends that the class should be made more communicative. When language learners, for example, can effectively translate their thoughts into words, they feel a rush or a sense of enthusiasm. It is the educator's job to maintain that enthusiasm and turn it into motivation.

In most cases, lesson planning is vital for keeping students motivated. While creating a lesson plan, the instructor should consider the balance of activities such as singing or running around the classroom versus other activities such as drawing or copying. Teachers should set high but attainable goals.

Students' motivation can be improved by relating lessons to their lives. Regardless of whether budgeting for family Christmas presents, writing short stories about their hometown, or even incorporating pop culture into the content, pupils will become more interested in the topic because they will be able to find themselves or their daily lives in what they are studying. Maintaining a routine is also an excellent way to keep students motivated. Learners know what to expect when an educator uses a schedule in class, and it can also help them stay coordinated (Cameron, 2002). Group activities are a perfect way to get the whole class talking. Making the lesson enjoyable is another excellent way to boost motivation. Learners might be more interested in learning if they are having fun. Rather than the teacher motivating them, they can motivate themselves and each other. Learners are much more likely to

remain motivated if they believe their teacher cares about them, according to Jeremy Harmer (2012). It's also essential to maintain a professional demeanour. If students see that the instructor is professional and knowledgeable, they are more likely to be inspired. As mentioned previously by the writer of the current study, it is also important that students have agency to stay motivated. This implies that they should be able to influence what is going on. It can also be beneficial for teachers to demonstrate their passion for the subject by using appropriate, concrete, and understandable examples.

## **2.2 Teaching the Four Basic Skills**

Listening, reading, speaking, and writing are the four separate language skill fields. The fact that the four basic language skills are closely linked together complements each other when teaching or studying them. According to experts like Jeremy Harmer (2012), these four skills can be divided into two categories: receptive and productive skills. The receptive skills are listening and reading, while the productive skills are speaking and writing. The receptive skills are commonly taught first. Despite the significant differences between reading and listening, the two go hand in hand. As Slattery and Willis states (2014), a teacher should involve students to carry out both Type 1 and Type 2 tasks in case of teaching listening and reading. Based on Harmer's findings (2012), Type 1 tasks are those where the learners must read or listen to something for general understanding, rather than asking them to point out details or get involved in a refined search of the given text. However, during Type 2 tasks, students should look at the text in considerably more detail, maybe for specific information.

Listening is beneficial; it is a necessary skill in every language, according to Jeremy Harmer (2007). It aids in the acquisition and retention of vocabulary, pronunciation, language chunks, and even grammar. The majority of the listening usually occurs when the teacher is talking. In the classroom, however, the use of recorded listening exercises is also expected and required. During these tasks,

students hear dialogues and monologues from course books. Recorded listening tracks are extremely useful since they enable students to hear a range of voices and accents of native speakers.

The other receptive skill is reading. Based on Halliwell's (1993) findings reading aids in the learning and acquisition of English. One of the most effective ways for students to receive comprehensible information is to read at their appropriate level. Comprehensible input is the language that students can understand even though they do not know all of the phrases or meanings. It is rather focused on Stephen Krashen's second-language acquisition theory, which he introduced in the 1980s. According to Krashen (1982), language learning is a method in which students deliberately attempt to understand the language. Students' English improves as they get more understandable feedback – comprehensible input. When it comes to reading instruction, teachers must choose a brief text. Many educators use graded readers, as Harmer (2012) points out. Graded readers range in level from beginner to advanced. The language in these books is simplified according to the level of knowledge and skills of the readers.

As stated in *The Practice of English Language Teaching* book (Harmer, 2012), reading can be divided into extensive and intensive. Extensive reading covers a large area; as Graham Stanley (2013) defines, it involves students reading long texts for general understanding, intending to enjoy the texts. Intensive reading focuses on closely following a shorter text, doing exercises with it, and learning it in detail. According to this approach, it helps language learners to understand the language's grammar and syntax truly. Intensive reading is when the primary emphasis is on studying, assessing, and expanding awareness. Reading intensively often includes note-taking and focusing on the details.

Moreover, learners can very well interpret, comprehend, and react critically to others' ideas by reading. They acquire knowledge about the specific ways in which texts aid in the formulation and expression of new ideas; when learning how to read, students also have the chance to consider the connection between their own



experiences ideas, experiences, and those they encounter while reading. (Davison & Dowson, 2009)

Speaking and writing are receptive skills, as mentioned earlier by the author of the present study. Jeremy Harmer (2007, 2012) lists many reasons why conducting communicative tasks are necessary. Still, the essential explanation is simple: communicative speaking activities typically offer or provide students with a willingness to talk and communicate in the target language.

According to David Nunan (1991), teaching effectiveness is assessed by the students' ability to carry out a conversation in the target language. There are multiple activities that teachers can use when they teach speaking. Harmer (2012) lists several game-like speaking exercises: hot seats, prompt cards or formal debate. The most effective activity that helps with speaking practice is situational dialogues. Communication and speech are at the heart of the communicative method founded in the 20th century. This method of teaching was first developed by Noam Chomsky (2002). Language learning, according to this perspective, is heavily reliant on communication. Classroom tasks should include role-plays, interviews, group work, opinion exchange, and knowledge gap exercises, as suggested by the communicative approach.

In spoken English, errors can be quickly corrected, or students can say the same thing in a different way. Unfortunately, this is not the case when it comes to writing. When it comes to writing, learners are required to be more accurate. First of all, students must learn when to use punctuation features in writing. A great way to explain these rules is to give them unpunctuated paragraphs and ask them to put capital letters, full stops, commas and inverted commas where it is necessary. In his book, Harmer (2012) mentions the process of writing. Based on his findings, the process of writing or the writing process includes five stages. The first stage is the planning stage, where the students must think about what they want to write to the target readers. The second step in this process is drafting. A draft is the unedited and the very first version of the writing. The following phase includes reviewing the draft, correcting all the mistakes and so on. After reviewing the draft, the writer

should edit and check it before handing in the writing. When teaching writing, most of the teachers involve essay writing tasks or creative exercises such as story writing.

### **2.3 Teaching reading and writing through literature**

According to experts such as Harmer (2007), Nunan (1991) and Stern (1991), all the language skills can be enhanced with the help of literature. However, these experts also agree that the language skills that can be most effectively targeted with literature is reading and writing. In case of reading, learners can make observations, formulate their own ideas, and examine the chosen text. As a result, they will learn to think critically, creatively, and freely. The pupils will benefit from this in other classes ,that require critical reasoning and independent thoughts (Stern 1991). When teaching reading, it is an excellent idea to involve authentic materials. Moreover, according to Kortner (1990), authentic literature and stories are ideal tools for teaching basic reading comprehension. While teaching learners how to read, educators should see if the students are interested in the words, if they can tell a familiar tale or if they are able to point out something they do not understand. Educators must become constant listeners who keep track of the learners' interactions with the classroom materials to receive feedback (Kortner 1990).

Based on Lazar's (1993) views, reading will familiarise learners with literary texts. As a result, they can improve their reading skills due to the fact that literary texts encourage personal participation in learners and enable them to relate their personal experiences to the subject matter's material. Also, reading literary texts helps learners develop their language skills by providing them with vocabulary, grammar, paragraph form and various writing styles. Reading stories and books also directly or indirectly assist pupils to achieve their academic or occupational goals (Lazar 1993).

Learners must learn how to write in an EFL context because almost all of their modules require them to write homework, summaries, and surveys. They should be able to grasp the language's systemic as well as the communicative aspects. Literary

texts provide learners with valuable authentic materials that can be used as a starting point for engaging conversation or writing while also growing students' word knowledge or vocabulary (Ur, 1996). To continue with, literature, according to Parkinson and Thomas (2000), offers examples of quality writing, linguistic diversity, expressive ranges, etc. In addition, literary texts often introduce students to coherent writing, which helps them organise their thoughts logically and coherently through linked paragraphs. As a result, introducing literature as part of the curriculum allows EFL learners to develop their writing skills.

Writing and drafting are also creative tasks, as they allow learners to let their imagination run free.

Using literature as a model of learning and exercises, Hismangolu (2005) describes three types of writing, which are quite effective. They are explained in the following table:

**Table 2.3 Literature based writing exercises**

<b>Controlled writing</b>	<b>Guided writing</b>	<b>Reproducing the model</b>
Includes activities like rewriting passages, practising grammatical structures and so on.	Students benefit from guided writing activities because they gain a better understanding of the literary work. In the case of such exercises, learners are required to respond to a number of questions or to complete sentences and put them together to summarise or retell the story.	When carrying out reproducing tasks, pupils learn the writing technique of paraphrasing (using their own vocabulary to rephrase what they read). For instance, they are asked to rewrite a dialogue into prose.

## 2.4 Defining “quality” literature

In case of teaching language skills and EFL through literature, it is essential to think about what is considered to be ‘good’ or quality literature. Numerous writers continue to think that +what makes a literary text right or suitable for learning can be answered without considering the sense it is used. For instance, some may think that while the learners’ responses are the most significant element in evaluating the chosen literary texts, however, the teacher can also select the material on internal factors, such as a set of pre-established criteria.

When choosing the ‘right’ literary works for English classes, language teachers should consider the learners’ interests, motivation, preferences, cultural background and language level. Nevertheless, one crucial aspect is whether a work will expose a level of personal engagement by piquing the learners’ interest and eliciting solid, constrictive responses (Collie & Slater, 1990).

Experts, such as Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown (2014) suggest a set of literature evaluation requirements separating them into fictional, visual and nonfictional elements.

Fictional elements include a set of requirements, such as a good plot. According to them (Tomlinson & Lynch-Brown, 2014), quality literature involves a good plotline. A good plot will lead to conflict to create anticipation and suspense that will entice the learners to participate. The next step in finding the ‘right’ literary text is paying attention to its characters. Characters must stand out. All key characters in an outstanding work of literary stories are fully formed and evolve due to life-changing occurrences. To go on with a story’s setting, which includes time and place, is quite important. Detailed explanations of settings lead to a successful opportunity to engage the students’ interests (Tomlinson & Lynch-Brown 2014).

Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown (2014) also highlight the importance of themes. As it was previously mentioned in the thesis (section 1.2), the theme of the literary text should be interesting for both children and adolescents, and they should also adhere to high moral and ethical principles. The vocabulary used should be suitable

for the story being told, and the overall length of it must be in accordance with the students' age and knowledge level. Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown (2014) also highlight the importance of visual elements or pictures, especially when dealing with young learners. First of all, the lines. The brush patterns that make up a picture are called lines. These outlines must help to give back and express both the tale's meaning and emotions. Secondly, the colours. Colours should be complemented with the text. Warm and soft tones, for instance, represent contentment and calmness, while cold colours could mean negative emotions. The colours should adjust the plot lines.

As for the non-fiction text, Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown (2014) state that the story's style should be clear and easily comprehensible. It is also essential to mind the captions and labels, for they are ought to be informative.

Furthermore, it is quite advised to avoid using texts that include stereotyping. The finest quality nonfiction requires more than just simply avoiding sexist or derogatory words in texts and visuals. It also illustrates meaningful cultural diversity images and even tackles social and global issues as well.

Moreover, Glazer and Giorgis (2005) emphasise the importance of coherence and integrity of the texts. They state, that a text is coherent if it gives a feeling of 'completeness' (meaning that the parts of the text follow each other in logical order), and integrity means that the chosen tale is presented accurately (Glazer and Giorgis 2005 p40-41). Based on Krashen's (2011) views, quality literature correlates with the readers and their needs, and the teacher should choose texts written specifically for the targeted language skill, for instance, reading, writing, listening or speaking.

It can be stated that a 'good' or 'quality' piece of literature is the one that is useful in terms of language instruction and/or encouragement at a specific stage of language development. What is more, it is essential to highlight, that determining what is 'good' or 'quality' in this sense also entails taking into account the needs and the desires of the people, who are: the educator, especially the student and to those who deal with designing the curriculum for the school year (Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown, 2014).

## **2.5 Using literature in EFL classroom – possible issues**

Despite the fact that experts such as Ellis and Brewster (2014), or Ghosn (2013) advocate for the use of literature in the EFL classroom, many educators still abstain from it (Nagy 2015). It is unclear why this approach has not gained traction in Transcarpathia, but as Nagy (2015) writes, according to Ellis and Brewster (2014), there seem to be five key explanations for this:

- teachers' lack of confidence in their ability to successfully tell or read a story aloud;
- they believe that the vocabulary of the stories is too difficult;
- they think that the content of the stories is too childish;
- teachers doubt the actual benefits of using stories;
- it is unclear for teachers how to use stories in the classroom;
- educators fear that they do not have enough time to prepare carefully if they choose to incorporate literature into the lessons.

According to Parkinson and Thomas (2004), teaching English through literature can be difficult because the language used in literary texts is unusual and hard to comprehend. Bland (2018) states that the absence in the use of children's literature in language education for young students is due to a variety of issues, the first being a lack of availability of texts through school libraries, resulting in equity issues and the second of which is the lack of teacher training.

Using verbal storytelling and nursery rhymes need little or no money and training; however, they do necessitate well-trained teachers who are fluent in the English language (Bland 2018). Bland (2018) also states that obtaining relevant text has been a major source of concern for years. In addition, in most cases, the school library is not equipped enough, except for private schools. If families and schools cannot afford books, the teacher bears the brunt of the responsibility, which is the case in most situations. A possible solution to this problem, as Bland (2018), suggests is using projectors in the classroom and relying on YouTube renderings of picture books.

## 2.6 Teaching Methods

Different approaches may be suitable for different contexts, as several experts, including Susan Halliwell (1993), have noted. What works for one student could not work for another. Teachers who begin looking for the right approach or solution to language teaching problems are doomed to fail. Based on Ellis, Brewster and Girard's (2002) findings, linguists have demonstrated that there is not one single best method for everyone in all contexts. No one teaching method is inherently superior to the others. Applying the same approach to all learners who have different objectives, contexts, and learning needs is not always possible or appropriate. Nevertheless, regardless of the approach used, there are certain aspects that teachers must remember. Visuals that complement spoken or written words are recommended for teachers. The adjustment of the educator's speech is significant a teacher should speak slowly, use longer and natural pauses, should repeat the words and phrases several times.

Linguists developed many effective teaching techniques that came to fruition during the twentieth century, and several of them are still in use today. Grammar-Translation, Oral and Situational Language Teaching, and the Audio-lingual process are the methods that can still be used in 21<sup>st</sup> century classrooms, according to Shin and Crandall's (2013) observations; however, they are not as popular these days as they used to be. These methods are, effective and frequently used in a foreign language learning class, according to Harmer (2007).

However, the most widely used methods on which teaching English to learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are (Larsen-Freeman, 2000): Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP), the Communicative approach, The Total Physical Response (TPR) and The Audio-lingual method (ALM).

