

# Using Novels in English Language Teaching in Cyprus

Neophytos Mitsigkas

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Department of Language and Linguistics

University of Essex

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To Maria,

my loving wife,

whose support and sacrifices made  
the completion of this thesis possible,  
and my beloved daughter, Raphaelia.

I can finally watch you grow.

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis reports on a mixed-methods descriptive study concerning the students and teachers' perceptions of the role of literature – and novels in particular – in English language teaching and learning. Literature has always been a perpetual feature of language learning, and the transition from the aesthetic study of literature to its use as a resource for linguistic development in the language classroom has marked its implementation and use. For many decades, the use of literature for language teaching was marginalised because of the advent of communicative language teaching.

Nevertheless, the current trend favours a resurgence of interest in using literature for language purposes, appreciating its valuable contribution in English language teaching. However, very limited empirical research has been done to examine the use of novels in language teaching. The quantitative component of this research involved 144 students of an English-speaking private school in Cyprus and 26 English language teachers. Both groups responded to a distinct self-completed questionnaire. A follow-up qualitative investigation was carried out with five of the teachers who completed the questionnaire. Lastly, twelve unstructured, non-participant observations were organised with the students who completed the questionnaire, in their classrooms. For a statistical analysis, IBM SPSS Statistics 19 was used, while the qualitative data analysis was done with NVivo 10 and the results from the quantitative and qualitative enquiry were then integrated in order to respond to six research questions.

The findings of the study present the students and teachers' beliefs on the role of novels in ELT and elucidate the acceptance of novels as an invaluable source of motivating and stimulating activities that can contribute to the increase of students' language awareness. Additionally, the findings resulting from an examination of the students and

teachers' beliefs substantiate and promote the catalytic role of novels in developing an intercultural awareness, where language and culture are seen as interrelated entities and novels are perceived as vivid cultural representations.



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 How it all started

The following are all conversations that took place at a school in Cyprus and are related to using literature with language learners:

A staff room at the school. A language teacher confronts another teacher who looks tired and upset.

“What is wrong John? Tired from the lesson?”

“Not really, it’s just that my students are not interested in the lesson anymore. They are inactive and demotivated. I think they are fed-up with the course book.”

A corridor outside the classroom. Two language teachers meet up soon after their classes had finished.

“How did your students find the novel?”

“Well, they seemed to be very interested in the story. I was expecting much less interaction because I was not envisaging novels to have such a positive impact in their active involvement during the lesson.”

Another discussion between two language teachers:

“Maria, how did your students find using the novel for increasing their receptive vocabulary?”

“Well it was dreadful. The students were not as enthusiastic as I was expecting and not much was done with the novel in terms of language practice. But to tell you the truth, I do not even know how to use literature myself. I am not a specialist, you know, and I have never received proper training and practice.”

The location is now in a language classroom, on a different day. A teacher asks the students what they think about using literature in the classroom for a change. Several replies were given:

“Yes, that would be so much more interesting than using that course book all the time.”

“I love reading literature. Can we read Harry Potter?”

“Not if it is going to be the same as reading literature in Greek. I don’t like the teacher telling me how to read the text and how to interpret the story”.

“Read a novel? I cannot read a novel in my L1, let alone read one in English.”

Conversations like the ones presented here sparked my interest in examining the use of literature – more specifically, the use of novels – with students who were studying English and teachers who were teaching it. Reflecting on this type of conversations, I came to the conclusion that the language classrooms are what Collie and Slater describe as a “microcosm of the [ELT] world...reflecting a time when there is much questioning of the relationship between language and literature” (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 1).

## 1.2 The role of Action Research (AR) at initiating this project.

Added to the above incentive, another justification for examining the use of literature with language learners was my inclination towards the use of novels as part of AR initiatives while I was working as a language teacher at a school, where very little could be done apart from considering the course book as the only and most appropriate material to be used for language teaching. The central idea of AR<sup>1</sup> was to tackle a problematic situation in the sense that I felt ELT was an area which could be more effective through the use of something different, something more ‘authentic’ in the language classroom. I was looking for something that would initiate discussions, motivate the learners, and at the same time, provide the desired amount of language

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<sup>1</sup> Hall (2015) advances the need for an orientation to refer to how research can advance our understanding, and he singles out as particularly relevant to the ideas of applied linguistics and educational research the idea of Action Research (AR). For Hall, AR “involves participants, values participant perspectives, and accepts the importance of local circumstances which an outside researcher can never be aware of, or aware in the same ways” (2015:238).

practice. Therefore, subjecting the whole teaching process to questioning, I developed new ideas and alternatives which resulted from the use of novels for language teaching purposes.

The results from AR showed that the use of novels in the language classroom increased the students' interest and curiosity for a previously unknown genre in the second language in which they were never exposed to and initiated an unprecedented incentive for learning the language through literature. Learning was treated more positively, the students' participation increased considerably, and they scored higher in tests . Additionally, literature helped students to develop a more autonomous stance towards learning and promote critical thinking. Consequently, the next step was to take the intervention of AR into the next level and empirically examine how novels were seen, if at all, as a language teaching material in the classroom by both teachers as well as students. This form of research initiated this project and therefore matches with the perspectives of Hall (2015) and Paran (2008) who strongly advocate the need for data-driven, empirical studies (more on this discussion can be found in the Literature review Chapter). Consequently, the aim of this project is not merely to abstractly inform its readers about what the available literature has to say about the use of literature in the language classroom. Rather, it focuses on the more effective interventions in this field which are based on the empirical investigation of the students and teachers' perspectives and how they 'see' the use of literary texts in the context of ELT.

### 1.3 The aim of this study

This research prominently aims to explore and study the field of English literature in English Language Teaching (ELT) from the students and teachers' perspective. In the past few years, the role of literature in the English language classroom has been

revaluated to gain recognition as a fundamental component of ELT (Carter and McRae, 1996; Collie and Slater, 1987; Duff and Malley, 2007; Lazar, 1999, 1993 and 1990; Paran, 2008). In that sense, my main interest does not concentrate on how to help students to study and examine literature. Rather, I will focus on the examination of the use of literature as a resource for the ELT classroom and on the use of tasks and activities related to literary texts that bring language to the central position of examination and study. Therefore, I do not want to give the impression that my research will provide insight on how to develop literary competence; rather, I concentrate on the use of literature as a means that could potentially encourage promote, and facilitate language learning.

The question of whether or not English literature should be used or linked with English language learning has been a subject of strong debate among a large number of scholars, since questions regarding how, when, and why literature can be used in the classroom to enhance the English language skills have been put to the front. The role of English literature in relation to ELT was completely marginal until the beginning of the 1980s. According to Paran (2006), language teachers then considered that literature was acquiring an irrelevant position in the language classrooms, especially with the advent of communicative language teaching. Thus, the use of literature was regarded as inappropriate and not essential for language learners who associated literature with the unnecessary method of grammar translation (Duff and Maley, 2007).

However, the role of literature in the twenty first century classroom has evolved, as a result of the consideration that some literary texts not only provide input for language acquisition, but also consist a great resource of authentic materials for the language learner. As Collie and Slater (1987, p. 3) suggest, literature provides a “bountiful and extremely varied body of written material” which is vital in the sense that it talks,

describes, and shares fundamental human issues which are “enduring” rather than “ephemeral”. Authentic materials are important in that they increase the students’ motivation and interest. This is especially so if we consider that one of the most intriguing reasons for learning a second language is to get closer to its speakers and learn more about their everyday lives, routines and habits – and the students’ integrative motivation can have a huge impact on their willingness to learn and bring the target culture closer in order to make it more accessible. Moreover, the view of literature as an authentic material is accompanied by the presupposition that literary texts are not uniformly designed for ELT purposes. This fact makes the language used in literature purely authentic and relevant to be used in the language learning process. As a result, learners will be greatly benefited by exposure to a language that is “as genuine and undistorted as can be managed in the classroom context” (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 3).

#### 1.4 Why specifically novels

I have already mentioned the importance of literature in relation to second language learning, but I would specifically like to stress the interface of novels and language teaching, explaining the reasons why I have chosen novels, among other genres, for further scrutiny with language teachers and learners. This is not to provide a detailed account for the characteristics of using novels for language purposes since this is done extensively in many parts of this study. However, I emphatically feel that this research and the examination of the use of novels in particular is important because it fills the gap of an empirical investigation of the use of novels in the language classroom, examining both teachers’ as well as students’ perceptions of their use and

implementation, as well as reporting on their implementation in the classroom through classroom observations.

Even though the relationship between language and literature in the last decades particularly, has met an increasing revival of attention, yet the use of novels with language learners still remains an underdeveloped topic with very few exceptions (Collie and Slater, 1987; Lazar, 1990, 1993; Tsai, 2012; Tseng, 2010; Yang, 2001) since there are few reports or studies which exclusively empirically examine how novels can be used in the classroom for second language learning, exploring how teachers and students see their contribution. Consequently, my aim is to shed light on the use of novels in the language learning classroom by investigating how students and teachers in Cyprus view their involvement in English language learning courses.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The role of literature in English language learning: an overview based on research

The role of literature in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and its purpose and implementation in ELT courses has been a subject of discussion and debate. Historically, there has been a division between the teaching of a language and the teaching of literature, an observation named by Kramsch and Nolden as the “institutionalized dichotomy between literary studies and language training” (1994, p. 28). There were times when the language that was utilised for language teaching was in fact experiencing some stereotyped models and views, relating it to the production of patterns and principles only being concerned with the production of formulas “forgetting its purpose as a message” (Long, 1986, p. 43). Consequently, the current focus was limited in viewing language teaching in its own right, erasing literature from the map of any kind of language-oriented process.

On the other edge of the spectrum, literature teachers were neglecting the fact that language was the foundation of literature and the only basis for literary texts, eliminating in that way the relationship between literature and language teaching. The explanation behind this occurrence is mainly provided by looking at the introduction of communicative language teaching in the early 1970s, where literature was not part of any kind of language teaching curriculum whatsoever, and in extension, these views resulted in the polarisation of these two fields. According to Long, the fields of literature and language teaching were greatly polarised and the chasm between them had been extended in what became “literature for the humanists and language for the scientists” (1986, p. 43). This unfortunate phenomenon had become a general trend in

the views of language teachers and literature teachers, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, with the exception of some enthusiasts.

However, it now seems that the differences of opinion among literature teachers and language teachers and the gap between them is beginning to be bridged. As Paran (2008) and Carter (2007) suggest, the integration of language and literature is more evident than ever before, and as a result, this occurrence has benefited both the teaching of language as well as literature. Consequently, literature has acquired a higher position and profile in the context of second language acquisition and it can now be regarded as a tool towards language proficiency and competency, studied not in isolation and by its own right, but also in terms of foreign and second language teaching.

Kramsch and Kramsch (2000) also note the transition of literature as the subject of interest of the elitist at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the role of literature in language competency and its importance and usefulness as an authentic realisation of language in the last decade. Similarly, Lazar (1993) notes the significance and the rise of interest in using literature in the language classroom, aiming at the learners' language development and awareness, whereas Hall (2005) distinguishes a shift from a doubtful stance in dealing with literature in the 20<sup>th</sup> century based on its assimilation in communicative language teaching.

Nevertheless, discussion and arguments regarding using literature in the L2 classroom can also be examined by examining some methodological handbooks that present a diverse picture about this issue. One of the keenest supporters of the use of literature in the language classroom is Ur (1996), who stresses the benefits of using literature to enhance the language learning experience. Additionally, McKay (2001) and Carter and



Nunan (2000) also include a chapter on literature in their writings and Harmer (2007) presents some literary texts and analysis regarding reading.

On the other hand, one of the scholars who present an opposing view is Vandrick (2003). He mentions the potential difficulties in using literature in language courses, especially for writing purposes, by arguing that largely, literature may prove irrelevant in the students' preparation for academic writing, thus resulting in demotivation and a lack of interest in students towards writing activities and tasks.

Belcher and Hirvela (2000) note the distinct complexities in introducing literature in language courses mainly because of the rise in interest that students found in the study of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), where language teaching and discourse are to be directed into a more specific and guided framework. Therefore, as they argue, the teaching of literature can only be considered as inappropriate to the needs of the program. In these terms, the inclusion of literature in these kinds of courses cannot prove beneficial for students who learn English to satisfy specific educational needs. However, it is difficult – if not impossible – for students to develop what Belcher and Hirvela call the “array of rhetorical and linguistic resources” (2000, p. 29) since their language development and learning process would be exclusively based on informative texts where reading and writing skills could not be enhanced and challenged.