The PPP method's principle is divided into three sections. The first, presentation, entails introducing the grammar unit, which can take the form of a rule, feature, or pattern, among other things. Training is the second level of PPP. This phase aims for the pupil to revisit and apply the new knowledge learned during the

presentation stage (Baker, 2000). Development is the third and final stage of PPP. The aim is to correctly replicate and apply the language item after it has been presented in the first stage and after it has been repeated in the second stage. In this third level students have the opportunity to use the language in creative way. (Baker, 2000).

According to Jeremy Harmer (2007), the key role of Communicative Language Teaching is to apply the Communicative Approach's theoretical perspective by making communicative competence the aim of language teaching and recognizing the value of language and communication. One of the primary responsibilities of the instructor is to create circumstances that encourage contact. Learning to use the language properly is an essential component of acquiring communicative competence.

Dr James J. Asher, a well-known linguist, founded the TPR, or Total Physical Response. The central concept of this teaching method can be summarized as follows: memorizing is not an efficient method of learning. As Larsen-Freeman (2000) states, Asher claimed and then described, based on his findings, that the easiest, least stressful way to achieve comprehension of any target language is to follow the teacher's instructions without native language translation. This approach typically begins by introducing the subject in the students' native language, but the native language is seldom used in the classroom after that. Body gestures help to clarify the context of the new words. In this approach, the instructor plays a crucial role.

As reported by Larsen-Freeman (2000), the Audio-lingual method is a speaking-based technique that teaches students how to use grammatical sentence structure. Furthermore, she (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) outlines the approach's core concepts, stating that one of the language teachers' most vital duties is to serve as an example of how to communicate in the target language. Teachers should be able to set a good example for their students. The aim of language learning is to learn how to communicate using the language. Larsen-Freeman (2000) explains that one of the most challenging aspects of teaching a foreign language is getting learners to



resolve their native language patterns, which will lead to repeating the same mistakes. However, it can also serve as a helping aid in teaching because she indicates that comparing the native and target languages will show the teacher which areas their students are likely to struggle with (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Project-based learning and problem-based learning are also common among teachers nowadays, according to Richards and Rodgers (2001). As John W. Thomas (2000) discusses, project-based learning (PBL), is an educational method, based on learning and real-world experiences that provide students with problems to solve. These activities typically represent the types of learning that people encounter in their daily lives outside of the classroom. Project-based learning occurs when a group of students collaborates to achieve a shared goal. The emphasis is entirely on the students. This approach not only introduces learners to new and relevant information but also allows them to practice their language skills so that they can operate as adults. Communication and presentation skills, planning and time management skills, self-assessment skills, and so on are examples of these skills. In accordance with Thomas (2000), project-based learning is beneficial because it allows students to apply what they have learned. It also aids learners in comprehending, applying, and remembering knowledge. The advantages also include the development of skills such as critical thinking, communication, and teamwork. Learners who work on projects are more engaged and motivated in their studies. On the other hand, problem-based learning is a completely different approach. As described by John F. Barell (2006), problem-based learning is an educational technique in which students learn new material by solving difficult, open-ended problems. The issues are real-life challenges that students tackle in socially and contextually dependent groups.

Apart from the methods already discussed, there are a variety of other teaching strategies that, according to experts such as Richard and Rogers (2001), Jeremy Harmer (2007), and Larsen-Freeman (2000), are all relevant and efficient. These methods are favoured by many educators, despite being labelled as a bit outdated:

- 1) Cognitive method – this method focuses on grammar rules and these rules are explained, deduced in order for students to understand them in context. This method also encourages learners to engage in lessons.
- 2) Community Language Learning – plays particular attention to student interaction, teachers use it to teach and understand English language through active student interaction. In this method, the teachers take up the role of advisers who encourage language learning and arrange speaking activities.
- 3) Learning Strategy Training – aims at how students learn when using this method the educator teaches learning strategies, the lessons involve cooperation and many activities, these activities vary according to different intelligences.
- 4) Direct Method – it is based on everyday spoken language. Students learn by associating the meaning of the words directly in English. This method helps to develop the learners' critical and creative thinking.
- 5) The Silent Way – the focus is on student interaction rather than the teacher. This approach is strongly learners centred. The educator is silent in order to allow learners to learn in their own way and to acquire awareness of how the foreign language actually works.
- 6) Comprehension Approach – in this approach the centre of attention is put on listening Comprehension. The teacher has an important role in this approach. English speaking is delayed until students are ready; meaning is clarified through actions and visuals.
- 7) Natural approach (similar to Direct Method) – focuses on speaking comprehension. This method was also developed by Krashen. The focus is mainly put on communication, more importantly on fluency and learning to speak in a social context with native speakers.
- 8) Suggestopedia – based on this approach, the primary aim of foreign language students is to become fluent in communicating quickly by acts of communication, rather than memorizing vocabulary. Role-plays, games, and songs, as well as vocabulary and grammar exercises, are used to achieve subconscious language comprehension.

## **2.7 Difficulties in the EFL Classroom**

There are several aspects of learning the English language. An educator not only teaches and evaluates pupils' language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, but also assists, stimulates, and encourages students' motivation, positive attitudes, and inspiration towards the subject. Moreover, teachers must consider how students learn in order to prepare lessons that will benefit them in the future.

There are several challenges teachers have to face while teaching English. As Wardhaugh (1969) highlighted, there are some theoretical issues to consider when teaching English to learners who learn it as a foreign language. According to him, it is advisable to blur the line between educators' practical approach and the theoretical concerns that should be the foundation of practice. Every good classroom practice, he believed, is founded through a well-rounded theory. According to Wardhaugh (1969), most classes are teacher-dominated, he stated that this direction should be changed, and the lessons should be more learner-centred.

Another issue is that many EFL learners do not have the chance to use English in their daily lives, and their motivation can suffer as a result of this. When selecting classroom activities, the educator must consider the fact that the learners are unlikely to be exposed to English outside of the classroom. As a result of this lack of opportunities to speak English, teachers must significantly increase fluency practice by encouraging students to use the language as much as possible in class while reducing the emphasis on accuracy (Harmer, 2007).

Educators should also keep in mind that classroom management plays a vital role in making the teaching-learning process successful. If the teacher is to manage classrooms effectively, he or she must be able to deal with a variety of different factors. Such factors involve how the classroom space is organized, whether students work alone or in groups, and how they schedule classroom time. The educator must also consider how they present themselves to students, as well as how they employ their most important asset - their voice (Harmer, 2007). Teachers need to manage their time and cover the entire syllabus so that students have enough content and

time to tackle test, assignments and examinations. Therefore teachers should plan every lesson very carefully.

Many teachers struggle with choosing the elements that assist in fruitful EFL learning. Harmer (2007) highlight that educators should prioritise their needs in order for students to learn the language efficiently. Pupils, especially language learners, need constant reassurance, and they should be able to practice their language skills confidently.

Educators should provide students with the security of suitable controlled practice (depending on different factors, including the learners' age, individual learning styles, and the language in discussion) whilst still allowing them to practice their language skills (Harmer, 2007).

According to Saville-Troike (2006) if an educator wants to avoid or overcome possible challenges that come with teaching EFL, they should keep in mind the following:

- Teachers should take into account the goals that classes and students have for learning a second language.

- Educators must establish learning/teaching priorities that are compatible with those goals.

- It is advisable to approach learning/teaching tasks with an understanding of the various dimensions involved: linguistic, psychological, and social.

- Teachers should be aware of the potential strengths and limitations of specific learners and learning contexts and use this knowledge to adapt learning/teaching procedures.

- There is no single “best” method for learning or teaching a second language.

- Educators should acknowledge incremental progress as an achievement.

They must also be patient, as learning a language takes time.

- Teachers need to pay attention to how and at what pace students develop and they should pay attention to learner feedback.

- Teachers should ways consider the students' needs, when creating and developing tasks.

## 2.8 Assessing learners

Assessment is a part of the learning process; in practice, teachers assess learners all the time. As it was stated by Linse (2005), assessment is a process of identifying learning goals and determining how well students are meeting them. It is ongoing, a process of monitoring learning and teaching. Based on Harmer's opinion (2007), students must continually be assessed and evaluated in order for teachers to know how well they are doing and, of course, to determine whether they understand the subject. One of the key aspects of student learning, according to Shin (2013), is how that learning is measured, and it has been shown that the essence of timing and evaluation has a significant impact on students' attitudes toward their studies. Assessment tests classify or rate the learners' achievement in addition to measuring learning outcomes. A well-timed and excellently designed test can have a significant effect on students and their learning habits. Students typically take tests at predetermined times during the term, such as at the end of a unit, the middle, or the end of the term. It entails a collection of well-defined procedures for giving and scoring feedback to learners.

An assessment may be summative or formative, according to Harmer (2007). Summative evaluation, as the name suggests, "summarizes" all that was learned during the year or at the end of a unit, and it is used by teachers to determine how well students have performed. It is often used in accordance with tests that assess basic language skills or overall language proficiency. These assessments are often used to report on the pupils' language learning progress and evaluate the effectiveness of a program, curriculum, material or student placement procedures. Teachers use formative testing to test students to help them improve their performance in the future. This classroom-based task provides a continuous image of students' language development and growth. The main purpose is to keep track of students' progress and provide necessary information to teachers. In case of carrying out assessments, teachers also give students informal and formal assessments. Informal assessment usually occurs more often than formal assessment. Informal

evaluation happens more often than formal evaluation. It can be explained by the fact that teachers, as it was stated by Jeremy Harmer (2003), in most cases perform informal evaluations more frequently because they are constantly evaluating learners' development. For example, they look over the shoulders of two students engaged in completing an exercise to see how they are doing, and teachers provide brief comments like 'Nice work' or 'Good job' when their learners speak.

Formal evaluations, on the other hand, are performed less frequently. As the name suggests, formal evaluations are formal methods of determining how much a student has learned or progressed over the course of the year. These include exams, diagnostic tests, achievement tests, etc. Tests are the type of formal assessment, but not all formal assessments are tests. As it was mentioned by the writer of the current thesis, assessment tests vary in type. Harmer (2003) lists these types of tests: diagnostic, placement, progress, achievement, proficiency and portfolio. Firstly, diagnostic tests given to students when teachers have to measure their knowledge, so that they know what they must do next, how should they organise everything when it comes to introducing a new topic and so on. Secondly, there are placement tests. When students begin their studies, they are frequently required to take placement tests so that their teachers can determine what level they must study at and the class they belong to. Progress tests are used to find out how well the pupils are getting on. These assessments evaluate their progress and include items that students have learned in class. Progress tests are given at the end of each week, month, or when a unit or coursebook is completed. Achievement tests are similar to progress tests in that they are provided at the end of a semester or year to determine what students have learned in the previous few months.

Moreover, there are also proficiency tests. Such tests measure a learner's skills concerning a set of general expectations. They lead to an overestimation of how much they know and how much they can do. Last but not least, there are what are known as portfolio evaluations. Portfolio assessments are focused on the work that students have completed over the course of a semester.

Understanding the basic standards that govern all evaluations and the special guidelines for evaluating learners is essential for developing or defining suitable assessments for students. Bachman and Palmer (1996) propose five criteria for developing language assessments, especially tests. Reliability, validity, practicality, authenticity, and washback are the five criteria. The outcomes of a language assessment should be correct and accurate in order for it to be considered reliable. Learners should receive the same score on the assessment if it is given the next day or if it is scored by two different rates. In terms of validity, the test must be relevant, appropriate, and useful, but most significantly, it must be appropriate for assessing the desired skill. If necessary resources, such as time and space, are available, an evaluation task can be completed. If the language being assessed is used in a way that is acceptable and applicable to learners, the evaluation is authentic. The term "washback" refers to how tests affect teaching and learning. It can have a positive or negative effect.

Miller, Linn and Gronlund (2009) also mention the importance of assessments and their validity. When it comes to designing or selecting tests, the most important question to consider is how relevant, meaningful, and valuable the scores' interpretation would be for the intended application of the results. Miller, Linn and Gronlund (2009) agree with Harmer (2007) regarding why assessments and tests are used. Assessments may take several different forms, ranging from simple multiple-choice or other fixed-response assessments to in-depth observations of efficiency. They can also be used in the classroom for several purposes. Assessment outcomes, for example, may be used to determine student strengths and limitations, schedule learning exercises, or explain success to students and parents (Miller, Linn and Gronlund, 2019). It is essential to emphasize, that teachers, in all cases should avoid using unclear directions, ambiguity, poorly formulated questions, and inadequate time limits. It is also advisable to mind the vocabulary and sentence structure, for it cannot be too difficult for the learners. Furthermore, teachers should avoid focusing too much on a single topic. assessments should cover all the students learned when preparing for the test. (Miller, Linn and Gronlund, 2019).

## 2.9 Dealing with Mixed-ability classes

Based on the existing literature concerning classes that include learners of different levels of ability, experts either classify them as mixed ability or heterogeneous classes. While describing such classes, Penny Ur (1996) prefers to use the word heterogeneous, while Prodromou (1992) refers to these groups as mixed-ability. It can be explained by the fact that according to Ur (1996), the word "mixed-ability" is perplexing since it may not include all elements of heterogeneity when applied to a group of language learners but instead puts the main focus on how learners perform. Furthermore, she argues that the word heterogeneous encompasses a variety of other elements that impact language learning, such as previous learning opportunities, better or weaker previous teaching, higher or lower level of motivation.

Mixed-ability classes are those that include students with varying levels of language proficiency. Students vary in age, motivation, intellect, self-discipline, language skills, attitude, and interests, in addition to language acquisition abilities (Hess, 2001). It can be stated that all classes are mixed-ability since all learners are different. There are classes where students' language abilities differ greatly, necessitating a high level of teaching ability to deal with such a classroom. Teaching in these classes is challenging, exhausting, time-consuming, and full of surprises. For instance, students in a mixed ability class have different learning styles. Some students learn easily, while others need additional assistance in learning a language. Furthermore, they have different preferences for learning and presenting their work; therefore, the educator must have an equal opportunity for each student to express their ideas. On the other hand, although teaching a mixed-ability class poses several challenges, it also encourages teachers to seek out non-traditional, innovative teaching methods and solutions (Hess, 2001). Working with mixed ability classrooms has a number of challenges and solutions, according to experts. For instance, Ur (1992) and Hess (2001) deals with the advantages and disadvantages of teaching heterogeneous classes, which are demonstrated in the following table.



**Table 2.6 Advantages and disadvantages of teaching mixed-ability classes as proposed by Ur (1996) and Hess (2001)**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>- <i>A wide range of human resources</i> There are many perspectives, interests, points of view, and temperaments in mixed-ability groups that include a range of human resources. Teachers can create interesting, diverse, meaningful, and student-centred lessons based on the differences among students.</p> <p>- <i>Learners' interaction</i> Interaction between pupils who have different language ability enhances learners' awareness of others, their tolerance and understanding.</p> <p>- <i>Increasing the autonomy of students</i> An educator cannot pay attention to all students in a mixed ability class. As a result, peer-teaching and teamwork are common in mixed-ability classes.</p> <p>- <i>Professional development</i> Teachers look for new teaching approaches and techniques because they need to be creative. As a consequence, teacher's development happens naturally.</p>	<p>- <i>Discipline</i> Mixed-ability classes are frequently undisciplined and difficult to manage. Differences in literacy skills trigger boredom in advanced learners or confusion in weaker students, who are often lost throughout the lessons.</p> <p>- <i>Interests</i> It is difficult to find exercises that are interesting and beneficial for both stronger and weaker learners. Moreover, It is exceedingly difficult to provide effective learning for all students in mixed-ability classes.</p> <p>- <i>Materials</i> It is important to adapt materials to the needs of all learners because course books are often homogeneous – targeted at one type of learner with no variations or versatility (Ur 1999).</p> <p>- <i>Participation</i> In a mixed-ability environment, it seems to be common for just a few people, typically the stronger ones, to participate.</p>

According to Hess (2001), using a variety of activities and strategies to overcome some of the difficulties is necessary since different tasks can accommodate different levels in the class. Different exercises should be targeted at different skills so that learners who struggle with speaking tasks will excel with reading or other abilities. Moreover, a multitude of team-work and pair-work exercises should be used – students should operate in pairs, teams, or individually. It is also advisable to pair a strong learner with a weaker one, the pairs should be changed frequently (Hess 2001). Pair work is valuable because it promotes peer teaching and mutual tolerance. Nevertheless, there are a few exercises in which weak students must operate separately from stronger students to avoid being overshadowed or inhibited by stronger students. More talented students profit from this because they are more challenged and can motivate each other to do better. It is also essential to denote, that students usually motivate each other to learn, but in many cases, they can distract their classmates from listening to the lesson too.

Furthermore, another significant principle to remember when dealing with a mixed ability class is proper pacing. In a classroom, setting a proper pace is difficult. A long period of observation is needed for proper pacing. Teaching a class too slowly or too quickly can disrupt a positive environment and cause some students to become bored or frustrated (Hess, 2001).

According to Ur (1991), keeping up the students' interest is a key factor in teaching, especially in case of mixed-ability classes. As students lose interest, they become demotivated, distracted, and use their mother tongue, among other things. Coming up with engaging activities for each lesson can be frustrating and time-consuming.

Nonetheless, it pays off because there are times when learners' interest in language is not sparked, but the content of the activities will pique their attention and keep them engaged. Referring to Hess's (2001) reports, it is a good idea to find activities that enable students to share their thoughts, ideas; they should carry out exercises that are engaging and stimulating, as well as those that mainly stimulate their interest.

## **2.10 Teaching EFL in Transcarpathian schools**

During the Soviet period in Ukraine, very little emphasis was placed on teaching Western languages (e.g., English, German, French, Spanish, and so on), for learning Russian as a "world language" was sufficient. The situation in the country quickly changed after the Soviet Union collapsed. More and more people realized that having Russian language skills is no longer enough. As a result, an increasing number of people in Ukraine are beginning to learn foreign languages, including English (Fábián, Huszti, & Lizák, 2005).

The Hungarians of Transcarpathia are considered to be a part of Ukraine's Hungarian minority. According to a decree issued by Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Science in 2003, foreign language instruction in local Hungarian-language schools begins in the second grade (Huszti, 2008).

The English language is taught in major groups in the average Ukrainian state-supported schools. With classroom sizes of 28 students, the schools usually split the class into two groups. When a class has less than 27 pupils, the classroom is not divided into groups. As a consequence, the lessons become too crowded and large. Working in such classes, however, is ineffective due to the lack of time to deal and work students individually (Bárány & Huszti, 2020).

In their study, Fábián, Huszti, and Lizák (2005) attempted to outline the situation of English language teaching in Hungarian schools in Transcarpathia. For the survey, they designed a questionnaire that covered a variety of topics, including questions about school textbook supply, they aimed to find out what types of methods are most commonly used by teachers in English classes, and what educators' views are on various teaching materials. Moreover, they sought to acquire knowledge about the most common challenges teachers have to face in the course of their jobs and how they believe these issues could be addressed.

According to the results, the effective teaching of English in Hungarian schools in Transcarpathia is hampered by a number of issues.

It is essential to denote, that the majority of teachers who took part in the survey believe that textbooks are too difficult to comprehend, are not interesting enough, and are ineffective for students. The glossary of the book has only been translated into Ukrainian, which is another major flaw in the textbooks. There are also instances where the educator does not speak Hungarian well enough or does not know it (Fábián, Huszti, & Lizák, 2005).

In accordance with Fábián, Huszti and Lizák (2005), Bátyi (2011) also writes about the problems concerning the English textbooks. She highlights, that since these second language textbooks are designed for learners whose mother tongue is Ukrainian, the instructions and vocabulary in the books are also written in Ukrainian language. This is a significant issue since a second-year Hungarian student who does not speak English or Ukrainian is unable to use the textbook. Another difficulty is that the books are written using the grammar-translation approach and do not have enough situational or other exercises that demonstrate communication in the target language (Bátyi, 2011).

In addition, Bátyi (2011) points out that the number of English lessons per week is insufficient for teachers to adequately explain the material. What is more, she claims, that the majority of Transcarpathian Hungarian school graduates have only minimal foreign language knowledge (Bátyi, 2011). A variety of factors contribute to the Transcarpathian Hungarian youth's low level of foreign language skills. The key issues are a lack of adequate textbooks, teaching aids, language practice opportunities, a limited number of lessons each week, heterogeneous classes of too many learners, and so on (Bátyi, 2011).

Conforming to Fábián, Huszti and Lizák (2005) teachers usually make up for textbook shortages by using books from well-known English and Hungarian publishers.

Aside from the textbook shortage, another problems English teachers face in Transcarpathia is the difference between the proficiency of the learners. The varying levels of knowledge of the students are a major problem in the beginning of both upper grades of high schools and lyceums, where students apply from different

schools. Overcoming this problem is entirely dependent on the teacher's expertise and insight (Fábián, Huszti, & Lizák, 2005).

Overall, the second part of the thesis discussed the topic of the study more broadly and also covered information about how to motivate students, as well as how to deal with mixed-ability classes. Furthermore, this section gave an account of how it is advisable to teach the four language skills, according to professionals. More importantly, this part outlined how literature aids in the acquisition of reading and writing and in the expansion of vocabulary. In addition, the second part focused on the issues that may occur when educators use literature to teach EFL. Last but not least, this segment of the thesis addressed the potential difficulties that teachers face nowadays.

### **PART 3**

## **TEACHERS' AND PUPILS' OPINIONS ABOUT THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH**

The third part of the thesis deals with the description of the quantitative study conducted in the form of two questionnaires. The primary goal of the research items was to learn more about the value of literature in English teaching and learning. Furthermore, the questionnaires offer two viewpoints on how literature creates an inspiring and motivating classroom atmosphere.

In addition, English teachers' opinions were evaluated about the role of literature and motivation in learning English as a foreign language. To get a more detailed picture, secondary school pupils' views were also analysed in connection with reading English books, stories, and their preferences in learning a foreign language.

In the following sections, the applied research method will be discussed, together with the participants' main characteristics and the analysis of the obtained data. This part of the thesis will concentrate on the techniques discussed in the earlier sections. Furthermore, the main findings will be emphasised with the help of tables and diagrams for an easier understanding of the results. Lastly, the results will be interpreted and discussed in a topic-related manner.

### **3.1 Research Methodology**

Information had to be collected from a large number of subjects from both sides of the educational process. As a result, the research was conducted in quantitative form with two online questionnaires. Different types of questionnaire items were used to get a broader understanding of the topic: closed-ended and open-ended questions, Likert scales; and multiple-choice questions.

The first questionnaire was completed by teachers of English as a foreign language. Each topic of the study was investigated by a number of different

questions in order to obtain more reliable results. The main areas of the research were the following:

- the importance of using authentic materials in English language teaching;
- the role of literature in making English lessons more exciting, and varied;
- the effects and consequences of using literature in the classroom;
- the connection between motivation and language learning;
- the role of teachers and creative tasks in the successful acquisition of a foreign language.

The second questionnaire was filled out by secondary school pupils. The main areas of the research included the following topics:

- pupils' attitude towards learning English;
- learners' opinion about the use of English poems and stories in the lesson;
- the most important ways of making English lessons more engaging and interesting for the learners;
- motivation as a key factor in language learning;
- the importance of using creative tasks and reading in English.

Before completing the questionnaire items, respondents were ensured about their anonymity. After collecting the answers from the participants, the obtained data will be analysed with descriptive and statistical methods in the following sections. Tables and diagrams will be applied for a better illustration. In addition, the findings will be discussed and interpreted in connection with the most important topics of the study under several headings.

### **3.2 Participants of the research**

As two separate questionnaires were designed to collect information from English language teachers and secondary school pupils, the research sample can be divided into two distinctive parts. The first questionnaire was filled out by 55 English teachers, , out of which 20 participants were males (36,4%) and 35 participants were females (63,6%).

**Table 3.2 Teaching experience of respondent teachers**

Years of teaching	0-5	6-10	11-16	17-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
Number of teachers	19	13	7	7	2	2	3	2

As we can see from Table 3.2, most teachers have 0-5 or 6-10 years of experience in teaching English, while the number of teachers with 21 or more years of experience is relatively small. Furthermore, respondents had to indicate the grades where they are teaching English currently. In general, all eleven grades of secondary education are taught by a large number of respondents.

**Table 3.3 Grades taught by respondent teachers**

Grades	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Teachers	18	18	14	16	26	25	24	28	26	24	19

The second questionnaire was completed by 100 secondary school pupils, out of which 40 (40%) were males and 60 (60%) were females. Pupils were selected from different Transcarpathian educational institutions, strictly from grades 5-11, as it can be observed in the following table.

**Table 3.4 Classes of respondent pupils**

Grades	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Number of pupils	17	12	8	12	15	20	16

Moreover, learners were asked to indicate how many English lessons they have in a week. The answers were the following: 2 lessons (11 pupils), 3 lessons (39 pupils), 4 lessons (30 pupils), 5 lessons (13 pupils) and 6 lessons (7 pupils). In conclusion, most pupils have 3-4 English lessons per week.

### **3.3 Data analysis**

After describing the main characteristics of the participants, the collected data will be analysed in this section with descriptive and statistical methods. Altogether, the study was completed with 155 participants: 55 English teachers and 100 pupils. As



the sample consists of two separate parts, two different questionnaires were designed in order to gather information about the main research areas. For these reasons, the obtained data will be analysed in two sections, too: the importance of literature and motivation from English teachers' point of view and the pupils' point of view.

### **3.3.1 Teachers' attitudes towards using literature in the lesson**

The first questionnaire was designed to collect data from English language teachers, and it was completed by 55 respondents. Most of them have maximum 10 years of experience, but some teachers had even more than 20 years of experience teaching English. In addition, participants were teaching in all the 11 grades of secondary education. Therefore, the following answers are from a large sample of English teachers with varied characteristics and experiences.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 1*

In the first question, respondents were asked to state how important it is for them to use authentic teaching materials during English lessons. The answers were the following, displayed in the order of their frequency:

- Authentic materials are useful because learners get acquainted not only with the language but also with the culture (26 teachers, 47,3%);
- Authentic materials are important because, with their help, learners can acquire a language easier (19 teachers, 34,5%);
- Authentic materials are useful in some cases, but they can be ignored in general (16 teachers, 29,1%);
- Authentic materials are not important at all (3 teachers, 5,5%).

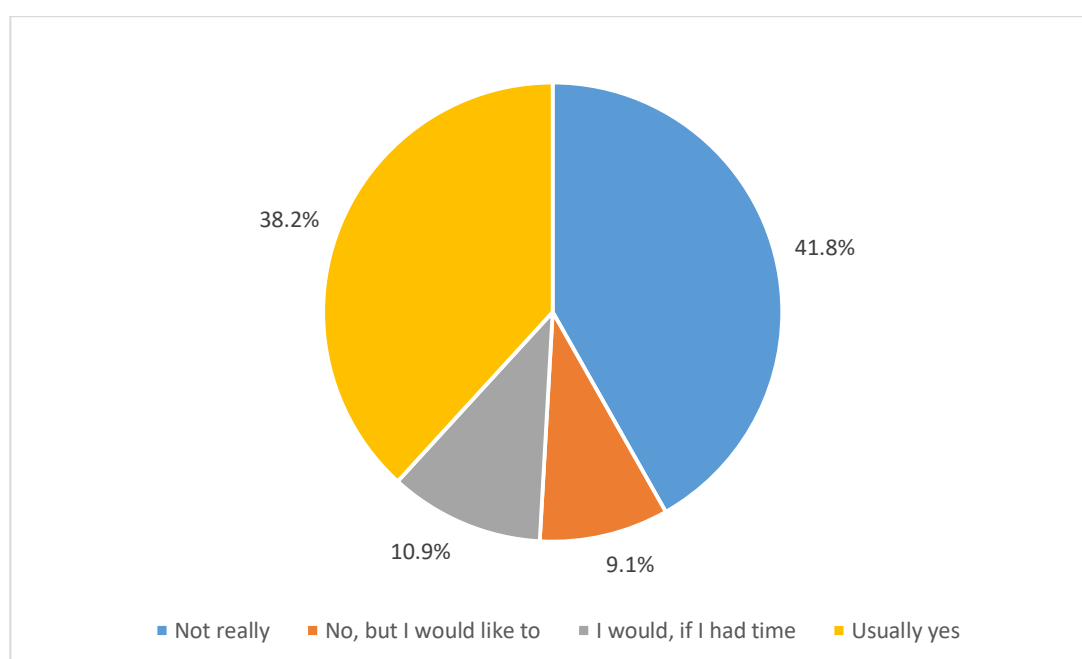
Little, Devitt and Singleton (1989) believe that authentic materials are incredibly important and contribute greatly to students' familiarity with the English language and its environment.

Based on the answers to the first question, most of the educators share this view. Thus, it can be said that authentic materials indeed help students to get to know not only the language but also the culture.

### *Questionnaire #1 question number 2*

The second question was focusing on those authentic English stories, tales, poems and rhymes which were designed with a non-educational purpose. Educators had to select how often they involve these materials in their lessons. These authentic materials play a vital role in teaching the language, however based on the results, it seems that the majority of the teachers agreed that they do not use them often. However, 32,2% (21 participants) incorporate authentic materials into their lessons, which is a fair ratio.

**Diagram 3.3.1 The frequency of using authentic materials in the lessons**



The fact that many teachers are not able to incorporate authentic materials into their lessons may be due to a variety of factors. One of the key factors is certainly that they cannot fit it into 45 minutes because they need time to implement and practice the curriculum as well.