Finally, perhaps the greatest opponent at the idea of using literature in the language classroom is Edmondson (1997) who entirely marginalises the importance of literature teaching in ELT. Edmondson argues that learners are exposed to the same teacher-centred approaches found in literature teaching, both in students' L1 and L2, and therefore, the students are exposed to their teachers' own understanding and elucidation of the text, thus resulting in the lack of motivation on behalf of the students. Paran was

the first one to criticise Edmondson's views, arguing that he was following an "isolationist position", since the whole learning experience was not to focus solely on acquiring competence in the L2. Instead, the learners were to acquire a "general competence" in an L2 since learners are "educational consumers" (Paran, 2006, p. 45) based on learning through their whole learning process at school.

## 2.2 Defining literature – classifying it as a subject?

This part begins by raising the question: 'what is literature?' Providing a straightforward definition is challenging since, traditionally, there have been numerous attempts to define literature. Accepting, for example, its purely literal lexicon definition, which considers literature as the "written works, especially those regarded as having artistic merit" is, at the least, vague (Oxford Dictionary, 2002). Eagleton suggests that we can define literature as "imaginative writing in the sense of fiction - writing which is not literally true" – but a distinction of this kind between fact and fiction is also very questionable and cannot provide an unambiguous definition (Eagleton, 2008, p. 1). Jakobson, on the other hand, describes literature as a kind of writing which represents an "organised violence committed on ordinary speech", where ordinary language not only deviates from everyday speech but in some occasions may also diverge from the accepted rules of grammar (as cited in Eagleton, 2008, p. 2).

In providing a more palpable definition of literature, Pope concedes that literature has acquired a narrowed meaning during the late eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries, and as a term, it was reduced so as to mean: 'certain kinds of artistic or aesthetic value which were reckoned to be especially creative and imaginative, fictional (not factual), [and] stories (not histories)' (2012, p. 72). Goodman

(1996, p. 7) perceives literature to include forms of writing that aim to ‘deliberately and creatively experiment with language in order to suggest images and ideas which engage the reader’s imagination’. That is ‘the spacing of poetry on the page may suggest a shape; the rhyme and rhythm may create a mood. The narrators and characters of prose fiction (short stories, novellas and novels) allow readers to enter fictional worlds by identifying with other people, perspectives and ideas’ (Goodman, 1996, p. 7). In other words, Goodman values imagination and interpretation to be central to the discussion and analysis of literature. Realistically, literature might be what Barthes says ‘what gets taught’ but then, this ranges from classics, the cannon, English and American works, postcolonial literature in English, popular literature, Caribbean literature, contemporary literature and best-sellers, to name a few (Showalter, 2003). For the purpose of this study, however, and for any reference to it henceforth, literature will be defined as a body of writing that includes poetry, prose fiction, and plays, whether by Wordsworth or Frost, Charlotte Bronte or Hemingway, Shakespeare or Beckett. In that sense, literature excludes newspapers, magazines, letters, menus and shopping lists. It is also worth mentioning that this thesis views the study of literature in relation to the reader, recognising the readers’ active role in shaping meaning. That role is utterly positioned by a range of factors that might influence a person’s interpretation of a literary text, and it includes age, culture, class, gender and past experiences.

The classification of the English literature as an academic subject has now been in the region of scholars for more than one hundred years, and the identification of those who should be included or excluded from this field has been a controversial aspect of what should define the canon. Carter and McRae (1996) stress the need to identify who is in and who is out of the canon, investigating and re-thinking all the “isms” (feminism, historicism, racism, etc.) and minority discourses (immigrant writing, Scottish, Welsh

and Irish writings; even though these will not be minority discourses in Scotland, Wales and Ireland), in addition to the critical approaches which have generated readers' discourse analysis, language-based approaches, structuralism, deconstruction and a few other responses to literature. Based on this assumption, and most importantly based on the development of critical approaches (both linguistic and theoretical), we can therefore assume the increase and development of canons which are associated with literature.

Consequently, I will make extended reference to the language-based approaches which can be used both to decode the text as well as provide information on the relationship between the readers' perception of the text and the text itself. In that sense, investigating the text and deciding on its functions concentrates on the processes which lead the reader at the core of the text, understanding and decoding everything associated with it. Focusing on the language processes when reading literature may guide the learner to the "linguistic heart" (Carter and McRae, 1996, p. xxv) of the text, and in achieving this, the learner acquires a better understanding of literature, familiarising themselves with the way it works and what it says.

### 2.3 Referential language learning versus Representational language learning

During the last two decades, there has been an intense theoretical debate regarding the use of literary texts in the language classroom. One of the main concerns was the relationship between the readers and the text itself. More importantly, there was a feeling of uncertainty, not only for the learners of the English language, but most importantly, for the teachers of EFL classrooms regarding how literary texts should be read and dealt with.

At this point, I would like to talk about a key notion in applying literary works to ELT: referential and representational materials. This is a concept introduced by McRae (1996) in his attempt to analyse the application of literary materials to language teaching. Adopting his theory, I would like to try to investigate how literary materials are moving towards a more representational basis to form a dynamic interaction between the reader and the text in the process of language learning.

Before moving on to setting up the distinction between these two terms, I would like to provide a short definition in order to better understand their purpose in the language-literature interface. McRae maintains that referential language – and by extension, referential materials – “remain close to what they mean in a dictionary sense...one word has one meaning, one grammatical construction is right and another wrong, the words mean what they say, no more and no less” (1996, p. 17). Based on this view, referential language learning entails a more limited attitude towards language use and implementation. It also involves accepting the limitations of referential language learning associated with the instinctive, automatic, and – in some cases – mechanical acceptance of meaning restraining learning in the most obvious functions of language. The negative consequences of viewing language learning in its mere, referential form is that learners may enclose themselves in the existence of reference without interacting with the more imaginative and creative functions of language. This is why representational learning is needed in order to make the transition from reference to preference. Representational language learning differs from referential language learning in that “the rules are questioned, played around with, and put to different uses as part of that ongoing process of language acquisition” despite the insistence on correctness on form “to the detriment of fluency” (ibid.) The learner needs to intuitively

make the transition from what appears restricting and limiting to what includes their personal preference.

In that sense, representational learning refers to a new philosophical notion which incorporates how literature can be used in order to reveal the manner in which learners may discover the representational possibilities of language. Representational language is “all around us” and it becomes a language use that involves “discussion, reflection and consideration of meaning, rather than the mere construing on unthinking acceptance of meaning” (McRae, 1996, p. 20).

The growth of language competence, then, needs to allow the learner to trigger his “imaginative interaction” for an “element of creativity” which will add to the learners’ personal development which probably moves outside the sphere of referential language learning and into the idea of representational language development (ibid.).

One could consider that the representational language learning model does not result in an effective method towards language mastery because learners are introduced to a “wrong” and “confusing” model of instruction where linguistic choices are wrongly presented. However, I argue that literary materials are presented to learners as literature in the form of different genres (novels, short stories, poems and many more) only after they have already gained a substantial and satisfactory level of language proficiency even though revised and simplified versions of literature can also be used with younger or lower level learners.

### 2.3.1 Increasing language learning capacity

With representational language learning, students will be acquainted with another level of meaning connected to communicative context where what is said is not always what

is meant, and therefore meaning is not in all cases clear and precise. Additionally, another advantage of representational language learning is that learners develop interpretive skills that allow them to read between the lines and discover the “hidden agenda that is targeting fluency [and] accuracy” (McRae, 1996, p. 18). Consequently, language learners can more easily increase their language learning capacity by building up their linguistic competence, following the representational model of language learning which incorporates literary texts that reveal the various language functions either by following or breaking the “rules”.

### 2.3.2 Transactional theory: efferent reading versus aesthetic reading

A similar way to understand the aforementioned notion is by taking into consideration Rosenblatt’s (1978) transactional theory of responding to literature. Rosenblatt has used the term transaction in order to differentiate it from the meaning of the word interaction. Interaction, as she argues, moves along the notion of dualistic perception of unconnected factors in comparison with transaction which entails a continuous process where “elements or factors ... [are] aspects of a total situation each conditioned by and conditioning the other” (Rosenblatt, 1978, pp. 17-18).

In order to explain further the idea of transactional theory of reading literature, Rosenblatt makes a distinction between two types of reading: efferent reading and aesthetic reading. Efferent reading is when the reader focuses on a fixed set of meanings and the focus concentrates on functions like character analysis, plot description, and setting; aesthetic reading involves reading for the enjoyment of reading, reliving and sharing the reader’s experiences with the text.

These two notions of reading can be more explicitly seen if we consider novels as a tool at making a distinction between efferent and aesthetic reading. Novels are a genre of literature which introduces the learner to a number of different themes, motifs and symbols, and require the readers to be able to interact with them, analyse them, but most importantly, experience them. Experiencing a novel though, should not necessarily discourage the learner from reading efferently, focusing only on the plot, characters, setting and background.

On the contrary, most novels require the reader to get involved – to accept or refuse the ideas presented in it by contributing and being a part of its world. It is however important to stress that choosing between efferent and aesthetic reading depends on the discretion of the reader in deciding what they wish to do with the text. It is absolutely essential to be able to recognise the kind of reading that needs to be done to attain the effect for not just novels, but for literature in general.

I believe that in the process of language learning, the teacher cannot and should not exclude any of the two types of reading literature beforehand, since the main goal of the teacher in using literature in the language classroom will be to discover ways through which he or she will engage the students in the text without excluding the feeling of enjoyment of reading and relating what is read with their own lives.

Widdowson (1978) makes an analogous comment, claiming that “to present someone with a set of extracts and to require from him to read them not in order to learn something interesting and relevant about the world but in order to learn something about the language being used is to misrepresent language use to some degree” (Widdowson, 1978, p. 80). As he argues, we cannot extract passages from larger units and present them to the learners as authentic texts.



As soon as a passage is extracted and taught by itself in isolation, it loses its recognition, purpose and naturalness as discourse, and therefore that results in the discontinuation of the normal flow and sequence of events. Even though extracts are meant to be genuine illustrations of language, the learners cannot in all cases interact with them in a compatible way to meet their ordinary communicative acts and therefore they cannot be considered authentic examples of language use.

### 2.3.3 Literariness and creativity

It has been argued in this thesis that literary texts enable the learners to examine and discover the representational possibilities of language by considering the language used in them. It has also been noted that with literary texts, learners can interact with the more creative functions of language, which cannot always be found in the textbooks used in the language classroom. However, there are two issues that have to be discussed in relation to these claims.

First, we have to be cautious when referring to the language used in literature as literary language, as it is extremely difficult to isolate distinctive properties of language that are exclusive to literary texts (Brumfit & Carter, 1986). This is not to refute that language can be used in a way that is illustrious as literary, but it cannot be distinguished and isolated in the same way as other types of languages (e.g. the language for business, nursing, or football commentary). Brumfit and Carter concluded that literature 'is not a language variety', and that it would be more productive to talk about 'literariness' in language where 'some uses of language are more or less literary than others' (Brumfit & Carter, 1986, p. 8, 10). However, the variances in the way language is used in

literature as opposed to other non-literary texts are apparent, and it would be much better to view this in relation to a ‘cline of literariness’ (Carter, 2016).

Second, many scholars have been debating the concept of creativity, its pervasive character and its multiple uses, especially in relation to where to place the canon of creativity. Specifically, there seems to be a consensus that supports the view that creativity transcends its ‘traditional’ application only in specific contexts as has been conventionally acknowledged in the past<sup>2</sup> (Attridge, 2004; Carter, 2016; Pope, 2005). There is no doubt that the language used in literature is practically creative, and my aim is not to argue otherwise. In fact, I firmly believe that the creativity in literature should be exploited to the maximum for teaching certain language functions to the language learners. This ‘uniqueness’ of literary language, however, is not a notion that can only be found in absolute value in literary texts. That is, creativity does not only ‘collocate’ with ‘writing or literature or art or poetic’, but also collocates with a variety of concepts and words such as silence, business, classroom learning, humour, internet, play, and many more (Carter, 2016, pp. 18–19). Nowadays, we are faced with an expansion and coverage of the topic of creativity where creativity is ‘re-positioned’ within more ‘interdisciplinary frameworks and contexts across the humanities, social sciences and sciences’ (Carter, 2016, pp. 18–19). Carter (2016) examined the topic of creativity by placing particular emphasis on the role of spoken creativity, especially as opposed to the context of written creativity, which is immensely researched in the context of literary texts. In that, he discovered that numerous descriptive frameworks for creativity are modelled on the basis of written examples rather than spoken examples and everyday creativity, and the creative language use that can be found in these contexts.

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, creativity does not only exist in the humanities but also in the sciences; it does not only flourish in literature since it is also abundant in spoken language.

One of Carter's (2016, p. 54) main aims is to explain creativity 'by means of clines and with reference to social contexts', suggesting that it is preferable to talk about creativity in terms of 'creativities', since creative language use is ubiquitous and can be used in a range of contexts, particularly in many contexts of everyday language and common speech. Furthermore, he also notes on the tendency to value written language more than the spoken language, where creative uses in terms of written language are distinctly associated with literary texts. He recognizes that novels have been an 'important development in the cultural history of creativity' because of the 'complex relationship between creativity and the creation of alternative and fictionalized worlds' (Carter, 2016, p. 26). However, at the same time, he suggests that it would be more instructive to see the 'literary and creative uses of language as existing along a cline or continuum rather than discrete sets of features or as a language-intrinsic or unique poetical register' (Carter, 2016, p. 66).