Nevertheless, it is quite encouraging that 38% of educators responded that they use authentic materials regularly, which is a relatively good rate.

### *Questionnaire #1 question number 3*

In the following question, teachers were asked to determine the importance of using graded readers in English language teaching.

Graded readers are useful because both their language and content are designed in accordance with the language knowledge of the learners who will use them. Respondents gave the following answers whether or not they would like to use graded readers in the school:

- Yes, because learners have to get acquainted with the language (24 teachers, 43,6%);
- Yes, because graded readers are very useful (18 teachers, 32,7%);
- Yes, I would use graded readers, if I had time (8 teachers, 14,5%);
- No, I do not use graded readers, but I am planning to use them in the future (8 teachers, 14,5%);
- No, I do not use graded readers, and I am not planning to use them in the future (3 teachers, 5,5%).

Ellis and Brewster (2014) advocate for the usage of graded readers. Graded readers are ideal for language learners, and they are especially suitable for younger learners.

This can be explained by the fact that these readings are tailored to the pupils' level of knowledge, thus if the students understand these readers, it can provide them with a sense of success which will motivate the pupils to learn more.

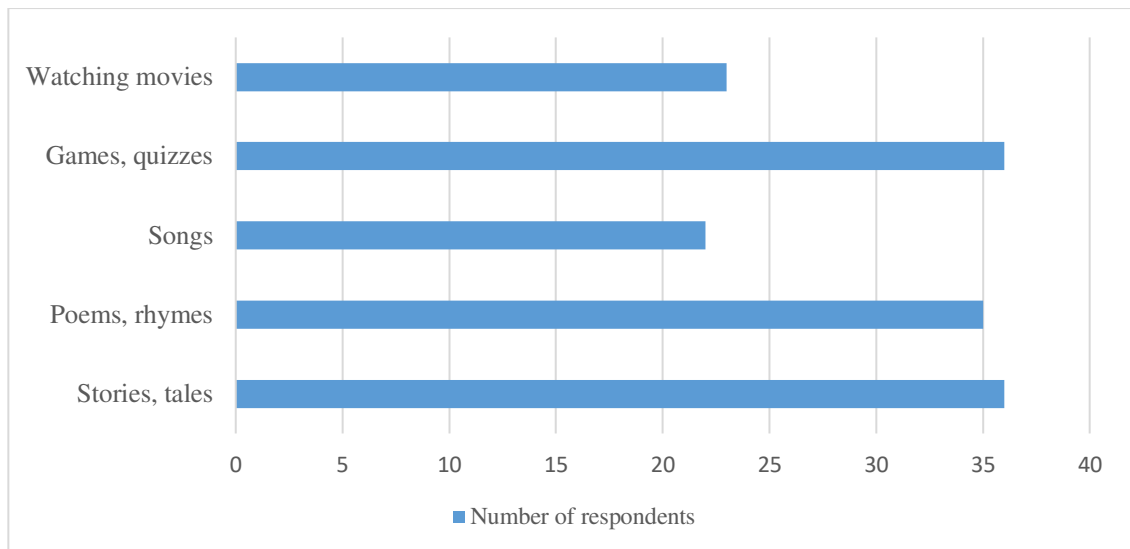
The results of the responses also indicate and affirm that graded readers are excellent tools in the language class, as 43,6% of teachers think so.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 4*

As for question number 4, participants had to select those materials and classroom activities, which they use to make the English lessons more interesting and entertaining for students (for instance, movies, games or quizzes). Experts such as Harmer (2012) or Ellis and Brewster (2014) advocate for the usage of authentic materials as helping aids, such as watching movies, learning songs and poems and so on.

As in previous cases, teachers had multiple options from which they could choose from. The results of this question are summarised in Diagram 3.3.2.

**Diagram 3.3.2 Ways of making the English lessons more varied**



There are various factors that can make a lesson more interesting or enjoyable in the twenty-first century, in order to capture the students' attention. As seen in the diagram, educators are eager to integrate literature, songs, games, and movies into their lessons. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that most educators aspire to keep their classes unanimous and enjoyable.

*Questionnaire #1 question number 5*

In the following question, teachers had to determine the effects of involving English literary pieces in the course of the lessons. The answers are given in the order of their frequency:

- The lessons are more interesting (34 teachers, 61,8%);
- Learners pay more attention (23 teachers, 41,8%);
- Learners are more active (23 teachers, 41,8%);
- Pupils like to learn poems, rhymes and tales (22 teachers, 40%);
- Learners are not interested in literature (6 teachers, 10,9%);
- Learners consider literature as boring (1 teacher, 1,8%);
- Pupils do not like to learn poems, rhymes and tales (1 teacher, 1,8%);
- Learners are less active (0 teacher, 0%).

This questionnaire item sought to answer why teachers apply literature during lessons, as it is one of the key points of the present thesis. According to Cameron

(2002), Ahlquist and Lugossy (2015), as well as Halliwell (1993), including stories in lessons makes the subject more interesting, encourages students to pay more attention, and motivates them to learn. Literature, based on Ellis and Brewster's (2014) views, fosters creative thinking. The majority of teachers implied that literature makes the lesson more interesting, as per the survey results, which back up experts' claims.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 6*

The aim of question number 6 was to determine the value of using authentic materials; thus, teachers were required to choose which language skills could be better learned using authentic English literature. According to their responses, reading skills (44 respondents, 80%) and writing skills (41 respondents, 74,5%) are far better improved with literature than listening comprehension (7 respondents, 12,7%) and pronunciation or speaking skills (5 respondents, 9,1%). This means that literature, can help to enhance the learners receptive and productive skills too.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 7*

In the following question, participants could express the degree of their agreement with given statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The statements which resulted in the strongest agreement were the following:

- Stories and poems enrich the vocabulary knowledge of learners (agreed by 52 teachers);
- Reading in English facilitates the development of language skills (agreed by 50 teachers);
- Tasks connected to reading can improve learners' creativity (agreed by 48 teachers);
- Learners sometimes cannot concentrate on literary works (agreed by 36 teachers).

Literature and reading, according to professionals like Lazar (1993), Ur (1996), or Parkinson and Thomas (2000) plays an important role in the development of language and communication skills. Reading tales, for instance, improves students' vocabulary almost imperceptibly. By reading, students also have the

chance to learn about syntax and sentence structures. Furthermore, since most educators are familiar with the fact that reading and learning for stories are beneficial for learners, it is unsurprising that they frequently involve them, as they indicate in previous questions.

Other statements received more disagreement among teachers. Respondents dispute that learners like to read (disagreed by 21 teachers), it is time-consuming to involve literature in teaching (disagreed by 25 teachers), it is hard to find tales or poems which are interesting for every pupil (disagreed by 26 teachers), and it is often hard to find reading materials that fit the language knowledge of learners (disagreed by 38 teachers).

This means that involving literature in teaching EFL has more benefits than drawbacks.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 8*

As for the following question, teachers were asked to determine how frequently we can use literature to teach different topics in the lesson. According to the participants, we cannot connect literature to every topic during the semester, but whenever it is possible, we should do so (36 teachers, 65,5%). Besides, 16 teachers (29,1%) think that literature can be used in very few cases when teaching the different parts of the curriculum. Lastly, 5 teachers (9,1%) say that in most cases, we can use literature in the lesson. Thus, it can be said that literature cannot be included in the class in all cases, but educators can often rely on it as a helping aid in teaching.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 9 and 10*

Questions number 9 and 10 aimed to determine whether it is possible for teachers to teach certain topics solely through literature. The following question was a yes-or-no one: teachers were asked if there are any topics that they would teach only with the help of literature. Only 8 teachers (14,5%) gave a positive answer to this question. Their reasons were the following:

- We can develop communication skills with literature;
- Stories are instructive, they teach important moral lessons;

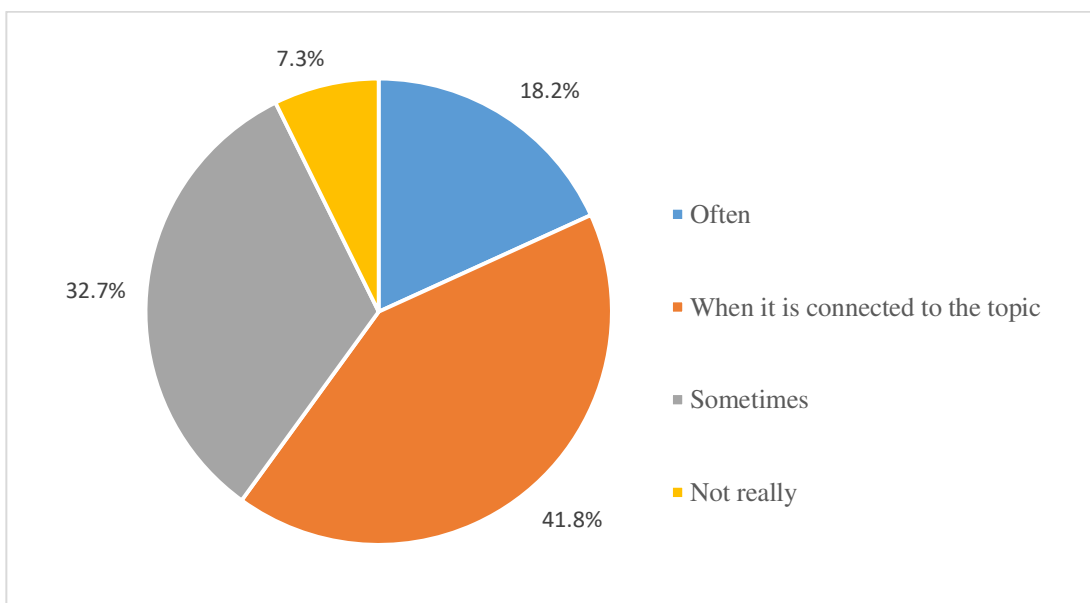
- There are many topics (for example, numbers, colours, family, greetings) that can be taught effectively to small children with poems and songs;
- Teaching about nature and the theatre can be easier with literature;
- As literary works are full of emotions and feelings, they are useful in developing the worldview and critical thinking of learners.

Based on the results, it can be stated that although incorporating literature and stories into lessons is an effective way to learn (with both youngsters and adolescents), educators agree that there are not many topics that can be taught solely by literature. This can be explained by the fact that, while literature covers a wide range of topics, it can only be used as a supplement or helping aid in most instances since literary texts cannot convey the entire curriculum without further explanation.

*Questionnaire #1 question number 11*

For questionnaire item number 11, teachers had to describe the connection between writing skills and literature. When they give writing tasks for homework (essay writing), teachers can involve literature in these assignments in different ways (e.g. writing about the lessons learned from stories). They had to determine how frequently they do so.

**Diagram 3.3.3 The frequency of involving literature in writing tasks**



Parkinson and Thomas (2000) explain that literature can be linked to several exercises in the case of teaching writing; moreover, learners are exposed to clear

and consistent writing through literature. As the results show, educators often rely on stories or tales when writing essays, especially if it is connected to the topic the students learn about. For instance, if the pupils learn about honesty and integrity, it is beneficial to include instructive stories like the Little Red Riding Hood and others.

*Questionnaire #1 question number 12*

In the following question, respondents had to select those challenges which English teachers have to face nowadays. More answers could be chosen at the same time. The most serious challenges include:

- Learners' English language knowledge is extremely varied (34 teachers, 61,8%);
- Inadequate number of lessons (19 teachers, 34,5%);
- Learners are inattentive (15 teachers, 27,3%);
- Learners are too afraid and shy to talk (15 teachers, 27,3%);
- The textbook is not appropriate (11 teachers, 20%);
- Learners are not interested in the material of the lesson (10 teachers, 18,2%);
- Learners do not like to learn English (7 teachers, 12,7%).

It is no secret that educators face several other challenges these days while teaching. Based on the responses, the greatest difficulty teachers have to overcome is that the level of students' proficiency varies. It is due to the fact that, as Ur (1991) and Ness (2001) point out, in most cases, classes in schools consist of mixed-ability students (as explained in section 2.8 of the present paper). This also means that the teacher should compile the material in accordance with the fact he/she has to teach a mixed-ability class and plan the lessons in such a way that students who struggle with learning English need much attention, but, at the same time stronger students should also be tasked.

*Questionnaire #1 question number 13*

The next question was connected to a Likert scale, in which the teachers could indicate how much they agree with given statements on a scale from 1 (strongly



disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The following statements received the highest degree of agreement among teachers:

- Motivation plays a key role in learning (agreed by 51 teachers);
- One of the teacher's most important tasks is to motivate learners (agreed by 48 teachers);
- Learners can be motivated with positive grades (agreed by 45 teachers);
- Learners often draw each other's attention during the lesson (agreed by 44 teachers);
- Learners can motivate each other (agreed by 41 teachers);
- Pupils are usually enthusiastic during the acquisition of the new topic (agreed by 38 teachers);
- Nowadays, it is harder to grab learners' attention (agreed by 32 teachers).

Other statements received high amount of disagreement:

- Motivation does not play an important role in learning (disagreed by 47 teachers);
- Learners are not interested in the new material (disagreed by 39 teachers);
- Motivation only plays an important role in learning occasionally (disagreed by 35 teachers).

Motivation plays an enormous role in teaching and learning English. As Harmer (2007) points out, one of the biggest tasks of teachers is to motivate students, for which literature is an excellent tool. The majority of the respondents, 51 teachers out of 55 agree that motivation has a key role in learning; thus the findings support the opinion of the existing literature.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 14 and 15*

For questions number 14 and 15, the respondents had to decide whether younger learners (grades 1-8) are more motivated in learning than pupils from the upper grades (9-11). Most teachers (41 respondents, 74,5%) believe that they are not more motivated. Only the remaining 14 teachers (25,5%) think that pupils from lower grades show more motivation towards learning. Their reasons included the following:

- Pupils from upper grades get bored with learning for many years;
- Some older pupils do not care too much about their school performance;
- Everything is new and interesting for young children;
- It is easier to grab the attention of children with songs, rhymes and games.

The 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> questions are interconnected, as they both aim to find out which age group is more motivated to learn, younger (grades 1-8) or older (grades 9-11) students. According to current literature, educators were confronted with the fact that children are more inspired to learn than adolescents. Nevertheless, surprisingly, 41% of the participants do not believe that younger students are more motivated than older ones, implying that there is no substantial difference in learner motivation due to age. This means that the answers to this question contradict the findings of the related literature, despite of the fact that experts such as Ahlquist and Lugossy (2015) and Ur (1996) agree that teaching and motivating the older age group is more difficult.