#### 2.4 Literature and its contribution to education

In section 2.1, I have noted the current trend in the use of English literature in the English language learning classroom in an integrated way to best fit the needs of an L2 curriculum. I have also commented on Edmondson's "fallacies" relating literature to a misleading and unnecessary practice in language learning. However what has not been taken into account by Edmondson is literature's functions in the spectrum of learning and education, not only in the language classroom but also in education in general.

Bredella (2000, p. 380) suggests that "literary texts in the foreign language classroom are not only important for foreign language learning, but also provide it with significant educational goals". By doing so, a chance is given to the learners to steel themselves to

face the outside world, prepare them for their citizenship, as well as promote diversities and the idea of otherness.

Similar views are also expressed by Shanahan (1997), who argues that “our fundamental role as language professionals is to expand and enrich the lives of our students and the society in which they live” (Shanahan, 1997, p. 171). He also goes on to suggest that the role of the teacher has changed from a utilitarian following a utilitarian logic, into what Paran (2008) calls “holistic perspectives” of learning, where the role of the learners is not limited in a blind pursuit of the language learning methodology assigned to them by the language learning curriculum. Instead, different aspects of the learners are now to be taken into account, giving particular emphasis on the context of learning in which the learner should be regarded as a whole person, and where literature can provide insight to the development of that whole person.

Therefore, learning English as a second or foreign language does not have to do only with language, but also entails many aspects of learning – most importantly, education and culture.

## 2.5 Literature, Culture and ELT

Many are the authors who have provided some thoughtful appreciation on the relation between culture and language in the field of language teaching (Blum-Kulka et al., (1989); Byram, (1989); Duff and Maley, (2007); Ur (1996)). But really, how important is the inclusion and study of culture in language teaching? The answer lies on the language teaching handbooks and methodologies where a short description of language teaching entails teaching the four skills not in isolation, but in relation to culture instead.

As Kramersch (1993:8) suggests, language and culture are both indispensable parts of language teaching that belong in our linguistic heritage. She maintains that culture is often considered as information “conveyed by the language, not as a feature of language itself” where cultural awareness is treated as an educational aim which is distinct from language. However, if we consider that language learning can be seen as a social practice, then culture becomes “the very core of language teaching” and as a result, cultural awareness enhances language proficiency by being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency (ibid.). It becomes the ‘heart’ of language teaching because culture is a facet of language where learners are introduced to the social and cultural meanings of language. The learners become familiarized with the concept that considers language use as ‘indissociable from the creation and transmission of culture’ (Kramersch, 1993, p. 9) and where the teachers’ purport deliberates teaching language in its social context. Consequently, language teaching is seen as a social practice, in that what we say and the language we use is confined by the context in which we say it. This occurs, for example, by ‘contextualizing grammatical sentences and situating them in socially appropriate verbal exchanges’ (Kramersch, 1993, p. 34). In the present study, it is claimed that teaching culture is a part of teaching the language, but the question remains, how is this feasible? The answer lies in the way speakers and readers give meaning to utterances produced and received (Kramersch, 1993, p. 177). Therefore, both ‘social and personal voices’ interconnect to initiate the central code of a culture that consists not only customs and proprieties, but most importantly ‘all the culture’s ground of meaning, its system of major values, habitual patterns of thought, and certain prevalent assumptions about human nature and society’ that the learner of a foreign language should be prepared to encounter (Nostrand, 1989, p. 51). Teaching the culture of the target language has traditionally been associated with the provision of

information about the people of the target country, their attitudes, beliefs and customs. This perspective has been largely adopted by a great number of teachers and by extension has been transmitted to an equally large number of students. However, Kramersch (1993) observes that what has been essentially ignored is that culture is a social construct and the role of language as a social practice should be re-examined in order to redefine the relationship between language teaching and culture. Within these lines, we should consider (Kramersch, 1993, pp. 205–206):

a) Establishing a ‘sphere of interculturality’, where the association between the linguistic forms and social structure should be established. An understanding of a foreign culture should be examined in relation to each person’s culture.

b) Teaching culture as an interpersonal process, where meaning arises through social interaction, and it is therefore needless to teach ‘fixed normative phenomena of language use’. Rather, the presentation of cultural behaviours should be replaced by a process that enables us (the teachers) and the students to understand ‘otherness’.

c) Teaching culture as difference. Culture should not be viewed merely in relation to the national traits, but should be introduced by taking other cultural factors into account (i.e. age, gender, regional origin, ethnic background and social class). As Kramersch reports, national traits are ‘but one of the many aspects of a person’s culture’.

d) Crossing disciplinary boundaries. Language teachers are encouraged to make a multidisciplinary association between language teaching and ethnography, sociolinguistics and literature (among others).

Cook and Bassetti (2011) propose that language teaching theorists have documented that learning a language means not just learning the language but also “the way of life

that goes with it” where language teaching is the creation of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997). For many language learners, the ideal way to ‘live’ the lives of the people in the country where the language is spoken is by visiting the country. Since this is practically impossible for most of the learners (or at least some of them), some indirect routes must be adopted so that they gain an understanding of the way of life of the country, and this can be achieved through literary works (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 4). Thus, culture augments language learning and proficiency, receiving appreciation both in terms of commonality as well as education.

Consequently, the aim of cultural learning focuses on the endorsement of cultural understanding on a cross-cultural level. The link between literature and cultural awareness and language teaching is elaborated on by McKay (2001). McKay proposes that using literary texts in the language classroom increases the student’s potential development of cross-cultural awareness. This becomes particularly essential if we take into account the rapid technological developments in our era, with the development and introduction of the social networking systems, which have as a main language of instruction and communication the English language. The English language thus uses both native and non-native speakers of English, and the language itself quickly transforms itself to be the means of exploration of cultural diversity and cultural awareness. In other words, the English language becomes a tool to explore and differentiate an assortment of cultural dimensions.

Literature often epitomises the multi-dimensional character of culture. Adaskou et al. (1990) present the different meanings of culture in the area of foreign language teaching, typifying the four dimensions of culture, naming them: 1) the aesthetic sense: where the use of language is linked to music, literature or film of a country, 2) the

sociological sense: where language is mostly associated with the customs of a country, 3) the semantic sense: in which the whole cultural and educational system of a country is represented by the language, and finally, 4) the pragmatic sense: where unwritten cultural norms seem to distinguish what kind of language is suitable for use by defining the right context.

Similar views are expressed by Duff and Maley (2007), who believe that literary texts have become a representational vehicle of culture for the target language teaching and for the target culture itself, promoting the awareness of “difference” and “developing tolerance and understanding” (Duff and Maley, 2007, pp. 5-6). As Vygotsky says, “a word is a microcosm of human consciousness” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 256) and therefore the diversity of meanings found in literature lead to a manifestation of differences between the students’ culture and the culture of the language in which the literary text is written. Allen (1975, p. 11) makes a similar point, arguing that literature is one of the “facets” of a culture and its importance can be appreciated in relation to its culture.

Therefore, teaching literature in the language classroom allows students to “work” in an ideological and cultural environment different from their own, thus understanding the cultural differences between their own traditions and the culture of their target language.

Consequently, it is very important to help students make realisations regarding the necessity of practicing skills to develop their cultural awareness and knowledge through literature and be able to engage it in everyday conversations. Hence, with the introduction of the proper methodologies and practices on the teachers’ part, the learners will acquire an understanding on how to shape and respond to various forms of meaning found in any given text or real-life situations.



## 2.6 Why use literature in the classroom

I have been talking about the significance of using literature in the English language classroom for reasons which include an increased awareness about the language and a gradual development of competence, as well as the introduction of culture and cultural elements associated with language teaching. However, the induction of literature in language curriculums should certainly presuppose some prerequisites.

Perhaps one the most important presuppositions is that the learner needs to have reached an adequate level of proficiency where reading competence has become an extended practice (Brumfit and Carter, 1986). In addition, Trengove (1986) argues that an increased awareness of language variety is an imperative requirement in order for a learner to be able to respond to literary language perceptively. He also suggests that increasing awareness of different varieties of English is vital for sufficient introduction of literature in the language classroom, and more specifically, in a foreign language classroom where a necessary prerequisite for language should be a developed awareness of language functions.

I would definitely propose that the English language has numerous literary uses found in novels which can be explored and developed through language-based activities, resulting in an intensified understanding and escalation of reader appreciation of the literary techniques of language. Nash (1986) supports this view by focusing on the technique of paraphrase and summary which he distinguishes as extensively adopted language teaching methods – a practice which can be particularly beneficial if we are making an exploration of literature in language by introducing language features like summaries, paraphrases, proverbs, sayings and idioms.

In fact, the significance in paraphrasing is seen through our everyday conversations and “ordinary language”, where we constantly make reference to things said by other people and what we actually perceive from the real world comes as a reference to a paraphrasing. This is why novels can be considered as the perfect tool for paraphrasing purposes since their representations in everyday situations as well as their contribution to social “voices” and cultural aspects of the language challenge the students to acquire the ‘hidden’ meaning by paraphrasing either a sentence or a larger piece of writing.

Nash (1986) also stresses the importance of paraphrase in the representation of a student’s effort to engage with the text, explaining and relating to it as part of his competence in language. This kind of paraphrase is the foundation for an understanding and involvement of literary language in language teaching, and in that sense, paraphrases are “at least a useful language drill [which] at their best they are a step towards the comprehension of literary values” (Nash, 1986, p. 83).

Short and Candlin (1986) are also in favour of using literary texts in the language classroom. They support the view that literary language is not ciphered and differentiated from a common language use, but instead, it shares the same features with it. In that sense, if learners of the English language are given the possibility to investigate textual analysis and literariness in language, they can ultimately increase their understanding and awareness towards literary texts and they will be able to develop language skills which are central to their overall sensitivity towards all kinds of texts.

Povey (1972) believes that by using literature in the language classroom, students will enhance all of their language skills because “literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact

syntax” (Povey, 1972, p. 187). If we consider that it is complicated to make a distinction between literature and other types of language linguistically, then there is no reason for not assuming that language is principal to literature, even though literature – on some occasions – can be more than language (e.g., about education, historical, social and cultural implications, reader response, etc.).

Furthermore, Short and Candlin (1986) explain that even though a teacher may acknowledge and set a division between language and literature, a learner’s understanding feels literature to be language, and we have to utilise the learners’ enjoyment in reading literature to motivate them and use literature as a component in language learning.

As I will demonstrate further on in my research, when discussing the discourse found in novels, we need to remember that a novel is constituted by diverse varieties of English and different forms of stylisations and examples of language. Therefore, this fact can be tremendously valuable in introducing the language learners to the different linguistic functions and varieties of the English language, even though this introduction is presumably more frequent in advanced learners (Widdowson, 1975).

Since my purpose in writing this chapter is to emphasise the reasons for using literature in the language classroom, I would like to end it by summarising Littlewood’s (1986) five perspectives on language teaching. Firstly, literature is a great example of language structures in use and it is these structures that learners should focus on in order to improve their language skills in reading comprehension, grammatical analysis and explanation.

Secondly, when the students are more competent in having an understanding towards stylistic variation, that means that literature can be used as a vehicle for discovering the

variation among language varieties. Therefore, this process is considered as an initiation into formal written register.

Thirdly, one of the biggest problems of language teaching in the classroom is the difficulty in creating authentic circumstances for language learning to take place. Mainly, this is an occurrence which comes as a result of the isolation of the learners from a natural environment of language use, and from the situations and contexts that initiate learning. However, in the instance of literature, language is self-sufficient since it creates its own situations and contexts and the language used in literature goes beyond the “unnatural” environment of the classroom. To support this view, Littlewood (*ibid.*) stresses the involvement of natural language when reading literature, in which the reader acquires the role of the ‘onlooker’ examining the events shaped by language. Consequently, these events construct a whole new context of the status of the language in the book which surpasses the unnatural and simulated classroom state and forms the basis for an authentic situation for language.

A fourth point is that after acquiring some competence in the language, learners begin to have access to the themes that lie beneath the language used in literature and respond to the text by making assumptions, parallelisms and broadening their mindset. According to Littlewood (1986, p. 180), this can be named the level of transition from “receptive to productive skills, and from the recording or responding of students we move on to the generalizing or theorizing”. It is at this level where the students will have to respond to activities based on the literary text, and it is certainly the stage during which they enhance their linguistic knowledge, since they will be producing written work in which they will elaborate on their thoughts and responses by theorising their understanding of a text. Thus, students will be working on their productive skills,

responding to ideas which will eventually stretch their competence in the target language.