*Questionnaire #1 question number 16*

The next question was connected to motivation again. The role of teachers had to be measured in motivating pupils to learn English. For instance, children can be motivated if they see that the teacher prepares interesting and colourful tasks, games, stories and songs for the lesson. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), McKay (2012) and Linse (2005), an educator's influence on learner motivation is significant. Teachers act as mentors throughout the lives of their students, and one of their primary responsibilities is to create a positive learning atmosphere for them. Moreover, students are often highly influenced by teachers, who are passionate about the subject and teach it with compassion. If the learners believe that the teacher is not interested in the topic, they will not be active in the class either. According to the respondents, the role of the teacher is crucial because if pupils see that he/she is enthusiastic about teaching, they will also enjoy the lesson much more (34 respondents, 61,8%). In addition, another 15 respondents (27,3%) feel that the teacher's behaviour has a significant effect on learners. Only 6 respondents (10,9%) think that it is hard to motivate pupils; therefore, teachers do not play a key role in

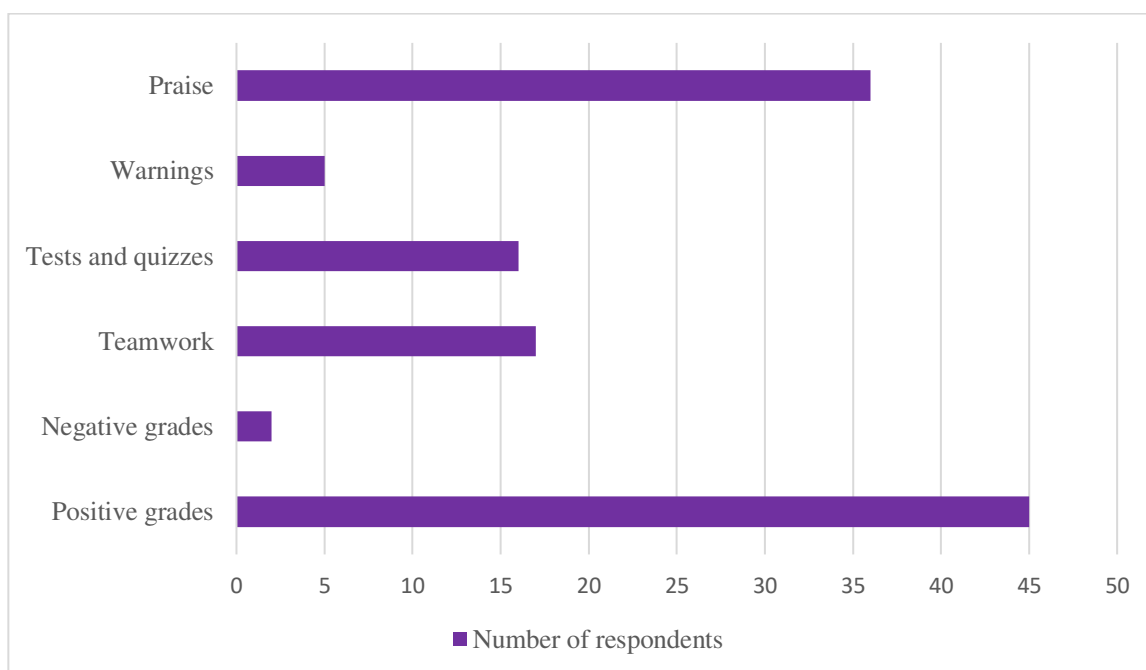
this phenomenon. None of the respondents indicated that the teacher's role is not important at all in motivating learners.

*Questionnaire #1 question number 17*

In the following question, educators had to choose those tools and methods which can be used to motivate learners the most effectively. Experts such as Harmer (2012) advocate for the frequent usage of positive grades, and according to him, students should be praised quite regularly in order to be motivated. Based on the results, positive grades and praise are the most important means of raising the motivation of children. This means that the answers are fully in accordance with professionals like Harmer (2012), Dörnyei (2001) and others.

On the contrary, warnings and negative grades are not effective means of motivating learners. The teachers had numerous options they could choose from; for instance, students are motivated by praise, warnings, teamwork, grades, etc. The detailed results can be seen in the following diagram.

**Diagram 3.3.4 Means of motivating learners**



*Questionnaire #1 question number 18*

Another interesting question (question number 18) was connected to the concept of a “perfect” teaching method. According to respondent teachers, it strongly depends on the learners what kind of methods they choose to teach (20

respondents, 36,4%). Besides, teachers usually develop their classroom methods through experience (19 teachers, 34,5%), and it also largely depends on the age of pupils (18 teachers, 32,7%). Moreover, 14 teachers (25,5%) believe that the perfect teaching method is the combination of several other methods.

As Ellis, Brewster, and Girard (2002) point out, the perfect teaching method does not exist because every student and class has different needs. Furthermore, the teacher develops his/her own teaching method through experience. The findings also confirm that teacher's choice of teaching methods and strategies is influenced by the students' level of knowledge and needs.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 19*

Question number 19 investigated the importance of creative tasks. Creativity stimulates the learners' brain, and it also motivates students to learn. It is the teacher's job (among other things) to make the exercises as colourful and creative as they can. Based on the responses, creative tasks are essential during English teaching as they make the lessons more colourful and pupils enjoy them very much (30 teachers, 54,5%).

Moreover, creative tasks are important because they can be used to motivate children (27 teachers, 49,1%). 6 teachers (10,9%) think that creative assignments are not important as they are considered only a burden by the learners.

However, none of the teachers selected the option according to which learners dislike creative tasks.

#### *Questionnaire #1 question number 20*

In the last question, teachers had to mark how much their pupils enjoy English lessons on a scale from 1 (completely not enjoy) to 10 (really enjoy). The most common answers were 7 (11 teachers), 8 (15 teachers), 9 (9 teachers) and 10 (16 teachers). The two smallest numbers were 5 (2 teachers) and 6 (2 teachers).

Based on the responses to this question, it can be concluded that teachers believe that the majority of students enjoy and love English lessons. This indicates that they are usually active, engaged and doing well in class, which is positive feedback for educators.

### 3.3.2 The role of literature and motivation in learning English

The second questionnaire was completed by 100 secondary school pupils from grades 5-11.

#### *Questionnaire #2 question number 1*

The first question focused on how often the students have English lessons. One of the main problems of teaching EFL is the shortage of time, as it was mentioned several times throughout the analysis of the questionnaires. It is quite difficult to explain and practice a new topic in 45 minutes. Moreover, students are often inattentive or may not understand the material and ask questions, which often passes the time, so when planning a lesson, this should also be included in those 45 minutes. According to the answers, most of them have 3-4 English lessons per week, which is a relatively good amount.

#### *Questionnaire #2 question number 2*

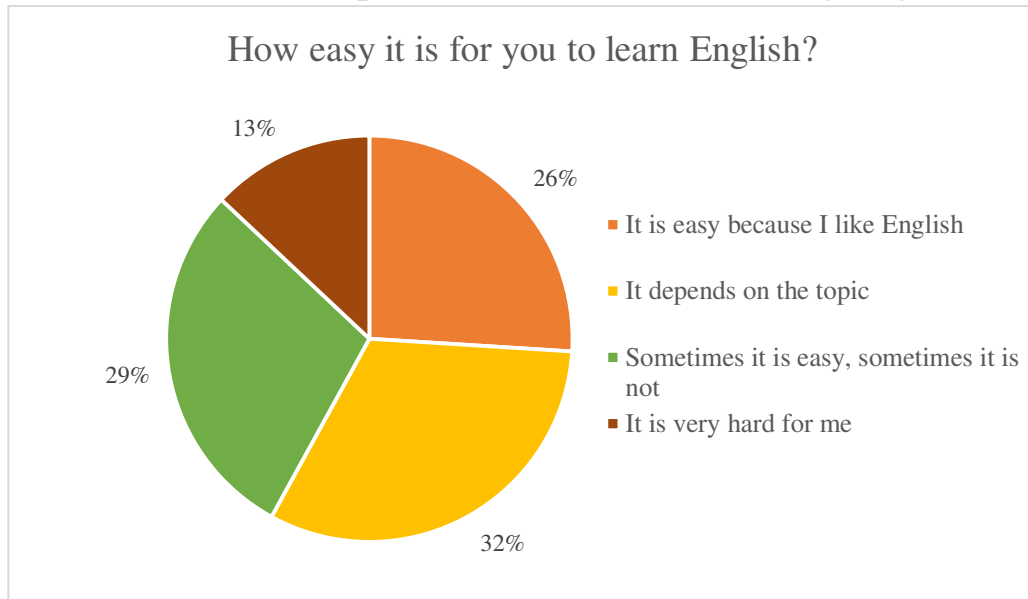
In the next question, they had to indicate how much they like and enjoy English lessons on a scale from 1 (completely not enjoy) to 10 (really enjoy). Pupils gave varied answers to this question, as the lowest number was 2 (1 pupil), but the most frequent answers were 7 (22 pupils), 8 (21 pupils), 9 (13 pupils) and 10 (19 pupils). After examining these results, it can be stated that in general, most pupils enjoy English lessons. If we look at *Questionnaire #1 question number 20*, it is clear that teachers' opinion coincides with the learners'.

#### *Questionnaire #2 question number 3*

After this, in the third question, the learners had to mark how easy or hard it is for them to learn English. These types of questions are crucial, because they provide teachers with feedback.

Students' feedback is the key to making teachers aware of what to put more emphasis on during the lessons. Teachers who receive feedback will be able to adapt assignments and classes to the students' needs, allowing them to improve. From the results, we can observe that their English level knowledge is very varied and different. The answers are summarised in Diagram 3.3.5.

**Diagram 3.3.5 Pupils' attitude towards learning English**

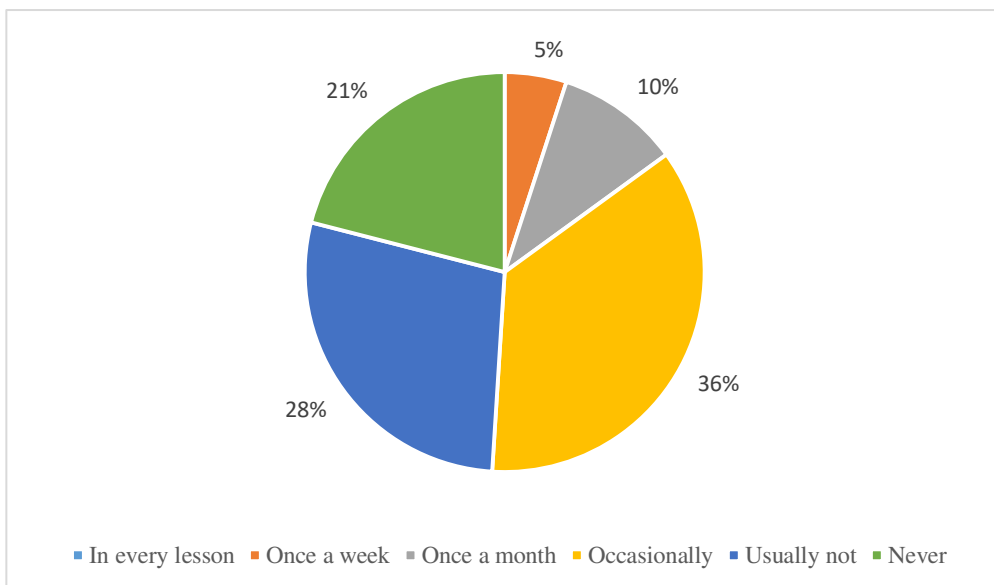


The results back up the fact, as it was stated by Hess (2001), that all classes are mixed-ability classes.

*Questionnaire #2 question number 4*

In the next question, pupils could state how often they learn poems and rhymes in English. Most respondents do not usually learn these types of materials, or they do it only monthly. None of the pupils learn poems and rhymes in every lesson, as this option was not chosen by any of the respondents. Results are shown in the following diagram.

**Diagram 3.3.6 The frequency of learning poems and rhymes**



As the students' responses show, teachers tend to use literature during teaching; thus, it can be said that including poems and stories in lessons is a common teaching technique.

*Questionnaire #2 question number 5*

As for questionnaire item number 5, learners had to give their opinions about learning rhymes and poems in English.

A few of the participants answered that they do not learn these (only 4 pupils), many of the students stated that they like to learn poems and rhymes (32 students), because they make the lessons more interesting, entertaining meanwhile, the others gave the following answers:

- I like to learn poems and rhymes because they make the lesson more entertaining (32 pupils);
- I like to learn poems and rhymes because they help me to memorise new words (30 pupils);
- I think poems and rhymes are unnecessary and not important (18 pupils);
- I do not like to learn them because they are boring (16 pupils).

Learning poems and rhymes, according to Hedge (2000), Duff and Maley (1991), and Lazar (1993), can enhance language learning, especially when it comes to learning new words and pronunciation.

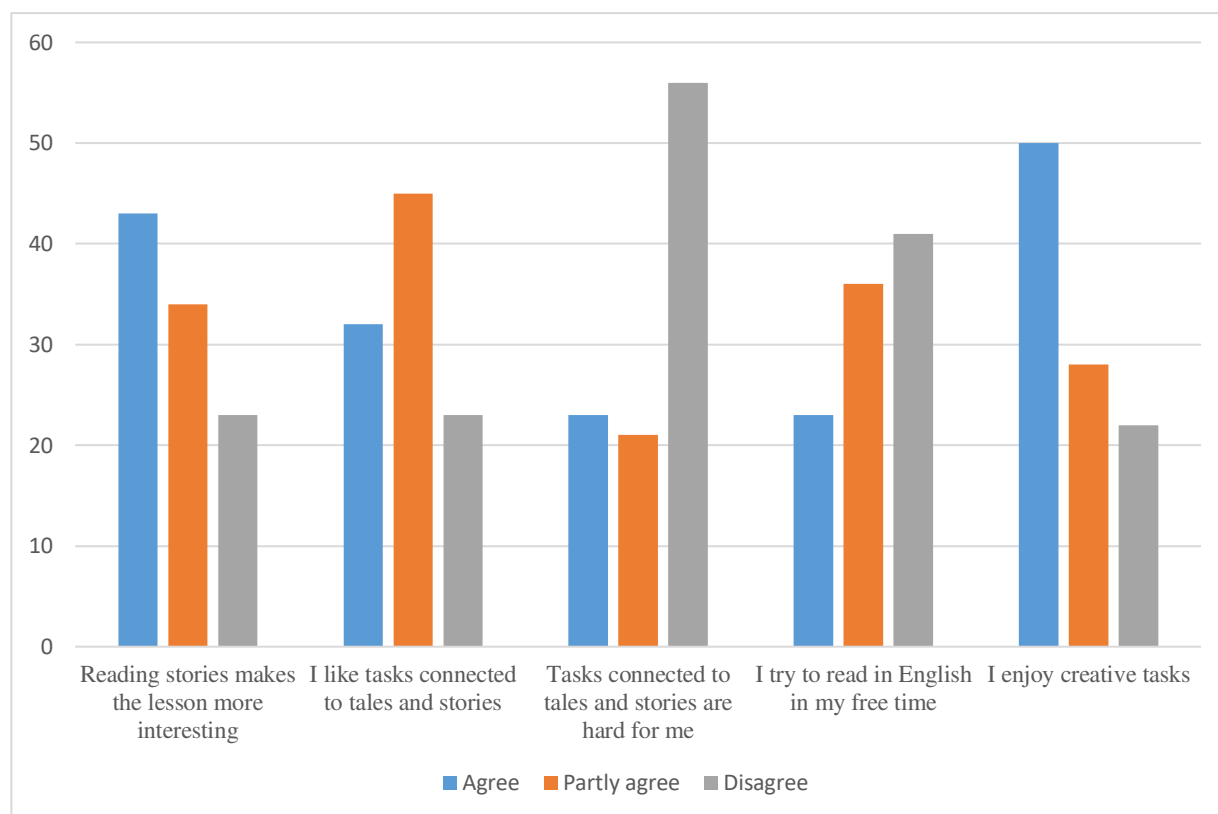
The majority of learners claimed that they enjoy learning poetry and rhymes because they are entertaining and help them memorise vocabulary. The results conclude with the opinion of experts. This means, that as a consequence, it can be concluded that poems and rhymes are extremely beneficial in developing multi-level, appropriate language competence.

*Questionnaire #2 question number 6*

In addition to the previous question, respondents could express their agreement or disagreement with the given statements regarding to literature, reading and carrying out tasks connected to literary texts.

The results of this question are shown in detail, as it can be seen in Table 3.3.7.

**Diagram 3.3.7 Learners' attitudes towards reading in English**



*Questionnaire #2 question number 7*

In the next question, learners had to name some tales which they had heard or read during English lessons. The following tales were mentioned: Robin Hood, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, The Jungle Book, How the Grinch Stole Christmas!, Peter Pan, Sherlock Holmes, King Midas and the Golden Touch, Aladdin, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Gulliver's Travels, Grimm's Fairy Tales, Harry Potter, Oliver Twist, Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, A Tale of Two Cities, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Lion King, Alvin and the Chipmunks.

The responses to this question revealed which stories and tales educators use while teaching English with the help of literature.

As Collie and Slater (1990) and Tomlison and Lynch-Brown (2014) point out, a good story is instructive, simple and easy to comprehend. It can be deduced from the students' responses that teachers usually choose stories that follow these criteria. Thus, they pick stories and tales, that are excellent in quality.



### *Questionnaire #2 question number 8*

Question number eight asked pupils to select those parts of the language which are the hardest for them to learn and practise:

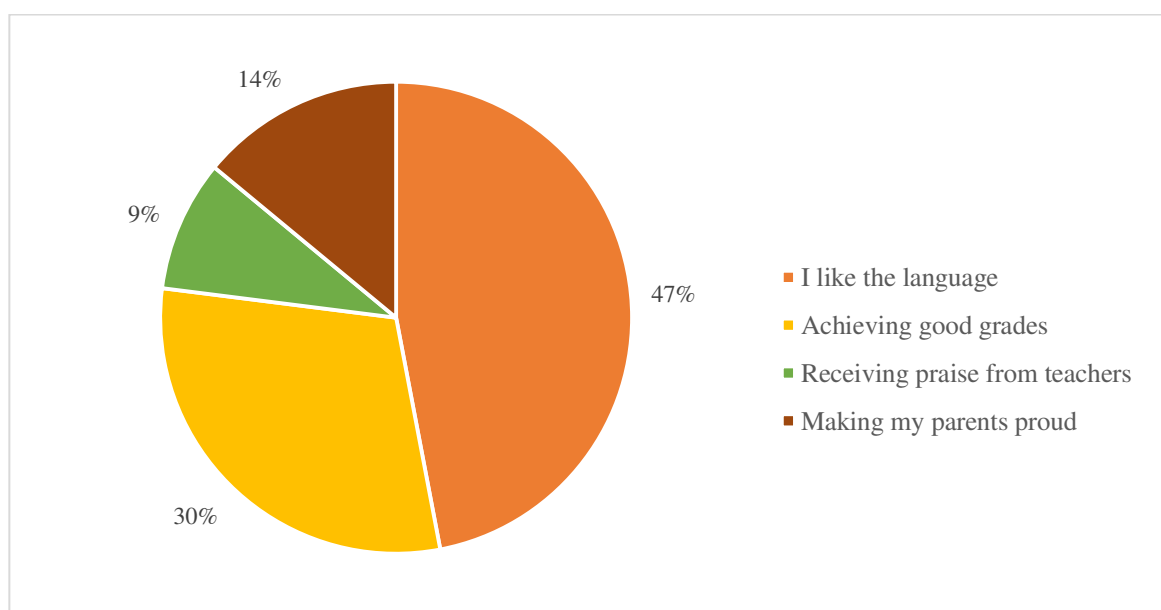
- Listening comprehension tasks (30 pupils);
- Pronunciation (28 pupils);
- Writing compositions and essays (24 pupils);
- Speaking in English (18 pupils).

The existing literature (Nunan 1991, Harmer 2012, Halliwell 1993) suggests that students have the most problems with listening tasks and pronunciation development while acquiring language skills. The answers to the current question (number 8) also support this fact, so it can be concluded that learners have less difficulty with writing and speaking exercises.

### *Questionnaire #2 question number 9*

In the following question, learners were asked to state what motivates them the most to learn English. The majority of the learners answered that they were motivated to learn English, because they love and enjoy it. As Dörnyei (2001) put it, we can distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Based on the answers, it seems that the majority of students are motivated to learn English for intrinsic reasons. The results are presented in Diagram 3.3.8.:

**Diagram 3.3.8 Motivating factors in learning English**



### *Questionnaire #2 question number 10*

As for question number 10, the respondents selected why they do not pay attention during lessons in most cases. Students' attention is usually very difficult to capture; sometimes even the tiniest things can distract them. However, interestingly, the most frequently chosen option was that they always pay attention (53 pupils). Others said that they sometimes do not understand the topic (21 pupils), or the lesson is too boring for them (17 pupils). The remaining 9 pupils do not focus on the English lesson because they are not interested in the given topic, or they are simply too tired.

### *Questionnaire #2 question number 11*

In the next question, participants could express their opinion about the things that make an English lesson more interesting. This questionnaire item also provided an answer to the question of what would encourage them to learn English, for instance, creative tasks or pair work. Based on their answers, the results were the following:

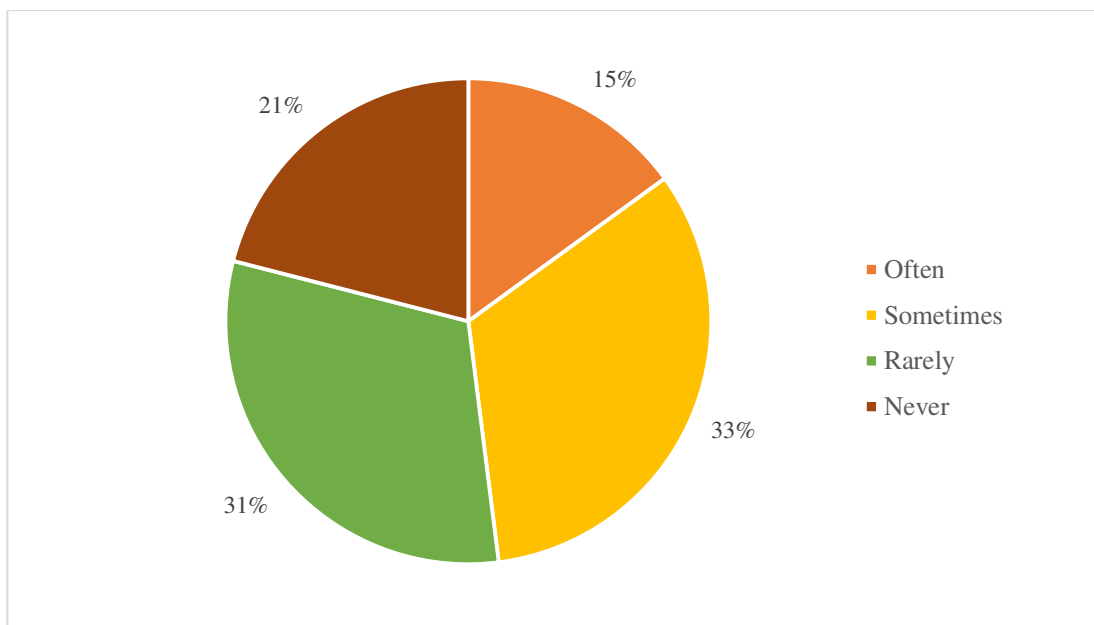
- Creative tasks (33%);
- Pair or group work (28%);
- Interesting materials (21%);
- Understandable topics (13%);
- Praise from the teacher (5%).

As maintained by Ghosn (2013), creative tasks are essential because they enliven the classroom and encourage students to listen, learn, and actively participate. Out of the given choices, most learners declared that they are motivated to learn English because of creative tasks, meaning that this is another claim backed up by the survey responses. Furthermore, pair work and teamwork were the second most popular options, indicating that learners enjoy working together and even motivating one another.

### *Questionnaire #2 question number 12*

For question number twelve, learners were asked about their reading habits in connection with the English language. They had to state the frequency of reading in English.

**Diagram 3.3.2 The frequency of reading in English**



The responses to this query yielded some exciting results. 33 per cent of students said they read in English occasionally, 31% said they rarely read English texts, 21% said never, and 15% choose the ‘*often*’ option. According to the answers, most students occasionally read English texts, which is a very good rate, considering that the students who collected the questionnaire belong do different kind of age groups.

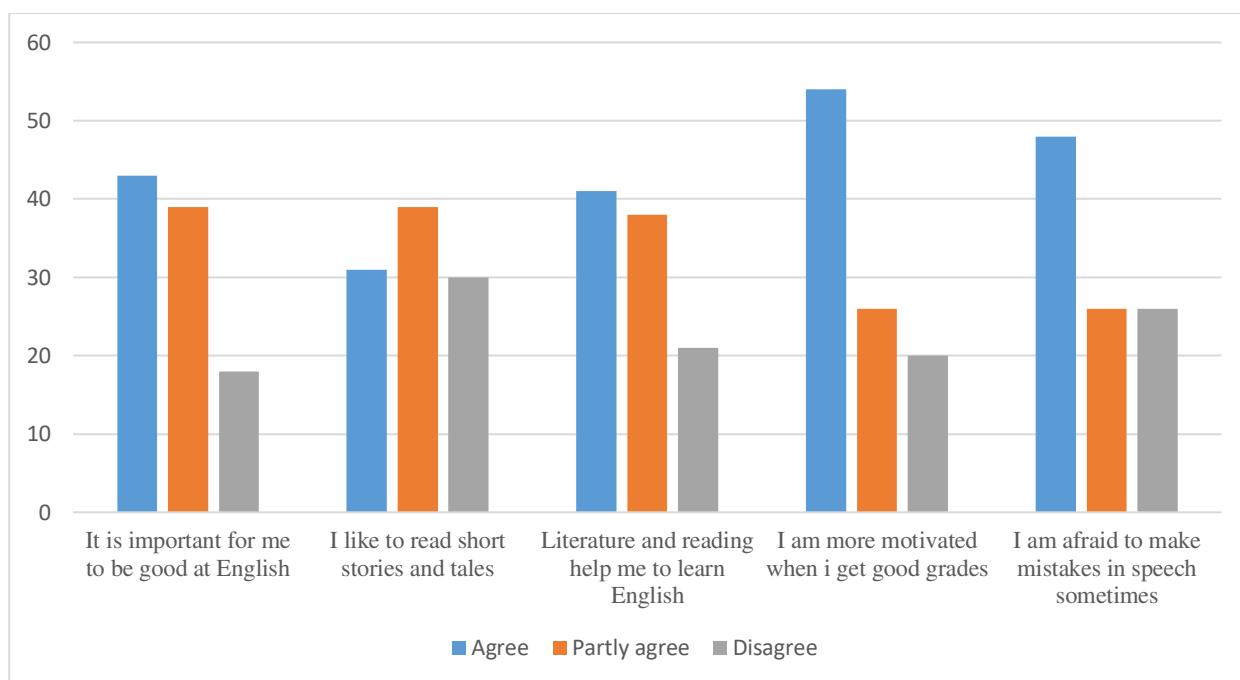
*Questionnaire #2 question number 13*

In addition, as for question thirteen, pupils had to mark the degree of their agreement with given statements concerning their English learning habits. It can be said that it is essential for them to speak English and literature helps them to improve their language skills. Also, it is important to highlight that they can be motivated very well with good grades.

However, they are often afraid to speak because of occasional mistakes. This is partly because most EFL learners have difficulties with pronouncing the words correctly.

Therefore, it is advisable to use (preferably authentic) materials in the class that improve pronunciation and encourage students to practice speaking as much as possible. The detailed results are summarised in the diagram below.

**Diagram 3.3.2 English learning habits of pupils**



*Questionnaire #2 question number 14*

The next question, which is number 14, was an open-ended one: pupils had to give an example of their favourite task from English lessons, which really motivated them to learn the language. The answers were quite interesting and entertaining. The following answers were mentioned:

- Watching a play about Romeo and Juliet;
- Presenting their hobbies in English;
- Writing about their role model;
- Working in groups to do a project;
- Retelling the story of Oliver Twist;
- Constructing a new story with the class;
- Writing their own poem in English;
- Summarising the stories of books and tales;
- Conducting an imaginary interview with a famous person;
- Translating their favourite Hungarian song into English;
- Making presentations about books (Sherlock Holmes);
- Writing advertisements in English;

- Quizzes, competitions and translations.

The replies to the question, as it can be seen, are incredibly diverse. The learners mentioned tasks that require creativity and bring them enjoyment. Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that students are most passionate about creative and imaginative activities. Moreover, it is important to mention that pupils appreciate and enjoy tasks that allow them to express and present their own, personal opinions in class.

#### *Questionnaire #2 question number 15*

In the last question, respondents had to indicate those things that they would wish to change in the course of English lessons. Most pupils did not want to change anything. Others would like to have less homework, to watch movies more frequently, to work in groups more often, and to have more time to talk in groups or pairs, thus practising speech and pronunciation. Learners would also like to do more creative tasks in order to focus more on developing their speaking skills, which they feel to be the hardest to improve.

The responses thus show that the majority of students are satisfied with the English lessons and their course. Furthermore, it is also worth mentioning that learners enjoy creative and communicative activities, and they also like exercises that focus on improving pronunciation.

### **3.4 Discussion and interpretation of the results**

In this section, the obtained results from the questionnaires will be discussed and interpreted in topic-related sections. The topics are connected with the role of literature and motivation in English language learning, and how teachers can involve literary pieces in their lessons to raise pupils' motivation.