The final stage is where we deal with the literary context as a fragment of literary history, and therefore associate it with social and linguistic aspects of the target language and its culture. In this, final stage, literary texts stretch the constraints of language into another level which goes beyond the linguistic aspects of literature.

## 2.7 Discourse in Literature

In this part of my study, I would like to deal with the relationship between the discourse used for both literature and language learning purposes. We can safely suggest that different types of discourse can contribute to the students' re-evaluation of their language learning aims and abilities. I will begin by providing a simple and brief definition of discourse.

By definition, discourse signifies the communicative objectives of an element, focusing on the expression of thought and meaning. If a simpler description is to be given, I would define discourse as the language used for communication purposes. This can be done through various techniques both written as well as spoken. Cook (1989) noted that discourse can be anything from swearing at someone, to reading a novel provided that is meaningful and coherent. Having said that, literature also entails a type of discourse through which students can employ interpretive processes in order to interact with the text and deduce meanings.

As I aforementioned, a very important feature of a language learner would be to have the ability to interact with literature and infer meanings found in literary texts. This can be achieved by reading or studying literature in juxtaposition with different types of discourse, thus providing the opportunity to the students to be exposed to what Widdowson calls “the conventional schemata” of ordinary discourse (Widdowson, 1983, p. 30). In this way, students will be more likely to respond to certain stimuli about the function of language, thus understanding its communicative purposes.

According to Widdowson (1983, p. 31), one of the benefits of using conventional discourses is that you can “anticipate” and “take short cuts” when reading a passage. That means that you can use your knowledge on the topic that the reading passage deals with in order to determine what is happening in the rest of the text. However, this cannot happen in literature, especially when and if we are exploring the language functions in a literary text aiming to the advanced language competence. When we “employ” literary discourse, the “actual procedures for making sense are much more in evidence” (Widdowson, 1983, pp. 53-57), and it is required that we utilise some interpretative procedures in order to comprehend discourse. In addition to this, Widdowson (1978) highlights the importance in distinguishing between two levels of linguistic competence – usage and use. As he claims, *usage* is the knowledge of the linguistic rules, and *use* is the knowledge of how the rules can be used in order to achieve effective communication. Even though the traditional role of literature in the language classroom was to teach language usage, learners can greatly benefit by redefining the function of literature and use it to develop language use.

Consider novels, for example. They might be a potentially helpful tool towards reassigning and allocating the role of literature in the language classroom. The reason behind this lies in the fact that the strictures of the background of a novel and the

relationships between the characters, setting and scenery are already delineated. Once the readers become engaged with the interrelationship of the events in the novel, they will become more aware of the ideas and motifs behind it. They will acquire an attitude towards the 'world' of the novel and they will respond to the characters and situations with sympathy, fondness, hatred, envy and frustration.

As soon as this is achieved, the readers will begin to understand the effect of using particular styles or registers to describe the scenery, a place, or the countryside, and most importantly, they will be in position to describe a person, forming an opinion about them based on the character's personality and attitude in the novel. Soon enough, the readers will understand the narrative viewpoint and they will be making questions about the relationships in the novel and how their behaviours come up as a result of the society and the setting of the world in which the novel takes place. Therefore, all of these functions of literature may help students to learn how to respond and what to expect in similar situations. It tells them a lot about how to develop language use in a way that they will increase their language skills and extend their linguistic knowledge. McKay (1986) strongly argues in favour of using literature to develop language use, since literature "presents language in discourse in which the parameters of the setting and role relationship are defined" (McKay, 1986, p. 192). She goes on to suggest that language, which exemplifies a particular register or dialect, is embedded within a social context, and therefore it is easier to decide why a specific form is used in literary texts. Consequently, literature is a very helpful tool in building up an understanding of the *use* of language. However, even though I have previously demonstrated how literature can be beneficial in terms of language use, not all literature uses the register and style in that way. For example, novels are more in a position to manipulate the actual use of language than poems because of the 'communicative' nature of its characters and

because of its universal themes and motifs which progressively unfold through the plot of the novel.

Similar views are expressed by Littlewood (1976), who believes that literary texts have a diverse association to the peripheral reality because they rely on it to form a new reality which exists inside a literary text and can only be recognised and analysed by using various interpretive skills. That is why we cannot make exclusive use of the conventional discourse when we are dealing with literature, since what is taken out of a passage, which is not characterised as literature, “fits the frame of reference we have already established before reading” (Widdowson, 1983, p. 13).

In literature, we seek proof which epitomises the presence of a new reality, distinguished only by the application of some language skills. Moreover, communication in a literary text can be intricate, since learners need to formulate reading techniques which will allow them to explore the text in a non-linear order in order to make sense of what goes on in it. It can be argued, then, that decoding and interpreting language in the form of communication in a literary text can only suggest the importance and the involvement of literature in the development and enhancement of English language learning skills, thus moving towards language competence.

Since my personal interest focuses on an investigation of how and why – if at all – novels are considered by students and teachers to be a form of literature that can be used to teach language, I would like to try and associate novels favourable to the argument, developing the abilities to understand how literary discourse functions, and therefore, explain why this process is vital to the development of language learning techniques.



### 2.7.1 Discourse in the Novel

To begin with, novels are authentic texts with genuine language in context and therefore we can exploit them in the language classroom for examining and responding to the language used. As previously stated, communication is vital in developing language learning skills, and therefore being exposed to novels signifies an examination of content, which in its turn directs the learners to a natural investigation of language found in them. It is, perhaps, one of the best examples of accessible language resources based on which learners acquire an interactive role in interpreting the language used in them. And since I have already commented on discourse, and more specifically literary discourse, I would now like to make reference to the discourse found in novels. In brief, the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* provides the following definition:

“discourse is a learned discussion, spoken or written, on a philosophical, political, literary or religious topic... [which has] latterly acquired much wider meanings and much wider implications. It is a language which is understood as utterance and thus involves subjects who speak and write- which presupposes listeners and readers who, in a sense, are objects. Discourse has an object and is directed to or at an object. Thus, in theory at any rate, discourse might include any modes of utterance as part of social practice. They are differentiated by their intention”

(Cuddon, 1998, p. 228)

Even though this definition defines discourse well, I would like to modify the way discourse is to be connoted in relation to literature. I couldn't agree more that discourse ultimately refers to effective communication, where a language used is understood. However, my opposition singles out the fact that literary discourse follows a diverse route, and it may be rather limited to regard it as a “learned

discussion”. Discourse in literature is not a given practice; instead, we need to find the indications and signs, as we read, that mark the existence of a new realism, a new truth, which is found in literature.

Interpretation does not come in the form of natural reading processes by skimming and scanning for information, but it is achieved based on interpretive processes which would not be requested from the reader otherwise. This can be demonstrated by considering novels, for example, where inference of meaning does not come as a result of conventional language formulations and easy-to-spot communication as it happens in normal reading procedures. In reading a novel, the reader must decode communication by viewing the novel as a whole, searching throughout the whole book and not necessarily concentrating on the order in which things appear.

The reader needs to search back and forth, and in some instances read ‘between the lines’, to infer meanings. Consequently, attaining communication in reading a novel, for example, or inferring meaning by interacting with it helps the readers to employ and develop their language learning skills, and it expands their language learning capacity. In this respect, if we were to assume that literary discourse is merely a learned discussion, then we would devalue its role as literature and we would not recognise it as a dynamic feature necessary for language learning development. Based on this view on discourse, I would go one step forward, suggesting that the novel carries its own discourse which is vital in our understanding of literature as a key component in language teaching, as demonstrated above, and as will be further discussed in this chapter.

### 2.7.2 Heteroglossia and focalisation: distinctive types of discourse

Mikhail Bakhtin defines novel as a diversity of “social speech types, sometimes even a diversity of language and a diversity of individual voices” which are skillfully put together to signal the “internal stratification” of any language (Bakhtin, 2004, p. 674). In its turn, this internal stratification is omnipresent in every language, and it is what defines novels as genres. It is therefore, in my opinion, what differentiates novels from any other genre of literature. Novels have the ability to weave together different discourses and organise the entirety of ideas communicated in them in terms of social diversity. As such, they achieve an exposure of the social voices coming out from an interrelationship between the author and the whole setting of the novel.

Similarly, Bakhtin goes on to suggest that the novels achieve heteroglossia because they are comprised by different voices, that is, the voice of the narrator, of the author, of the characters and perhaps the voice of the reader himself. However, each of these voices allows an array of voices to be shared by the societal community linked together to create a connection between utterances and languages. Consequently, the interrelationships found when reading a novel in combination with the social voices they represent, the various speech types used in them, and its “dispersion into the rivulets and droplets of social heteroglossia” is the fundamental and unique characteristic which comprises the stylistics of the novel (Bakhtin, 2004, p. 674).

A very characteristic example of the diverse voices that exist in the novel and how the focus on them changes interchangeably can be demonstrated by considering the possibility of ‘focalization’. In Mieke Bal’s (1997) book *Narratology*, focalisation refers to the relationship between the vision, the image that is, and what is perceived. Based on Bal’s argument, the primary purpose of focalisation is to present things from

a different viewpoint, concentrating on both the “vision through which things are presented [and] the identity of the voice that is verbalizing that vision” (Bal, 1997, p. 143). In other words, Bal wanted to set a distinction between the people who see and the people who speak in an attempt to redefine the relationship between vision, the agent who sees that vision and what is seen during the vision.

For that reason we also have the *focalizer* that represents the point of view from which the elements in a story or fabula can be seen. An example of this would be to take the book *Jane Eyre*. In the novel, the focalizer corresponds with the character of Jane and as a result of that the reader reads the story in regard to Jane’s perspective and he or she reads the story with Jane’s eyes (although there may be multiple focalizers in one literary work, not just one). This means that we, as readers, are disposed to accept the vision presented by her and empathise with her tragic and distressed upbringing in the novel. This is what Bal calls “character-bound focalization” and it can vary from time to time and from one character to another. This difference in perception among different characters in a story aims in demonstrating the various angles in which different characters can see the same events in the story.

However, as Bal (1997) argues, we do not only have character-bound focalization but we also need to account for “external focalization” which focuses, as the name proposes, on an external focalizer who is usually the author or narrator(s) of the story. By assigning this role, the author achieves the presentation of the facts in his or her own view, not hiding their own bias. In this way, the prejudice of the author is transplanted in the mind of the readers throughout the whole story, and the reader is inclined to follow the bias of the author.

Apart from the focalizer, we also have the “focalized object” which refers to the object on which we, as readers, should be focusing on. The importance of the focalised object should be stressed since the image which is projected to the readers is already regulated by the focalizer and therefore it is to assume that the object itself tells us a lot about the focalizer. Thus, by presenting the technique of focalisation, Bal has attempted to found the idea of the diversity of voices in a literary text – especially in a novel where there usually is more than one character. This device reveals the diversity of voices portrayed in the novel and how the voices may be altered based on focalisation.

Having mentioned the diversity of voices present in the novel, I consider it necessary to provide some exemplifications as to how this can be demonstrated. What is the relationship, then, between novels and language teaching? The answer to that question relies on the view that language cannot be seen and interpreted as just an abstract system of normative forms, but rather as a “concrete heteroglot conception” of the whole world (Bakhtin, 2004).

This world can be discovered in respect to novels since the language used in them is, in my view, heteroglot from the beginning to the end and it represents different kinds of propensities and socio-cultural differences which all link together, shaping a new socially exemplified language. This “new” language epitomises the primary stipulation that makes the novel the best component of language teaching. It is through this nature of the novel that the world is formed in words where interpretations and meanings can be inferred by what Widdowson (1983, p. 31) calls “procedural abilities”.

Even though arguably it is not only the novel that does this, the novel is probably the best point of reference based on its heteroglotal aptitude. Therefore, novels can encourage the students to interact with the text in order to infer meanings which need

to be deciphered, since the language used is not at all formulaic in nature. Similarly, Long (1986, p. 43) comments on language teaching, arguing that teaching the language should not be limited and reduced into formulas and disregard its intention as message. On the contrary, literature should be examined in order to consider its origin as language.

Another point worth mentioning when reading Bakhtin is that he rejects the view of language as unitary, since he believes that language can only be unitary as an “abstract grammatical system of normative forms” (Bakhtin, 2004, p. 674). However, even if we accept this view, we cannot ignore the “unitary plane” of the novel which unites stylisations and illustrations of language presented in different forms and through different types of sociocultural language from the discourse of the speaker to the discourse of a whole nation.

Accordingly, we can assume that novels are not only central to the teaching of a language, but are also significant in formatting a language, acquiring in that way procedural techniques in order to explore and discuss the character of a literary text. By doing that, students can interpret what they read and infer meanings by broadening their language skills in more conceptualised and nonfigurative areas related to developed language competence and proficiency.

## 2.8 Selection of texts

One of the aims of this research is to examine students and teachers' attitudes in relation to using literary texts for ELT purposes, and investigate whether they consider the integration of literature in language learning courses a breakthrough which can result in a more systematic and effective process towards linguistic competence and language mastery.

There is a significance to using literary texts in the language classroom, mainly because they provide the learners with authentic material which “construct experiences or content in a non-trivial way which gives voice to complexities and subtleties not always present in other types of texts” (Carter and McRae, 1996, p. xxiv). Similar views are expressed by Picken (2007), who characterises authenticity to be a “virtue” for communicative language teaching, and hence, literary texts are considered one of the best materials for language learning since they have not been designed specifically to complement the process of language teaching. Therefore, since literature is not “fashioned for the specific purposes of teaching a language...[it necessitates students to] cope with the language intended for native speakers” (Collie and Slater, 1987, pp. 3-4).

The significance of the creative functions of the English language used in literary materials and literary competence link up to the capability of the learner to understand and analyse how patterns of language are used accordingly to reinforce and shape the message. However, the selection of the text(s) to be used is one of the most difficult tasks that a teacher has to face. The selection of the literary text to be used in the language classroom requires careful analysis and preparation. What should be definitely avoided is that the selection of texts should exclusively depend on the

teacher's personal interests, preferences and traditions (Brumfit and Carter, 1986). Instead, the selection of literature depends on the students' needs, level, language capacity, interests and even cultural background. For Collie and Slater (1987), the primary factor that should be taken into consideration is the ability of the text to stimulate the personal involvement of the students resulting in a positive disposition towards it.

A literary work that stimulates the interest of the language learner can also generate a more positive inclination towards its use, and therefore, promotes the necessary conditions in the classroom that will make the use of literature a "memorable, individual and collective experience" (Carter and Long, 1991, p. 3). It would be very inappropriate to assume that the selection of literary materials to be used is not followed by some criteria of appropriateness (Brumfit and Carter, 1986; Carter and Long, 1991; Collie and Slater, 1987). For example, it is important to note that the book(s) to be used should match the language capacity and awareness of the learners and that their level of understanding is not lower than the level of the literary texts. Therefore language difficulty should be considered as well since the learners will have both a linguistic and a cultural gap to bridge when reading a text, and students may not be able to "identify with or enjoy the text which they perceive as fraught with difficulty every step of the way" (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 6).

Another important element that should be taken into consideration is the learners' ability to identify with the text in terms of feelings, expectations, emotions and responses. Introducing literary materials in the language classroom should be an enjoyable experience since the language used is – in most instances – more complex than what the learners are used to, and we do not want the learners to become uninterested by choosing a text which is not relevant to their life experiences and



interests and does not provoke positive reactions from them. As Brumfit puts it, “the fundamental ability of a good reader of literature is the ability to generalise from the given text to either other aspects of the literary tradition or personal or social significances outside literature (1985, p. 108). Novels also need to be of an appropriate length (always depending on the level and the needs of the learners) not only for the teacher to cope with, but also for the learner to be an active participant throughout the whole learning process.

When learners read literature, we expect them to acquire competencies and skills in recognising the various differences in the language use (such as the ability to note the distinction between expressive language use and informative language use), distinguish between literal and metaphorical meanings, as well as deal with cultural differences and assumptions (Showalter, 2003). Even though these elements seem to be present in non-literary texts, yet the difference in which “hidden” functions of language are depicted in literary texts make them a very powerful and leading tool for language teaching. As Showalter suggests, great attention is given to the detailed use of diction, syntax, metaphor and style not only for the interpretation of literary texts, but most importantly for decoding the stream of language in modern societies (ibid.). Thus, I am mostly interested in examining whether teachers consider novels as a source of authentic material in the language classroom which can be used to achieve competency in language learning. Additionally, my interest extends in probing students’ beliefs regarding the way they identify with the text and examine whether they consider literary texts a tool which they can use to ‘draw on their own personal experiences, feelings and emotions’ (Lazar, 1993:24).

### 2.8.1 Novels: a key component for English language learning

Using a novel as a tool in language learning enables the learners to be introduced into a complete book pattern, a fact that unquestionably occurs in the learners' native language and can also happen in the second language. Additionally, novels have the ability to expose all the literary features associated with language teaching more than any other genre, since the way the plot progresses and how characters are juxtaposed may alter page by page, thus enabling the students to be exposed to different language functions that serve the same purpose.

### 2.8.2 What is a novel?

Before moving on to make a further and deeper reference to the usefulness of novels in the language classroom, I would like to attempt to provide a definition of what a novel is. I have consciously used the word 'attempt', since providing an absolute definition for a novel is, at the very least, precarious because the novel as a genre resists exact definition. Eagleton (2005, p. 1) claims that the point about the novel is that not only it eludes definition but it also undermines it.

As a word, the novel has derived from the Italian word 'novella', which means a 'tale or piece of news'. Usually, a novel can be characterised as a piece or pieces of prose fiction of an extended length. However, this definition is also a bit restricted since not all novels have been written in prose form and the length of novels varies vastly; there have been debates on how long a novel should be to differentiate it from a different genre (i.e. a short story). Other proposed definitions see the novel as an "anarchic

genre”, because its rule is not to have any rules; ‘anarchic’ because, by definition, an anarchist breaks rules as a standard, and this is what novels do (Eagleton, 2005, p. 2). It is even characterised as the “most hybrid of literary forms, a space in which different voices, idioms and belief-systems continually collide” (Eagleton, 2005, p. 6). McKay acknowledges in a very similar way the risk of defining the novel, and she argues that novels are like horses, in the sense that you generally know one when you see one (2011, p. 2). She talks about novels by referring to the characteristics and qualities they share, with the most prominent features that distinguish them from other genres being narration, character, plot, setting, time and finitude (ibid.).

Despite the universal consensus on the difficulty in providing a fixed definition for novels, yet a narrower, more comprehensive definition is still required. The term novel refers to a genre of written prose fictional narrative which is generally extensive, “a fiction in prose of a certain extent” (Forster, 2005:25). Forster suggests that any fictitious prose work which exceeds 50,000 words is considered to be a novel. As an extended narrative, the novel can therefore be differentiated from other written narratives, such as the short story and the novelette<sup>3</sup>. Abrams (1999:190) asserts that the novel’s magnitude “permits a greater variety of characters, greater complication of plot (or plots), ampler development of milieu, and more sustained exploration of character and motives than do the shorter, more concentrated modes”. The novel’s plot may include various forms such as tragic, romantic, comic, satiric and it is also characterized by the presence of elements of ‘moral, political or social comment’ amongst others (Roberts:1 in Bloomsbury the novel from its origins to the present day).

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<sup>3</sup> Works of middle length which are typically longer than short stories but shorter than a novel.

Another matter that requires discussion refers to the actual birth era of the novel, with scholars and writers arguing about the approximate date of origin. For example, Bakhtin (found in Eagleton) argues that the novel may go as far back as the Imperial Rome and even ancient Greece, where Williams (1970) traces it in the background of the ancient Mediterranean. The truth is that the novel has been neglected for many decades until about the 18<sup>th</sup> century, since other literary forms (like poetry and plays) would capture the attention and consideration of both their writers as well as their audience. The novel had to wait until the 18<sup>th</sup> century to meet its literary *arriviste*. With great writers like Daniel Defoe, Voltaire, Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson, novels began a literary revolution that meant their profound growth and emergence. One of the basic reasons why people had made this huge change in their attitude towards novels was the view of the novel as the most vivid book related to life and existence. In his essay “Why the Novel Matters”, D. H. Lawrence expresses his thoughts on the vitality of the novel:

“The novel is the one bright book of life. Books are not life. They are only tremulations on the ether. But the novel as a tremulation, can make the whole man alive tremble... To be alive, to be man alive, to be whole man alive: that is the point. And at is best, the novel, and the novel supremely can help you. It can help you not to be dead man in life”

(D. H. Lawrence, 1936<sup>4</sup>)

Based on this view, the novel acquires its purpose as a literary form which addresses people unswervingly and truthfully about life.

Eagleton attempts to explain how his definition of the novel differs from Hegel’s, who distinguishes novels as the ‘epic of prosaic modern world’ (Eagleton, 2005:6-8). Even

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<sup>4</sup> D. H. Lawrence, “Why the Novel Matters”, in *Phoenix, the Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence*.

though Eagleton accepts that they both share a “consuming interest in narrative, dramatic action and the material world”, yet the novel is more of a contemporary art and a discourse of the present rather of the past. The novel is a characteristically “modern” form which refuses to be “bound by the past” and deals with the common life, as opposed to the epic<sup>5</sup> which is centred on a heroic figure. As Eagleton says, the novel is “one mainstream literary mode which speaks the language of the people...[and] the great vernacular literary art, which draws upon the resources of ordinary speech rather than some specialized literary language”; a literary form (even though not the first one) in which the ‘common’ people ‘stage an appearance’ (Eagleton, 2005, p. 8). It must, nevertheless, be noted that there are novels which are an exception, and do not draw on the vernacular common language.

Unsurprisingly, then, the novel is not just another piece of literature. Instead, it has become an art which, at its core, deals with life, society and individuals and insinuatingly maintains the equilibrium between what defines it as art, and life.

The novel skilfully managed to gain its augmentation for two more reasons which are related to my study: the use of its language and the emphasis on ‘the parallels between the trajectories of fiction and the trajectories of an individual life’ (Showalter, 2003:89). Firstly, a huge part of the novel’s magnetism is due to its common language use and jargon, and this can be exemplified by the discourse found in novels that requires no language experts to be read. This fact is also what makes the novel a genuine piece of literature, an authentic material which was designed to accommodate the everyday language and the language of the people, yet having a language of its own. It is,

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<sup>5</sup> The epic or heroic poem is a long verse narrative on a ‘serious subject’, narrated in a formal and elevated style, centred on a heroic ‘quasi-divine’ figure and whose actions define the fate of a nation or group of people (e.g., Milton’s *Paradise Lost*) (Abrams, 1999:76).

therefore, essential to stress the importance of the novel in achieving to be recognised, as I will further explain, as a valuable tool towards language teaching and a source of immense language enrichment and learning. Secondly, the novel can be seen as a “mirror of the life cycle” and through it students can “see their lives take narrative shape and meaning” (Showalter, 2003:89). In that sense, the students’ lives resemble the stories they read in the novels and they share the same elements of “complication, peripeteia, resolution, etc.” (ibid.). These elements make the novel a more accessible genre than drama or poetry because students may find the narrative more familiar with their own expectations and experiences.

### 2.8.3 Using novels as a resource for language learning

Lazar (1990) is one of the first scholars who argued that there are particular features of the novels that provide the learners with opportunities to increase their “language capacity”, to use Widdowson’s (1984) term. Therefore, I will exclusively examine and deal with the features through which a novel engages the learners in the process of language learning, studying and presenting the methods that can be used to teach language to the learners. Using novels as resource of language learning materials is a method to integrate all four skills since novels and their context can offer an excellent example of how an integration of reading, listening, speaking and writing can be achieved through their use.

Additionally, I will try to examine whether the novel can be used as a tool to increase language awareness and language enrichment although the initial perception of literature was associated with the imaginary and creative (i.e. fiction). In this attempt I will make extensive reference to practices and activities that can be employed in order

to achieve efficient teaching of the English language when using a novel. Finally, I will also try to associate any potential problems and difficulties that the students face when dealing with the literary (in this case the novel) with the problems they have when learning a language.

Novels are a medium that can form the basis for vocabulary expansion and representation of different styles of writing, which include diverse and numerous language functions from grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and word selection to differences in the point of view, narrative and use of symbolism.

As Ur (1996) suggests, one of the advantages of literature teaching is that students are exposed in “representations of various authentic uses of the language” (Ur, 1996, p. 201). Such variations are more than evident in novels, where language alteration and change in style and form can create the perfect components for language competence. This occurs mainly because of the genuine use of unmonitored language found in novels that enables the learners to be exposed to “real” discourse, where everyday conversations and non-directed jargon makes them a legitimate language learning tool. While there is very little doubt that learners can enrich their language and increase their language capacity by reading a novel, it is often claimed that this type of reading may also hinder learning by presenting a language that is by no means representative of the language that is used nowadays. Even though it is authentic, it occasionally deviates from the everyday uses of the language, and it is neither typical of the language used for our daily life nor the language used in language learning textbooks. This is especially true for literature that includes archaism, where the language used in it deviates from its contemporary uses and the ‘taught’ language norms (e.g. in texts by Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and the Bronte sisters). Lazar (1993, p. 53) raises the danger of not being able to cope with the language of the text despite the learners’

competence and proficiency level, as it often ‘departs strikingly from the usual norms of language use’. That is, we would not want our learners to believe that Shakespeare’s ‘shall I compare thee to a summer’s day’ is something that they would normally say to someone as an expression of love. In deciding whether or not a novel is suitable to be used with the learners, Lazar has proposed asking a number of critical questions in order to evaluate its appropriateness: ‘Are students sufficiently familiar with the usual norms of language use to recognise when they are subverted?, Will students find it useful and enjoyable to study the text, or will they feel demotivated by the difficulties of the language?, How much of the language in the text will students be able to infer?’ (Lazar, 1993, p. 53). This set of questions is a necessary guide to assess how relevant a novel or a literary text is and whether it functions in alignment to the language needs of the students and, by extension, of the language course. If the language used in literary texts is far too specialised, it will fail to match with the students’ language requirements. At the same time, it runs the danger of demotivating them for reading the text in the first place. However, even though the objection to using literature on the grounds of lexical appropriacy and language difficulty has, up to a certain degree, some validity, it should not be a superseding one if we as teachers make ‘a judicious choice’ of the texts to be used in the language classroom considering it as ‘counterpoise and supplement to other material’ (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 5).