As it was previously stated, the findings of the present study are based on the responses of 55 experienced English teachers and 100 secondary school pupils. The students were of different ages, from fifth graders to eleventh graders, this means that the results are built on their opinion.

### **3.4.1 Using authentic materials in the classroom**

Nearly half of the respondent teachers (47,3%) agreed that authentic materials are useful because they can help pupils to learn about the language and its cultural background too. In addition, authentic input facilitates the language acquisition process, according to 19 teachers (34,5%). However, we have to mention that 29,1% of the respondents (16 teachers) felt that although authentic materials are important in some cases, we can ignore them usually.

Furthermore, teachers had to select how often they involve authentic English stories, rhymes and poems in the lessons. The amount of teachers who do not apply authentic materials (41,8%) is nearly the same as those who usually do so (38,2%). The remaining teachers would like to use authentic stories and rhymes if they had enough classroom time. In summary, authentic materials considered as very effective and useful by most teachers, but nearly half of the respondents do not involve these materials in their English lessons.

Graded readers are another example of authentic input that could be used in the English lessons to help learners develop their language skills on the most appropriate level. Teachers widely believe that graded readers should be used to get learners acquainted with the language (43,6%), and these materials are very useful in language learning (32,7%). Also, except for 3 teachers (5,5%), every respondent would like to use graded readers in the future with their pupils.

Based on the responses, it is hard to involve literature in connection with every topic learned during the semester, but we should try to use it in the classroom as often as possible (36 teachers, 65,5%). There are very few topics that we can only teach effectively with literature. Only 14,5% of teachers would use exclusively literature to teach moral lessons about life, develop communication skills, extend the pupils' worldview and show them how to express their emotions. Poems and songs can be useful in teaching basic words for children in the lower grades.

However, respondent pupils stated that they normally do not learn English poems and rhymes (49%), and only 36% of pupils do it occasionally, while 10%

learn poems once a month, and only 5% do it on a weekly basis. Therefore, authentic English poems and rhymes are not used frequently in foreign language lessons.

### **3.4.2 The effects of literature on learners**

According to the answer of teachers, involving English literature in the foreign language classroom makes the lessons more interesting; thus learners pay more attention to the teacher, and they became more active because pupils like to learn poems, rhymes and tales. Only 1 teacher (1,8%) said that literature is boring for the learners, so the greatest majority considers the use of literature in the English lesson as a great motivating factor for learners.

With the help of literature, learners can develop their reading (80% of teachers) and writing skills (74,5% of teachers), most importantly. Listening comprehension and speaking skills are not improved significantly with literature. Moreover, by reading stories and learning poems, pupils' vocabulary knowledge can be greatly developed, and their creativity can be improved. Teachers should help learners to focus on the literary works, especially for those pupils who do not really like to read. Teachers disagreed with the statement that it is hard to find appropriate literary pieces for every learner, just think about graded readers.

Nearly all the teachers connect the development of writing skills and the use of literature to each other. For example, when a literary work is linked to the topic of the lesson, they sometimes give essay writing tasks to the pupils in connection with the moral lessons learned from the story or the main characters, meaning that the students can learn from such tales.

Moreover, learners like to learn poems and rhymes because these make English lessons more engaging (32 pupils), and help them memorise newly learnt words (30 pupils). However, some of them consider rhymes and poems as unnecessary to learn (18 pupils) and boring (16 pupils). According to them, reading stories and tales can make the lesson more interesting (agreed by 77% of pupils).

Pupils try to read in English in their free time, as it was strongly agreed by 23% and partially agreed by 36%, but 41% of the respondents disagreed with this statement.

Learners had to state how often they read in English. According to the results, 15% of pupils often read, while 33% read sometimes, and 31% only rarely. 21% of pupils never read in English, as we can see, this is a very divisive topic among respondents. 70% of pupils stated that they like to read short stories and tales.

In addition, pupils named a great number of tales that they enjoyed during English lessons, including Harry Potter, Robin Hood, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, How the Grinch Stole Christmas!, King Midas and the Golden Touch, Aladdin, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Oliver Twist, Jack and the Beanstalk, just to mention some of the most frequent ones. Based on the results, educators are encouraged to bring these tales and stories into the classroom as many learners will remember them later, and they can develop a positive attitude in learners towards reading in English.

### **3.4.3 The role of motivation in language learning**

It was strongly agreed by nearly all the teachers (92,7%) that motivation is one of the key components of learning. Teachers widely agreed that learners can be motivated easily with positive grades, and they can also motivate each other, but it is the teacher's task to make the pupils concentrated on the lesson in order to keep them motivated towards learning English (87,3% of the respondents).

Only a small number of teachers (25,5%) consider pupils from the lower grades to be more motivated than older learners. The main reasons behind their belief is that everything is interesting for young children, and their attention can be grabbed easily with songs, games and rhymes. Also, some older pupils are less motivated about learning and achieving good grades in school.

According to the viewpoint of learners, they usually pay attention in the classroom (53%), but other respondents indicated that they sometimes do not understand the material (21%), or the lesson is too boring (17%), thus they become



inattentive and less motivated to learn English. 9% of the pupils are not interested in the lesson's topic, or they are just too tired to pay attention in some cases.

Being good at English is very important for 82% of the pupils, and they feel that literature helps them to learn the language (79%). Also, they are generally more motivated when they get good grades (80%), but they are often afraid to speak in English because of making mistakes (74%).

#### **3.4.4 Motivating pupils in the lesson**

Teachers could select those ways with which English lessons can be made more interesting for pupils. For this reason, the most frequently used classroom activities were games, quizzes, stories, tales, poems and rhymes. Watching movies and listening to songs were not as often selected as the other options. The most challenging parts of the language for learners are listening comprehension tasks (30 pupils), pronouncing words correctly (28 pupils) and writing essays (24 pupils).

Motivating learners to participate in the lesson actively is important because there are many challenges that teachers have to face nowadays. Firstly, learners' language skills are extremely varied (according to 61,8% of teachers). This is further proven by the fact that learning English is easy for 26% of pupils, while 61% of them consider it to be easy or hard sometimes, depending on the topic, and 13% of respondent pupils said that English is a very hard subject for them. Other issues include the following: the number of English lessons is inadequate (34,5% of teachers), pupils are inattentive and often afraid to talk (27,3% of teachers).

Therefore, it is getting harder to grab the attention of learners, but they are usually enthusiastic about new topics and creative classroom tasks. It is the teacher's most important task to keep the learners motivated during the lesson. Indeed, teachers' play a significant role in the successful language acquisition of their learners. If the teachers are enthusiastic about their profession, bring exciting and engaging activities into the classroom, pupils will also be more motivated in language learning (according to the observation of 34 teachers, 61,8%). The

behaviour of the teacher affects the behaviour of the pupils, according to 15 teachers (27,3%). Therefore, we can say that if we want our learners to be more motivated and active in the lesson, we should start with making ourselves motivated towards teaching first.

Based on the experiences of English teachers, the most effective means of motivating pupils are positive grades (81,8% of teachers) and teacher's praise (65,5% of teachers). Tests, quizzes and teamwork can also motivate learners to some extent, while giving warnings and negative grades are considered ineffective in this respect. Furthermore, teachers believe that the type of teaching methods they use is learner-dependent in most cases, and it is also determined by their age. Educators develop their classroom strategies (including motivating and attention-grabbing techniques) through experience, and they usually combine several methods to hold more effective English lessons.

According to pupils, they are motivated to learn English because they simply like the language (47%), and want to achieve good grades (30%). Other motivating factors were less important: making their parents proud (14%) and receiving praise from teachers (9%).

Based on pupils' responses, in order to make English lessons more interesting, teachers should involve creative tasks (33 pupils), pair or group work (28 pupils), and exciting materials (21 pupils) in the classroom. Understandable topics (13 pupils) and teacher's praise (5 pupils) are not the main tools of creating motivation in the English lesson.

### **3.4.5 Learners' attitude towards creative tasks**

Creative tasks make English lessons more interesting; therefore learners enjoy them very much (according to 54,5% of teachers). As a result, creative tasks are effective means of motivating children (49,1% of teachers). Only 6 teachers (10,9%) consider creative tasks as unimportant and a burden for pupils.

Furthermore, 77% of pupils enjoy tasks connected to tales and stories, but these are sometimes hard for them to complete (44%). Respondent pupils enjoy creative tasks to a great extent (78% of them agreed with this statement). When they were asked what makes an English lesson more interesting, the most frequently chosen option was creative tasks (33% of pupils). Also, if learners could change one thing in the English lessons, they would like to do more creative tasks that help them develop speaking and communicative skills in English.

According to the answers of pupils, there are some tasks that can make the lesson not only interesting, but also very effective. These tasks should be taken into consideration by teachers: watching plays, presenting hobbies, writing essays about role models, doing group work, retelling stories of books, or constructing new storylines with their classmates. Also, learners can write their own poems, conduct imaginary interviews, translate songs into English from their mother tongue, write advertisements in English, do quizzes, and participate in competitions.

### **3.5 Pedagogical Implications**

From the standpoint of the study, it is essential to emphasize how the survey findings and information will assist an educator. The following main results emerge from the questionnaires, after analysing every response and taking them into account:

- The majority of teachers believe that authentic resources aid learners in acquiring the language and the culture. Authentic materials also provide learners with an insight into the target language speakers' lifestyle and values.
- When it comes to teaching EFL, educators tend to use graded readers. Since they are founded on the learners' language level, employing graded readers is quite beneficial, especially when working with younger students. In addition, graded readers assist pupils in expanding and boosting their vocabulary as well as learning to communicate more effectively.
- Since using literary text in the EFL classroom is an excellent way to inspire students, improve their imagination, motivate them, expand their vocabulary,

and learn new content, teachers often rely on them during English lessons. Thus, this indicates that the storytelling method is effective and useful when it comes to teaching EFL.

- It is essential to keep in mind that despite the fact that incorporating literature and stories into the EFL teaching-learning process is an excellent method to acquire the language more efficiently, educators believe that there are only a few topics that can be taught strictly and only with literary texts.
- In the case of giving out tasks that are connected to essays and writing, teachers often tend to connect the topics of such exercises to literature.
- When teachers choose literary texts, it is essential to keep in mind the aspects that make this literary work qualitative, for instance: themes, characters, message, and so on.
- One of the most significant challenges that teachers face today is the wide range of knowledge levels among the learners. Nevertheless, there are many ways to overcome this issue (for example, pair work or by creating different tasks for stronger and weaker learners).
- There is no such thing as the 'perfect' teaching method since each teacher decides on his or her own way which technique is suitable for him and her and later applies it according to the needs of the students.
- The students themselves indicated that they enjoy literature and love it when poems, stories or tales are involved in the teaching-learning process.
- Since creativity is essential in teaching EFL, it is crucial for teachers to assign learners tasks that are innovative, interesting and allow them to use their imagination.
- Poems and rhymes help pupils to understand and recall new content more easily.

Overall, the third part of the given thesis dealt with the analysis of research-related questionnaires. In this section, the author of the present research carefully studied the responses of the research participants, the results of which were backed

up with opinions of numerous experts. The advantages of teachers integrating literature into their classes, as well as, how students respond to it have been one of the main subjects of the research. While analysing the questionnaires, the answers proved to be extremely useful and valuable.

It can be stated that the data gathered during the analysis part and the conclusions drawn from the responses back up the details presented in the previous part of the thesis.

## CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the evolving standards of the twenty-first century, this present study provides an account of teaching EFL through literature, which is becoming increasingly common among teachers. The purpose of this thesis was to gather more information about the theory and methodology of teaching EFL with the help of literature. A significant amount of academic literature was reviewed, and two different questionnaires were carried out in order to explore the procedure and method of incorporating literature in the English teaching and learning process as thoroughly as possible. To continue with, the current thesis also clarifies the significance of teaching English and what teachers should concentrate on when performing their duties.

In the first part, the essential details on how to incorporate literature into lessons are highlighted. In addition, how the relationship between literature and learning is also discussed, as well as why stories, tales and poems should be included in English classes. Moreover, the advantages of using literature as a helping aid in teaching EFL are also explored. The views of many experts on the subject are explained and analysed. To go on with, this segment addresses how the teaching of young students and adolescents differs.

The second part also deals with theory. This section goes through the problems that educators face today in detail. A thorough overview of how to motivate students is given and solutions for what exercises are recommended for mixed-ability classes. What is more, this chapter also introduces and describes the most widely used and successful teaching methods. The reasons for the widespread use of these approaches in schools are also discussed in the present work.

Additionally, the second part also discusses how the four language skills can be taught using literature, along with some of the issues that might occur while using literature to teach. An insight into the situation of teaching EFL in Transcarpathia is also provided.

The third chapter of the thesis is dedicated to the research that was carried out by the writer of the current paper and its analysis. Two separate questionnaires were designed to investigate the importance and significance of teaching EFL through literature. A total of 55 teachers completed the first questionnaire, while 100 students filled out the second. In the analysis section, the most apparent results from the survey are noted. Furthermore, the findings presented in this thesis reveal that the current academic literature on the subject of using literary texts in teaching and learning is accurate. For starters, based on the questionnaire answers it is clear, that according to teachers, as mentioned repeatedly throughout the thesis, integrating stories into lessons is highly beneficial. The research part of the present thesis demonstrated the effectiveness of using literature in the classroom and how this approach makes learning easier for students.

The first hypothesis drawn up in the introduction was based on the important role of literature in acquiring the four basic skills. Both teachers and learners confirmed that literature indeed serves as a helping aid in teaching and learning listening, speaking, reading and writing. Furthermore, the questionnaire answers revealed that teachers frequently choose topics relevant to literature and stories when selecting essay topics.

According to the following claim, students' creativity is enhanced by reading stories and learning poetry. The outcomes of the research supported this hypothesis. Educators and students themselves highlighted that there are many creative tasks associated with literature that can make lessons more enjoyable, increase learners' imagination, and make them more attentive – all while learning a topic through literature.

The third hypothesis proposed that authentic materials were immensely advantageous in teaching EFL. As per educators' opinion, authentic resources are valuable since with them, learners become acquainted with not only the language but also with the cultural context of the target language.

In terms of the following hypothesis, it emphasizes that literature has a motivating effect on learners. This is yet another fact supported by research findings;

thus it is now acceptable to claim that teaching EFL through literature contributes to increasing student engagement. Both teachers and students believe that incorporating literature into lessons increases student motivation because it makes the lesson more interesting and entertaining.

According to the fifth hypothesis, poems and rhymes greatly aid students' memorization of new material, particularly words. Most students (62 pupils) emphasize that they enjoy learning poems and rhymes because it makes the lessons more entertaining and helps them learn new material and more seamlessly.