Evidently, novels, as I have already stated and as I will further explain, when selected carefully and appropriately, consist a manifestation of authentic performance which fuels the effectiveness of the language learning process.



It seems natural that language teachers may feel a bit uncomfortable when introducing novels in the language classroom based on the problems and difficulties that may arise from the language complexity, length and classification of novels. Often, feelings of uncertainty and confusion are developed on the part of the teachers about the role that a novel should have in the language classroom, yet teachers can easily exploit the multifaceted nature of novels in order to achieve communication and raise the students' awareness of language.

This distinction can be easily explained by using a simple example of both contemporary and classical novels. First, however, a distinction in their difference needs to be set. We can most effectively depict the difference between classic and contemporary novels simply by examining their age – that is, the time period during which they were written, even though it is generally difficult to provide an exact definition of contemporary fiction since it is a very flexible term which does not easily set any chronological boundaries.. Contemporary novels, are usually the novels written at an estimated date around our time, and we systematically accept this kind of literature to be associated and allied with our lives. Eaglestone (2013, p. 1) suggests that ‘the way literature thinks is bound up with what it is like to be us, to be human... literature is how we make ourselves intelligible to ourselves’. It is based on this view that contemporary literature matters since it reflects on the realisation of who we are now, today, and where we stand. Eaglestone believes that the best way to do this is by reading contemporary novels, and this can be attributed to the novel's classification as the most ‘thoughtful, the closest, the more personal’ of all arts (2013, p. 1). Similar views are expressed by Gupta (2012, p. 2), who claims that we read contemporary literature because we expect it to be ‘directly relevant to our lives and our world. We hope to find in it expressions and issues with which we are familiar. We anticipate resonances with

our experiences, attitudes and concerns, as these have developed with our lifetimes and surface in our everyday lives’.

The freedom of the contemporary novel lays in the fact that it can ‘go absolutely anywhere or do anything’; we can read it by paying attention to the novel itself and not by looking at the author’s life and making meaning only by relating it to the author. Rather, we can make meaning by realising who we are as readers and how we ‘see’ ourselves in the community, aspects that are central to the understanding of the contemporary novel (Eaglestone, 2013, p. 4). Even though we know that the contemporary novel ends in the present, the question is where does it start, which is a very difficult question to be answered. Gupta defines contemporary novels as the ‘literature of our times, of the present’ (2013, p. 2). Eaglestone goes one step further to label contemporary as the literature of the last 10 years, but even with this distinction, contemporary novels can still deal with the past, present and future.

On the other hand, classic novels are by definition the novels whose importance and vitality has remained unaffected throughout time. In other words, classic novels can be characterised as works of art that have gained recognition and an established value based on their universal themes which can be applied in any given time period during which they have appeared. Pope (2012, p. 219) explains that classic novels might refer to the ‘cannon’ of prescribed texts that have ‘stood the test of time’ (even though this leaves the question of whose time and how this can be tested). He claims that classic novels consistently tend to be defined in contradistinction to other work that is labelled ‘minor’, ‘common’, ‘popular’ or ‘contemporary’. In an attempt to answer the question ‘why read the classics?’, Calvino (1999) presents a number of definitions of what makes a ‘classic’, and he mentions that classics never fail to attract their readers to reread them

in order to (re)discover them and compare the experience of how they felt when they first read them to how they felt when they read them after some time. For that, he argues that ‘the classics are books which exercise a particular influence, both when they imprint themselves on our imagination as unforgettable, and when they hide in the layers of memory disguised as the individual’s or the collective unconscious’ (Calvino, 1999, p. 4). Perhaps one of Calvino’s most stimulating definitions is the eleventh one, which encourages readers to discover their own classics, suggesting that the readers’ subjectivity is appreciated and endorsed even for such a universal term as ‘classics’: “‘Your’ classic is a book to which you cannot remain indifferent, and which helps you define yourself in relation or even in opposition to it’ (Calvino, 1999, p. 7). Nevertheless, Littlewood (1986) asserts that novels can carry out diverse functions, always depending on the goals that a teacher sets for their students and the expected outcomes from the students’ exposure to certain types of novels.

#### 2.8.4 English or foreign ‘voices’?

The argument that selecting literary texts written only by English writers can be taught with language learners and the counterargument that ‘new’ literatures in English with the inclusion of works from the outer circle are equally productive and beneficial for the language learners (Chan, 1999; Kachru, 1986; Vethamani, 1996) will be the subject of discussion in this section.

This topic sprang from informal conversations I have had with teachers of English in Cyprus, who considered the use of non-native literature as not appropriate for language learners because of the context in which it was written and the cultural differences that

exist. They argue that when selecting a text for language purposes, especially if that text is a novel that contains larger fragments of language and is extensive in length, the appropriateness in the selection depends on the author's origin. Based on their arguments, teachers should preferably choose literary texts that are written by authors whose native language is English (i.e. Charles Dickens and Jane Austen can be chosen, but not Kamala Suraiyya (Das) and Mulk Raj Anand).

The questions raised here are very similar to the set of questions Kachru (1986) introduces to reflect on the debate regarding the use of non-native literatures in English as a resource for language teaching, such as, 'why do writers choose English as the language of their creativity', or is it because they consider English as a more suitable language for 'recreating typically [foreign] social, cultural, or emotional contexts'? (Kachru, 1986). Kachru also notes the scepticism with which non-native writers are encountered, and he mentions the suspicion they are often dealt with in regards to their 'nationalistic, linguistic and cultural roots'. The fast growth of literatures in English, which includes, but is not limited to, South Asian and African writings, has meant the need for the broadening of the term English literature to what Kachru calls 'literatures in English' and suggests the inclusion of non-native writers of English in the English literary tradition, a fact that demonstrates their recognition and appreciation. Despite the need for inclusion of literature by non-native speakers of English in the English literary canon, there are still certain criteria that are required to determine the appropriateness of their use. Some of these criteria apparently follow the same principles for text selection that apply for any type of literary texts (see 2.8, Selection of Texts), such as complexity, students' proficiency level, etc. However, in the 'grading' of such literary texts, Kachru distinguishes between the 'stages' and 'strategies' of their use (Kachru, 1986, p. 143). These are explained with reference to

variety, register, author and text (and its features). The next step, according to Kachru (1986, p. 143), is to clarify by what means a non-native writer uses 'linguistic devices to contextualize a non-native language in his own 'un-English culture', a process that he calls 'nativization'. These devices are as follows:

- a) Lexical innovations, which include lexicalization of numerous text types, and predominantly refer to the local words that are 'borrowed' into English and the way these words are 'hybridized'.
- b) Translation equivalence, where writers translate directly from their L1 into English.
- c) Contextual redefinition of lexical items of English in new contexts emphasising kinship terms or attitudinal terms, which may need to be redefined (e.g. mother, sister).
- d) Rhetorical and functional styles: These styles refer to the communicative styles that are systematized based on the appropriateness of their use. For example, different styles will be used for different settings, participants and situations. Kachru (1986) notes that the suitability of a style depends on the 'native literary or oral tradition' or the 'style repertoire' of other literary languages, which is then 'recreated' in English. What is particularly important is that even though these rhetorical and functional styles are considered 'deviant' by the native English speakers (Kachru, 1983a), they are reliant on language and culture and mark the 'user's identity through language'. However, Kachru (1986) recognises that the distance between native varieties of English and non-native varieties of English may extend depending on how 'culture-bound' a style becomes.

In any of the strategies and stages used for grading non-native literary texts described here, a basic understanding of the context and the cultural elements that make these

texts is required in order to perceive how English is used to communicate the culture-bound elements that Kachru (1986) describes. As Lazar puts it, literary texts in English

‘reflect the rich and fascinating diversities of our world. They are written by authors in many different countries and widely divergent cultures. By exposing our students to literature in English, it seems we should be asking them to think about the range of cultures from which literature in English is produced.’ (1993, p. 16)

Therefore, an understanding that non-native English literature assimilates a discrete stylistic attribute that becomes imperative for description of the plot of a novel, its characters, settings, themes and motifs is necessary. By recognising the ‘nativized style repertoire’ that non-native writers use in English, we understand how it ‘recreates the native patterns of speech and social interactions and attempts to transfer...[native] attitudes into English...[in order to] portray the subtle social stratification and religious and ethnic pluralism. All of this is part of the learner and it becomes part of the language which he or she is learning’ (Kachru, 1986, p. 148). Therefore, non-native varieties of literary texts in English are a ‘repertoire of resources for providing linguistic and cross-cultural explanation’ in order to demonstrate how English has been ‘modified’ to contexts and countries other than Western ones (Kachru, 1986, p. 148). In a very similar way, Carter and McRae (1996) note on the emergence of numerous varieties of ‘world Englishes’, and they reject their categorization as either deviant or inferior.

However, as Paran (2008) notes, it is difficult to succeed in having an extensive representation of English literatures on a language programme. Therefore, our aim should not be to choose an ‘either/or’ type of attitude towards the native and non-native varieties. Rather, a balance should be established, where appropriate proportions of both varieties will be introduced to the learners (Kachru, 1986). As a result, the learners

will be acculturated in cultural and social contexts that are either non-English or English, thus understanding the notion of English use to achieve cross-cultural communication (Kachru, 1986).

#### 2.8.5 Using simplified texts

As a final point, I would like to make reference to the possibility of using simplified (or abridged) texts in the English language classroom in order to avoid, as some scholars claim, the possibility of experiencing difficulties when dealing with the language at a primary level.

Some of the reasons that may compel the teacher for using simplified novels could be the novels' (referring to the unabridged versions) linguistic complexities, often associated with sociocultural factors with which learners are unable to deal. Honeyfield (1977) denies this view, arguing that a simplification of the text balances communication in the text and the information taken out of it is reduced and attenuated from its original form. McKay (1986) shares the same belief, claiming that the additional words in a simplified text can do nothing more than "spread the information out, rather than localize information" (McKay, 1986, p. 193).

Before deciding on the use or exclusion of simplified texts from the English language classroom, I believe that it is necessary to make a very vital distinction. Undeniably, choosing which novels to use for language teaching depends on the learners' age, background knowledge, task level and proficiency. Therefore, it would be a 'crime' to present to students of lower levels novels such as would potentially damage the whole learning process, because of their complexity and difficulty. That is why we have to be extremely careful before deciding which novels should be used and which ones should

be left for later reference. At a lower level, students need natural and comprehensible input<sup>6</sup> that will make the language learning process more effective. Simplified texts, in that sense, allow learners to use them as a learning aid, which is exclusive of a disturbing idiosyncratic style and obscure grammatical phenomena that will damage communication between the learner and the text.

However, using simplified versions of texts may in some occasions 'water down' the information to be interpreted and analysed by the learner, and therefore, teachers should insist, in those cases, on the use of the original form of the text to ensure that it remains intact from any modification and that learners can benefit out of it. This is particularly so for higher level students, where language proficiency has reached desirable levels which are adequate to help students deal with the language, themes and motifs of a novel. Additionally, in some occasions simplified texts may create an unnatural discourse which is a result of the attempt for language simplification. Crandall (1995) suggests that simplified texts may in some occasions damage the natural reading process, increasing the reading complexity of both grammar and meaning. Therefore, in these cases, authentic texts and novels which are not simplified ensure the authentic and natural use of language followed by natural unity and comprehensibility.

Taking all the above into consideration, simplified texts can have an introductory function and help prepare the learners for reading unabridged texts of advanced difficulty (i.e. novels). Despite their simplified language, they also serve in performing an imaginative function which is essential in engaging the students and stimulating their interest and curiosity. They can be used to facilitate linguistic access to authentic texts

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<sup>6</sup> Comprehensible input refers to language which students understand the meaning of, but which is nevertheless slightly above their own production level (Harmer, 2007).



of a greater length and promote literary competence. Here, linguistic competence<sup>7</sup> should be detached from literary competence in determining our ability to ‘read novels’. Linguistic competence can be defined by the knowledge of grammar and the existence of language rules in various language components on a morphological, syntactic and semantic level, which allow effective communication to take place. ‘True’ competence or ‘language mastery’ enables the speakers of a language to have an ‘intuitive grasp’ of the rules of a language, which facilitates understanding without ‘explicit reflection’ (Culler, 2002, p. 10).

However, to be able to ‘read’ literature does not merely result by the knowledge and recognition of language rules and by our ability to understand sentences and phrases since a reader of literature may not be sure of ‘what to make of this strange concatenation of phrases’ (Culler, 2002, p. 132). Rather, as Culler argues, for someone to be able to read a text as literature, they should not approach it with a ‘tabula rasa’ since reading literature involves having certain preconceptions and implicit understanding of the functions of literary discourse that enable the reader to know what they have to look for. Related to this is Culler’s assertion that the act of reading literature necessitates the readers’ familiarity with the conventions that will enable them to read a text as literature, to ‘internalize the grammar of literature that will facilitate the ability to ‘convert linguistic sequences into literary structures and meaning’ (Culler, 2002, p. 132). Therefore, for someone to be able to read novels, for example, they must have a substantial experience and knowledge of the conventions for reading novels to have acquired the required literary competence. In investigating the act of interpretation, Culler suggests that in order for a literary text to have meaning, there

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<sup>7</sup> Linguistic competence represents ‘the explicit representation, by a system of rules or norms, of the implicit knowledge possessed by those who successfully operate within the system’ (Culler, 2002, p. 10).

needs to be a set of underlying system, a theory of literary discourse that will ‘account for the possibilities of interpretation’ and where the conventions that allow us to make meaning from a set of ‘empty meanings’ and restrict the reader from simply giving to a literary work any meaning (Culler, 2002, p. 138). As a result, simplified texts could work towards that direction by providing an introduction to the conventions for reading literature and making meaning. When a certain level of language proficiency has been reached and the desired literary competence has been fostered, then the teachers may choose to introduce students to unabridged literary texts, exploiting their full potential. This should be done since an authentic literary text introduces the students to natural discourse which is very limited or restricted (for purposes of proficiency and competence) in simplified versions. Furthermore, the “longer a piece of text, the more can be done with it and the more open the whole process can be” (McRae, 1996, p. 22).

## 2.9 Teaching Literature using EFL techniques

It is evident that through my research I place myself in favour of promoting the use of English literature as a means in ELT. However, teaching the English language through literature involves extracting strategies from the EFL classroom in order to apply them to literary texts (Carter and Long, 1991).

Therefore, the point of reference moves away from teacher-centred approaches and is replaced by a more language-based approach that includes student-centred activities (Carter and McRae, 1996). In doing this, literary texts can be used and exploited by employing EFL strategies like role play activities, prediction of meaning activities, character description exercises, vocabulary activities and many more that will be thoroughly discussed in this study. One of the major advantages of language-based

approaches employed in teaching language through literature is that they aim for the integration of the fields of literature and language.

This integration will result in a more round and complete learning process, where the learners will be exposed to a vast proportion of student-centred approaches (Carter et al., 1989; Carter and Long, 1991; Carter and McRae, 1996) to which I will make reference in this section. By using this kind of approach, a greater level of understanding and communication between the students and the teacher can be established.

Additionally, pair work and group work are two types of activities that function appropriately, reflecting on the disposition of the activities that come along with student-centred and activity-based approaches. As Carter and McRae suggest (1996), such organisation can be used to encourage self-sufficiency among students and promote the feeling of learner autonomy since learners rely less on their teacher as the source of knowledge and instruction and they can share their thoughts and understanding with each other more easily.

Hence, pair and group work in using the literary texts boosts the learners' confidence to the level where they can personalise their interaction with them (Brumfit and Carter, 1986). In addition, Brumfit and Carter (1986, p. 38) go on to suggest that language based approaches can also result in a more "fruitful appreciation of the literary uses of language" and therefore the teachers can concentrate on the techniques of summary and paraphrase. Similar views are found in Carter and Long (1991), where the aim of learner-centred approaches can be followed by a greater attention to the way language is used. Thus, as they argue, the interpretation of relations between linguistic forms (meaningful strings of language) and literary meanings (explaining how literature

works) as well as the ability to learn to read between the lines and relate to “hidden” meanings and interpretations is more primary than learning to read the lines.

## 2.10 Stylistic readings of literature

Stylistics is described as “a method of textual interpretation in which primary of place is assigned to *language*” (Simpson, 2004, p. 2). Language becomes very important because the various forms, levels and patterns that ‘constitute linguistic structure are an important index of the function of the text’ (ibid.). The question that now arises is: What is the purpose of stylistics? Simpson (2004) answers this question by asserting that doing stylistics is exploring language and the creativity in the use of language. It enriches the ways in which we think about language and ‘offers a substantial purchase on our understanding of (literary) texts’ (Simpson, 2004, p. 3). Analytic inquiry has an essential ‘reflexive capacity’ that can ‘shed light on the very language system it derives from; it tells us about the “rules” of language because it often explores texts where those rules are bent, distended or stretched to breaking point’ (Simpson, 2004, p. 3). In other words, stylistics aim to encourage students to make meaningful interpretations of literary texts and expand their awareness of the language (Lazar, 1993).

Paran (2008) roots the ‘re-emergence’ of literature within the context of L2 learning on stylistics, even though he acknowledges the complex relationship between the two. He attributes this intricate relationship to the lack of empirical research on the effect of stylistics in the language learning classrooms, and even more so in the context of L2 learning. Some papers have dealt with the effect of stylistics on language learners (Watson & Zyngier, 2007) by mostly focusing on L1 situations, and this leads people to assume that language learning issues related to stylistics have either been resolve or

that they do not exist (Paran, 2008, p. 486). There are, however, some exceptions that demonstrate a stylistic approach in relation to using novels with the language learners (Lazar, 1990; Davies, 1998). Nevertheless, if we wish to involve stylistics in language learning, we should definitely examine the relationship between stylistics and language teaching empirically and more emphatically. As Paran (2008, p. 487) suggests, we need more research that will support the ‘intuitive endorsement of [stylistics] for language learning.

Carter (1996, p. 4) notices a link between language-based approaches and stylistics, in that the former may provide a ‘pre-stylistic basis for subsequently more systematic and rigorous scrutiny of language’. He also notes on how stylistic analysis may facilitate fostering interpretive skills and promote reading between the lines, which can help learners make sense of language, which is not always ‘in real communicative contexts – neat, clear and immediately comprehensible’ (Carter, 1996, p. 5). Thus, this is seen as a major benefit of stylistics since it encourages learners to work with the language, make inferences and examine all the possible clues to meaning. Short (1996, p. 41) considers stylistic analysis a very important tool that can help ‘less sophisticated readers...to puzzle out meaning when they get stuck’. This, as he argues, can be applied to a wide range of language and literature students who can be both native and non-native speakers of English. However, he suggests caution when we would be dealing with lower level students and advises us to find techniques that will help students get over the ‘initial hurdles’. These might be ‘softening-up’ teaching techniques, as he calls them, which are associated with ELT to non-native students of English and aim to get the students interested in applying them in analysis (Short, 1996, p. 43). This view matches Carter’s beliefs regarding the advantages of stylistics, in that they can provide

students with a 'way in' to a text 'opening up starting points for fuller interpretation' and better scrutiny of literary texts (Carter, 1996, p. 5).

Since literature is made of language, I consider the role of linguistic structures and the general use of language in a literary text formative and determining in order to acquire meaning. Therefore, it is quite essential to expose our students to the function and character of language in moulding their perception and appreciation of a literary text. In doing so, we create a relationship between the linguistic features of a text and the interpretation of a text, resulting in a meaningful consideration which consists, above all, linguistic structures.

Short (1983) describes that teachers of English literature have been repeatedly omitting and neglecting a stylistic and textual analysis and this "flight from the text" can be particularly observed in teaching in countries other than England. It is true that one of the greatest fears of English language teachers (and perhaps it should be stressed that I am mainly referring to non-native English language teachers) is to be linguistically competent enough in order to be in position to perform a textual analysis of a text, thus introducing it to their students. Short also notes that the lack of recognition of the role of stylistics and most importantly of 'deviant linguistic structures in understanding' was mainly accountable for the failure in teaching English through Literature (1983:72). The attempt to teach language through literature should not, however, be abandoned since stylistic analysis could help the learners to understand how meanings can be "constructed" and at the same time, increase the learners' awareness of the norms and conventions of English usage (Short, 1983:73). Moreover, Short reminds us that the non-native speakers of English have the advantage of being exposed to a 'long-term exposure' to linguistic analysis and structures because of the teaching of English grammar, an occurrence which leaves the learners more prepared to cope with the

stylistic descriptions and analysis which are necessary for enhancing their understanding and awareness (ibid.)

However, I believe that teaching English to speakers of other languages by introducing literary texts as a means towards language mastery necessitates attention on more “text-immanent” features. This need can be explained since students may not have adequate knowledge of the norms of the language in order to distinguish what is fundamental for understanding (Short, 1983, p. 72).

Consequently, if students are not urged to develop an awareness of textual analysis based on the stylistic examination of a text, they are more likely to fail in learning the language by using literature since they will not be in position to make an interpretation based on “unknown” language norms. Moreover, a stylistic analysis of the text, especially for non-native speakers of English, is required in order for them to grasp the characteristics of the language and understand its features in both grammatical and structural terms.

Short (1996) suggests that stylistic analysis is a method which undoubtedly depicts the central features of a text linking them to an interpretation. Similar views are expressed by Lazar (1993), since she finds that stylistics is possibly one of the greatest links that results in understanding how the messages in a text are conveyed. She goes on to suggest that stylistics has the advantage of “illustrating how particular linguistic forms function to convey specific messages...[by] using terminology and a set of procedures reasonably familiar to students to reach and justify literary intuitions” (Lazar 1993, p. 32).

Of course, the reference to relevant terminology and set of procedures which Lazar points out include and are based on grammatical descriptions (or linguistic structures if

you wish), so that learners will develop and intensify their knowledge of the language. By doing so, not only do the students increase their language awareness, but they are also able to use their knowledge about the norms of the language to interpret literary texts and convey meaning.

In a very similar way, Brumfit and Carter (1986) note the relationship between “practical criticism and stylistic analysis of literary texts”. In short, practical criticism refers to the intuitions of the reader to make critical judgements where students are presented with a text and are expected to arrive impulsively at an appreciation of its literary values without explicitly guiding them how to do it (Lazar, 1993, p. 31).

Moreover, Brumfit and Carter (1986) explain that practical criticism shares two assumptions with the stylistic analysis. First, the principal form for analysis of a literary texts should be “patterns made by language”, considering that texts are exclusively made by language, and second, that practical criticism is conflicting with the aesthetic view of the text. Therefore, the aim of both practical criticism as well as stylistic analysis is to try and pinpoint intuitive responses of the learners that will result in the interpretation of meaning of the text based on its language structure. In this way, the teacher will ultimately try to show “how what is said is said and how meanings are made” (Brumfit and Carter, 1986, pp. 2-3).

I cannot, however, comment on the language learners’ intuitive responses without making a reference to the key theory which examines reader responses – reception theory or reception aesthetics.



## 2.11 Reception Theory

Reception theory is considered to be one of the most contemporary developments of *hermeneutics*<sup>8</sup>. Unlike hermeneutics, reception theory concentrates on the on the readers' role in literature, not exclusively limiting interpretations of literary texts based on the author's extensive intentions, the historical past and cultural orientations or the science of subjectivity (referred to as *phenomenology*).

In modern literary theory, the reader was the most disadvantaged and deprived since attention had been driven firstly to Romanticism and the author during the nineteenth century and secondly, to New Criticism and an absolute interest on the text itself. In reception theory, the reader is as vital to the text as the text is to the reader. For example, let me consider the possibility of taking the first sentence of arguably one of the most famous novels in history, *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens.

The novel begins with the following ambiguous sentence:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the age of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way...”

(Charles Dickens)

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<sup>8</sup> A theory which focuses on the art of interpretation of both linguistic and non-linguistic expressions.

Being confronted to this bizarre, puzzling, and for many, nonsensical sentence, we need to establish a literary convention which will be the starting point of its interpretation. In other words we have to set a degree of relevance to the opposites mentioned in the novel in order to gather more information about them and simply put, understand what the opening sentence is saying.

But what is the point in beginning the novel in this way, and at the same time contrasting related themes in an absurd way? First of all, in the process of gathering information as readers, we recognise that the sentence is made up of doubles, and in almost every sense, opposing pairs. Secondly, we come to realise that the writer has made use of *anaphora*, a rhetorical device which involves the repetition of a word or a group of words in successive clauses (Cuddon, 1998).

The purpose of this device so commonly used in literary forms is to emphasise certain motifs and consequently stress the attention that is needed on behalf of the reader in those particular passages. Now, many are those who may not be familiar with the term *anaphora*, and yet by reading the text aloud one is silently impressed or “captivated” by the dynamic, vibrant and poetic resonance of this device. Consequently, the reader unconsciously draws a hypothesis on the significance of the opening lines based on their rhyming elements and precise language, followed by the deliberate duality found in the contrasting pairs in the sentence.