Overall, after analysing the collected data, it is safe to say that the results are consistent with the views expressed in the first and second part of the thesis. The current findings strongly support the pertinence of teaching English as a foreign language through literature. The use of literary texts in the classroom is undoubtedly reasonable motivating, inspirable and exciting. Furthermore, the recent thesis demonstrates that stories, poems, tales and rhymes can capture students' attention since they provide challenging and interesting topics.

To continue with, the present results contribute to the increasing body of literature on teaching English as a foreign language in schools of Transcarpathia. Expectantly, the research outcomes will broaden people's awareness of the importance of incorporating literary texts into classroom instruction.

Further investigation and experimentation into the matter of teaching English through literature is strongly recommended since more information would help us to establish a greater degree of accuracy on this matter. However, the key conclusion that can be made is that teaching EFL is a challenging job, however, with the right strategies (for instance, with the help of literature and other authentic materials) and mindset, it can be genuinely successful.



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## ВИСНОВКИ

Результатом швидкоплинності 21 століття, дослідження демонструють можливості застосування літератури під час викладання англійської мови як іноземної, і це набуває поширення серед вчителів. Метою магістерської роботи було зібрати якнайбільше інформації про теорію та методологію навчання англійської мови як іноземна за допомогою наукової літератури. У роботі розглядається знача кількість наукової літератури, і автор цієї магістерської роботи підготував дві різні анкети, щоб ретельніше дослідити процес та метод включення літератури в процес викладання та навчання англійської мови. Продовжуючи, теперішня магістерська робота з'ясовує важливість викладання англійської мови та те, на чому вчителі повинні зосередитися при виконанні своїх обов'язків.

У першій частині висвітлено основні деталі включення літератури в хід уроку. Також йдеться про те, як взаємозв'язані між собою література та навчання і чому історії, казки та вірші слід включати в уроки англійської мови. Перший сегмент стосується того, чим відрізняється навчання молодших школярів та підлітків.

У другій частині також йдеться про теоретичні засади цієї тематики. Цей розділ детально описує проблеми, з якими сьогодні стикаються педагоги. Він надає детальний огляд мотивації студентів та знаходить рішення щодо того, які методи рекомендуються для роботи у класах із учнями які мають різні рівні здібностей. Більше того, у цьому розділі представлені та описані найбільш широко використовувані та найбільш успішні методи навчання. Причини широкого застосування цих підходів у школах також обговорюються в цій роботі, а також надає уявлення про ситуацію викладання англійської мови як іноземної у школах Закарпаття.

Третій розділ стосується дослідження та аналізів результатів, проведених автором даної роботи. Дві окремі анкети були розроблені для дослідження викладання англійської мови як іноземної з використанням літератури.

Загалом 55 викладачів заповнили першу анкету, тоді як 100 учнів заповнили другу. Найвизначніші результати опитування згадані в аналізі даних.

Згідно з першої гіпотезі, сформульованої у вступі, вона базувалась на вагомості літератури в набутті чотирьох основних навичок. І вчителі, і школярі підтвердили, що література справді допомагає під час навчання, розвиває такі основні навички, як: слух, говоріння, читання та письмо.

Наступне твердження полягало в тому, що творчість учнів посилюється читанням оповідань та вивченням віршів. Результати дослідження підтвердили цю гіпотезу. Педагоги та студенти самі підкреслили, що з літературою пов'язана ціла низка творчих завдань, які можуть зробити уроки приємнішими, розвиваючи уяву та творчі здібності учнів.

Третя гіпотеза наводила на думку, що автентичні матеріали повинні бути надзвичайно корисними для навчання англійської мови як іноземної. На думку освітян, автентичні джерела є цінними, оскільки вони знайомлять учнів не лише з мовою, а й з культурним контекстом мови.

Наступна гіпотеза підкреслює, що література має мотиваційний вплив на учнів. Це ще один факт, підтверджений результатами досліджень; таким чином, зараз прийнятно стверджувати, що викладання англійської мови як іноземної за допомогою літератури сприяє збільшенню ентузіазму та мотивації учнів. І вчителі, і учні вважають, що включення літератури до уроків підвищує мотивацію учнів, оскільки робить заняття цікавішим та веселішим. Відповідно до п'ятої гіпотези, вірші та скоромовки дуже сильно допомагають учням запам'ятовувати нові матеріали, особливо слова. Більшість студентів (62 учня) наголошують, що їм подобається вивчати вірші та скоромовки, оскільки це робить уроки веселішими та допомагає засвоювати нові матеріали.

Загалом, проаналізувавши зібрані дані, можна з упевненістю сказати, що результати відповідають думкам, висловленим у першій та другій частинах магістерської роботи. Нинішні результати підтверджують доцільність викладання англійської мови як іноземної за допомогою літератури.

Очікується, що результати досліджень звернуть увагу людей на важливість включення літературних текстів у навчання іноземних мов.

Рекомендуємо продовжити подальші дослідження з даної теми, оскільки більше інформації допоможе нам встановити більшу точність цього питання. Однак найголовнішим висновком є те, що викладання англійської мови як іноземної є складною роботою, але при правильних стратегіях (таких як література та інші автентичні матеріали) процес вивчення може бути справді успішним.



## APPENDICIES

### Appendix 1 Questionnaire I

#### **Dear Respondent!**

My name is Alexandra Moldován, and I am an English major student who studies at the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher education már nem ez a főszövege, fent van a honlapon. Since teaching and learning English is a difficult task, every educator uses various resources to assist his or her students' learning (for instance, involving children's literature in the EFL learning process).

With this questionnaire, I would like to find out how teachers feel about the use of English literary works in their lessons: whether it is beneficial to teach students short stories, tales, poems, and rhymes, and how this method can benefit them.

Completing the questionnaire is anonymous, and I will only use the data obtained for research purposes. Completing the questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes.

**Gender:** Female/Male

#### **How many years have you been teaching English?**

- a) 0-5
- b) 6-10
- c) 11-16
- d) 17-20
- e) 21-25
- f) 26-30
- g) 31-35
- h) 36-40

#### **In which grade (s) do you teach? Please select them.**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

**1. Many teachers use authentic materials that are not designed for learning or teaching purposes but express the way native speakers communicate. When teaching a foreign language (English), how important do you think it is to use authentic materials? It is possible to mark multiple answers.**

- a) Authentic materials are useful because learners get acquainted not only with the language but also with the culture.
- b) Authentic materials are important because, with their help, learners can acquire a language easier.
- c) Authentic materials are useful in some cases, but they can be ignored in general.
- d) Authentic materials are not important at all.

**2. Fairy tales, rhymes, and songs, written for non-educational purposes are also count as authentic materials in English. Do you usually use them in your classrooms?**

- a) Usually yes
- b) No, but I would like to
- c) I would if I had time
- d) Not really

**3. There are so-called “graded readers” that have been developed specifically for foreign language learners, as their language and content are adapted to their level of knowledge. Do you use graded readers in language teaching? Multiple answers can be marked.**

- a) Yes, because learners have to get acquainted with the language
- b) Yes, because graded readers are very useful
- c) Yes, I would use graded readers if I had time
- d) No, I do not use graded readers, but I am planning to use them in the future
- e) No, I do not use graded readers, and I am not planning to use them in the future

**4. How do you usually make your lessons more colourful? Multiple answers can be marked.**

- a) With stories and tales
- b) With poems and rhymes
- c) With songs

d) With games, quizzes

e) By watching movies

**5. How does the inclusion of literature in the lessons (it can be a poem, tale, rhyme, short story) affect the lesson? Choose the 3 statements you think are most relevant:**

a) The lessons are more interesting;

b) Learners pay more attention; ez a második nem egy külön állítás?

c) Learners are more active

d) Pupils like to learn poems, rhymes and tales

e) Learners are not interested in literature

f) Learners consider literature as boring

g) Pupils do not like to learn poems, rhymes and tales

h) Learners are less active

**6. Which language skill can be acquired the most effectively through the use of foreign language literature?**

a) pronunciation and speaking

b) reading

c) writing

d) listening

**7. Do you agree with the following statements? Rate it on a scale from 1 to 4, where 4- means strongly agree, 3 – agree 2 – disagree 1 – strongly disagree.**

	1	2	3	4
Stories and poems enrich the vocabulary knowledge of learners				
Students love reading in English				
Reading in English facilitates the development of language skills				
Tasks connected to reading can improve learners' creativity				
It is time-consuming to incorporate literature in learning				
It is difficult to find a story/poem/tale that is interesting to all students				

Learners sometimes cannot concentrate on literary works				
It is often difficult to find a reading that matches the level of knowledge of the students				

**8. Are all topics appropriate when it comes to incorporating literature into a lesson? Multiple answers can be marked.**

- a) In most cases, yes.
- b) It is not possible to connect literature to all topics; that is, we cannot associate a story, poem, or rhyme with everything, but I always use it whenever possible.
- c) It is applicable in very few cases.

**9) Are there topics you would teach solely and exclusively with the help of literature?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. If yes, please justify your answer.**

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**11. When students have to write an essay, do you usually include literary topics in the assignments? E.g.: Were students tasked with writing about the lessons or moral of a particular story or tale (say the Little Mermaid)? \***

- a) Yes, often
- b) Yes, when it relates to a topic
- c) Sometimes
- d) Not really

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. What challenges does an English teacher have to face today? Multiple answers can be marked**

- 1) Students are inattentive
- 2) Learners are not interested in the material of the lesson

- 3) Inadequate number of lessons
- 4) Learners do not like to learn English
- 5) The textbook is not appropriate
- 6) Learners' English language knowledge is extremely varied
- 7) Learners are too afraid and shy to talk

**13. Do you agree with the following statements? Rate it on a scale from 1 to 4, where 4- means strongly agree, 3 – agree 2 – disagree 1 – strongly disagree.**

	1	2	3	4
Motivation plays a key role in learning				
Motivation does not play an important role in learning				
One of the teacher's most important tasks is to motivate learners				
Pupils are usually enthusiastic during the acquisition of the new topic				
Learners are not interested in the new material				
Nowadays, it is harder to grab learners' attention				
Motivation only plays an important role in learning occasionally				
Learners can be motivated with positive grades				
Learners can motivate each other				
Learners often draw each other's attention during the lesson				

**14. According to the existing literature on the topic and based on experts' opinion (Robinson, Richards, Harmer, etc.), age also influences how motivated students are. Do you think younger students (grades 1-8) are more motivated to learn than older ones? (Classes 9-11) \***

Yes

No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**15. If yes, please support your answer**

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**16. To what extent does a teacher play a role in the student's attitude towards learning English? (For instance, does it motivate the learners if the teacher is prepared for the lesson and tries to make the lesson more colourful by involving tales/songs/games)**

- a) The teacher's behaviour has a great effect on learners
- b) The role of the teacher is very important because if pupils see that he/she is enthusiastic about teaching, they will also enjoy the lesson much more
- c) It is hard to motivate pupils, therefore, teachers do not play a key role in this phenomenon
- e) The teacher's role is not important at all in motivating learners.

**17. What motivates students the most to learn? Multiple answers can be marked**

- a) good grades
- b) positive feedback
- c) teamwork
- d) mini-tests
- e) warnings
- d) negative grades

**18. According to your opinion, is there such a thing as the "perfect teaching method"? Multiple answers can be marked**

- a) Yes
- b) Yes, but it is a combination of several methods
- c) The method the teacher chooses depends heavily on the students
- d) It depends on the age of the students, different teaching methods are suitable for each age group
- e) Each teacher develops his or her own method through experience
- f) It does not exist

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**19. How important is it to include creative tasks in a lesson? Multiple answers can be marked.**

- a) Creative tasks are really important and have a lot of motivating power
- b) In my opinion, they are important, they make the class more colourful and the students also enjoy them better
- c) They are not really important, students tend to take them as a burden
- d) Students do not like creative tasks

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**20. On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 10 is very, 1 is not at all) How much do you think students enjoy English lessons?**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

## Appendix 2

### Questionnaire II

#### **Dear Respondent!**

My name is Alexandra Moldován and I am an English major student, who studies at the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian College of Higher Education. This questionnaire can be linked to research on my dissertation, which aims, among other things, to find out how literature can be used in the teaching of English. By completing this (anonymous) questionnaire, you are contributing to this research.

Thank you in advance for your answers!

**Gender: Male/Female**

**Grade:\_\_\_\_\_**

**1. How many English lessons do you have in a week?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. How much do you like English lessons? Mark it on a scale from 1 (completely not) to 10 (very much).**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**3. How easy it is for you to learn English?**

a) It is easy because I like English

b) It depends on the topic

c) Sometimes it is easy, sometimes it is not

d) It is very hard for me

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. How often do you learn poems or rhymes in English?**

a) In every lesson

b) Once a week

c) Once a month

d) Occasionally

e) Usually not

f) Never

**5. What is your opinion about learning poems or rhymes?**



- a) I like to learn them because they help me memorise new words
- b) I like to learn them because they make the lesson more interesting
- c) I do not like to learn them because they are boring
- d) I think poems and rhymes are unnecessary and not important

**6. Do you agree with these statements?**

Statements	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
Reading stories makes the lessons more interesting			
I like tasks connected to tales and stories			
Tasks connected to tales and stories are hard for me			
I try to read in English in my free time			
I enjoy creative tasks			

**7. Name some tales that you had read or heard about during English lessons.**

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**8. What is the hardest for you in connection with the English language?**

- a) Speaking in English
- b) Writing compositions and essays
- c) Pronunciation
- d) Listening comprehension tasks

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. What motivates you to learn English?**

- a) I like the language
- b) Achieving good grades
- c) Receiving praise from teachers
- d) Making my parents proud

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. If you do not pay attention during the lesson, it is because...**

- a) I am not interested in the topic
- b) I do not understand the topic
- c) The lesson is too boring for me

d) I always pay attention

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**11. What makes an English lesson more interesting for you?**

a) Interesting materials

b) Understandable topics

c) Creative tasks

d) Pair or group work

e) Praise from the teacher

d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. How often do you read in English?**

a) Often

b) Sometimes

c) Rarely

d) Never

**13. Do you agree with these statements?**

Statements	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
It is important for me to be good at English			
I like to read short stories and tales			
Literature and reading help me to learn English			
I am more motivated when I get good grades			
I am afraid to make mistakes in speech sometimes			

**14. What was your favourite creative task from English?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**15. If you could, what would you change in the English lessons?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## NYILATKOZAT

Alulírott, Moldován Alexandra angol szakos hallgató, kijelentem, hogy a dolgozatomat a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskolán, a Filológia tanszéken készítettem, angol nyelv és irodalom tanári diploma megszerzése végett.

Kijelentem, hogy a dolgozatot más szakon korábban nem védtem meg, saját munkám eredménye, és csak a hivatkozott forrásokat (szakirodalom, eszközök, stb.) használtam fel.

Tudomásul veszem, hogy dolgozatomat a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola könyvtárának Kézirattárában helyezik el