As we read these lines, we make numerous inferences as to how we should interpret them, as to how meaning is shaped, and what is hidden behind this peculiarly profound opening sentence. For example, we may assume that if the title of the novel is a key element in the reading of the novel talking about *A Tale of Two Cities*, then interestingly

the oppositional pairs described in the first lines may refer to the opposing differences found in those two cities.

However, since the aforementioned lines are only the starting lines of the novel we assume that questions regarding their role in the whole novel will eventually be answered as we read through it. In fact, the most probable scenario in reading the whole novel is that we will have to make numerous assumptions regarding questions or uncertainties that we will encounter. It is still a reader's duty to structure possible or even doubtful interpretations about the meaning of a literary text, and certainly it is a reader's affair to be able to make implications and draw hypotheses based on its language. Consequently, the language used in a literary text must be ultimately concretised into meaning. It is the reader's contribution and involvement in constructing meaning which defines a novel, a poem, a play, or any literary work, for that matter. In other words, the reader is as important as the author since the text is in the reader, not on the page.

Having stressed the role of reading, I would also like to make reference to the actual practice of reading, since for reception theory, it is constantly a multifaceted and convoluted matter, but at the same time it is also disclosing and evolving based on time. Ingarden (1973), for example, considers that in order for the reader to establish a correct reading process, he or she needs to objectify certain schemata through which the reader will start to employ pre-understandings in order to express his or her anticipations and prospects about what is read.

Yet, what we learn through reading is that no expectancy and probability can remain static in the reading process since what we acquire can be altered and revised while reading and what we learn will be part of a circle based on what we read and how much

we amend what we expect from the text. It is, therefore, comprehensible that our initial responses and hypotheses while reading may be modified and challenged as we read along a literary text. Thus, our initial interpretations and understandings may be transformed by what comes next in a literary text.

Iser (1978) suggests that the reader needs to be familiar with the “codes” of a literary text through which the production of meaning and interpretation is possible. For Iser, reading should never be a set procedure since it is the ultimate role of the reader to be able to “defamiliarize” what he or she reads and apply new codes of understanding while reading.

However, as Lazar (1993, p. 31) puts it, the difficulty in the use of this approach relates to the difference of the language learners’ intuition about the language from those of the native speakers since their “linguistic, cultural and literary backgrounds are likely to be different”. In addition, appreciating literature and understanding its function both aesthetically by acquiring meaning, as well as linguistically by achieving language development, involves the examination of the text in relation to stylistics. For that purpose, explicit linguistic responses could be linked with intuitive responses about the meaning of a text leading to both the aesthetic appreciation and exposure to language learning techniques.

Another great theorist who had been in favour of the reception theory is Stanley Fish (1980). Even though his views partly conflicted with the views of Iser, he refused to accept any form of objectivity attached to literary works. He considered reading as not being a topic related to understanding what a literary text meant, but instead, as a matter of what the text did to the reader. In extension, what the text does to us is absolutely associated with what we do to it (Eagleton, 2008, p. 74). Therefore everything we read

is, as Eagleton calls it, a “product of interpretation” in a world where the possibility of not being able to make interpretations is ultimately excluded.

It becomes comprehensible that in order for a student to make a set of inferences and be able to explain the manner in which what is said is said in order to convey meaning entails some or even particular attention to the readers’ intuitive responses. It is certain that intuitive responses are crucial to the reading of literature since they form the basis of examination for what literature signifies to us. This is why developing stylistic processes and using the “apparatus of linguistic description” (Leech and Short, 1981, p. 74) for the examination of a text is vital to the analysis of a text since responding successfully to it depends on the interpretative acts developed when reading.

Through this method, we will evade possible difficulties that students may face regarding the appreciation of literature, since they need to have a well-defined strategy in the way they should read literature in order to avoid making them feel demotivated and puzzled by the complexities of a text. It is, therefore, through the apparatus of linguistic description that students will value a literary text positively, as well as make realisations regarding the link between the linguistic functions of a literary text and their intuitive responses that will result in interpretations.

I strongly believe that much of linguistic association and examination of a text, an act which is, in itself, vital for understanding and analysing a text, depends greatly on the stylistic analysis and stylistic procedures employed when reading the text. Therefore, language use and linguistic analysis of a text becomes an integral aspect of the whole process to understand and interpret literature, but it also becomes a method of formulating intuitive responses, “objectifying it and rendering it susceptible to investigation, revising in that way our initial interpretation” (Pearce, 1977).

While stressing the importance of using stylistics in the language classroom to interpret and assess literature, it is also necessary to note the connection between stylistics and the linguistic analysis of a literary text and the necessity of this approach to convey meaning and perceive how literature functions. By doing this, we can explain why stylistics is beneficial for the language learner since it has the benefit of “illustrating how particular linguistic forms function to convey specific messages” (Lazar, 1993, p. 32). Lazar takes it one step further to suggest that when students utilise this approach, they use familiar procedures, like, for example, grammatical descriptions, to rationalise accessible literary intuitions. Therefore, students not only exploit their existing knowledge of language to comprehend literary texts, but also increase their understanding of how a foreign language works, and thus they extend their capacity and competence of the target language.

Nevertheless, even though a stylistic analysis of literature is an approach from which learners can benefit enormously, there also should be a limitation to its use and implementation when dealing with a literary work. Undeniably, stylistics is very important in appreciating literature, but it cannot be the only approach available to the teachers or learners who want to associate literature to language learning.

As I will analyse further ahead in my study, using literature as a language learning technique entails methods which go beyond the level of stylistics, and relate to the examination of at least cultural, historical and social perspectives of the target language.

## 2.12 The Need for an Empirical Turn

In most of my previous mentions, the discussion concentrated on reflecting on the benefits and the concerns of using literature as a means of language teaching, focusing mostly on a number of points considering the inclusion (mainly) or exclusion of

literature in the language learning curriculum. It should be stressed that the content mentioned in the sections of this chapter hitherto is the work of theorists drawing on linguistics, literary theory and second language acquisition (SLA) theory. However, there is a scope for their assertions regarding the benefits of using literature to be tested and subjected to empirical scrutiny, which is what this thesis aims to do. It must also be noted that despite the fact that in recent years literature has ‘begun to assume a higher profile in contexts of second language acquisition, a dimension absent from the research radar’ (Carter, 2007, p. 10, as cited in Paran, 2008) in earlier years, there are substantial ‘unresolved questions still insufficiently investigated’ regarding what students and teachers have to say about the use of literature in language courses (Hall, 2015, p. 231).

It is, therefore, essential to bring forward for notice and consideration the critique of the claims regarding the use of literature in language classrooms from the perspective of those who are advancing the need for an empirical investigation and data-based studies in order to substantiate these claims. Paran (2008) suggests that both the proponents and exponents of the use of literature for language teaching purposes agree that there is a lack of research in this area, and he highlights the paucity of empirical evidence regarding arguments for or against its use in language programmes. He also claims that most of the information provided in this area has been largely theoretical, and there is, therefore, a need for empirical validation of any of the claims regarding the contribution of literature to language learning and the students’ interest in it (Paran, 2008, p. 470).

Similar views are expressed by Hall (2015, p. 112), who asserts a number of claims for the value of literature in second language learning (i.e. affective arguments, cultural arguments and psycholinguistic arguments). However, even though he does not question the correctness of these claims since he principally argues in favour of the

value of literature in various kinds of contexts for language learners, he emphasizes that these claims have ‘too often been taken on trust’, and thus, they need to be ‘framed more empirically and precisely for any useful investigation to be possible’ (2015, p. 112).

Other linguistic investigations of second language extensive reading in relation to second language reading of literature reveal that there is lack of ‘actual empirical data relating to the reading and comprehension of literature within the language classroom’, and that current arguments for or against the use of literature in the classroom ‘are only loosely based on empirical evidence’ (Hanauer, 2001, p. 295, 297). Hall dedicates a whole part (namely part 3) in his book to encourage people who want to conduct their own research in order to ‘extend or apply issues raised’ in the discussion regarding literature, language and language education, and he urges the need to ‘bring new perspectives to the study of literature in language education’ (2015, p. 231). It is based exactly on this need for bringing new perspectives into light that I have pursued my own research, looking to extend or scrutinize teachers’ and students’ perceptions in using literary texts in language courses – a research gap that needs to be investigated more emphatically.

Therefore, this thesis aims to be contextualised within the empirical turn as proposed by Paran (2008), Hall (2015), Hanauer (2001) and Delanoy (1996), taking up the challenge to examine or even validate the theoretical positions regarding the contribution of literature to language learning, foregrounding the students’ and teachers’ attitudes more distinctly. In what follows, I start with a more thorough consideration of empirical research into the contribution of literature to second language learning. I then concentrate particularly on students and teachers’ perceptions



on the use of literature in EFL classrooms, followed by a presentation of empirical studies related to the use of novels in the classroom.

### 2.12.1 The shift to data-driven examination

I have previously indicated that the work of this thesis aims to be situated within the empirical turn and the need for a more data-driven discussion as proposed by Paran (2008) and Hall (2015). In an attempt to contextualize my argumentation within this current development, I consider it necessary to refer to conceivably the most principal development in the examination of literature in language classrooms. Paran (2008, pp. 470–471) suggests that this development can be found in the way in which ‘published work has added empirical exploration of the issues to theoretical discussions and practitioner research’.

For example, researchers have examined the value of using literature in foreign language classrooms for considerations and explorations of cultural phenomena (Scott & Huntington, 2002) and the students’ interpretation of literary texts through in-class discussions to decide on the way the students’ interpretive processes vary in teacher-moderated classroom discussions as opposed to student-centred small group discussions (Scott & Huntington, 2007). Additionally, there has been research on the use of language teaching techniques that were modified to literary functions and were based on empirical data taken from the learners (Isaac, 2002). Researchers have also looked at students’ favourable attitudes towards specific genres that were used in language classrooms (Chang, 2007; Chen, 2006); the investigation of teachers’ and students’ attitudes towards the use of literature in EFL classrooms (AbdulHussein, 2013; Yilmaz, 2012; Tseng, 2010; Donato & Brooks, 2004; Kim, 2004); and the classes

that have used literature for language improvement as opposed to the ones that have not (Yang, 2001). As Paran suggests, even though we do not have a large number of papers, this is an important developing area of inquiry because researchers are focusing on how learners interact with literary texts and how the texts influence classroom interaction (2008, p. 471).

### 2.12.2 Examining students' perceptions on the use of literary texts

In the EFL/ESL contexts, there is an agreement that we do not have a very clear picture of students' perceptions regarding the use of literary texts since this is an area that is generally less explored. Paran recognizes the absence of data-driven studies in this domain, a fact that adds to the difficulty of making generalizations (Paran, 2008). Additionally, it is to be noted that there is an even smaller number of papers that are dedicated to on the use of literary texts for language purposes in school settings, since most of them provide empirical evidence based on university settings. However, a few recent studies have attempted to shed light on this underexamined topic.

Tseng (2010) has documented students' perceptions of literary works, focusing on their attitudes towards different literary genres. For this study, Tseng (2010) experimented by selecting a number of literary texts, with which the students were familiar, to be taught for 14 weeks in the language classroom, covering various genres, and the presentations of these works were based on reader-response theory. The findings showed that students generally had a positive attitude towards the literary works in the experiment, showing preference mainly in prose fiction (short stories and novels) among the presented texts as opposed to poetry and drama and contemporary literature instead of classic literature (Tseng, 2010, 58–59). The study also notes the importance

of the concept of Computer-Assisted Literature Teaching (CALT) in finding literature resources on the internet as well as the students' engagement with literary works of which they had opportunities to value their performances on other media.

In another study, Yilmaz (2012) focused on the investigation of university students' attitudes towards the study of literature in English, also examining the influences of their opinions together with the teachers' practical methods concerning literature instruction in ELT classrooms. The results show that the students who participated in the experiment found the use of literature in their language programme rewarding, encouraging the inclusion of literature in language departments (Yilmaz, 2012, pp. 89–90). The students also found the involvement of literary activities to be beneficial for language learning purposes, showing strong preference towards small group work considering it as the most appropriate approach for reading literary texts in the classroom. This certainly has some implications on the methods used with literature, emphasising the positive effect of student-centred approaches. The study concentrated similar results to Tsang's (2010) experiment since the students preferred prose fiction over plays and poems and seemed to perceive most improvement in reading comprehension, noting however the contribution of literature to the improvement of their writing skills; on the other hand, in contrast, listening skills met the least improvement.

A study by Tsai (2012) looking at students' perceptions of using a novel in the EFL classroom in a college EFL reading course yielded similar results. In a process to evaluate the overall effectiveness of novels based on students' perceptions who had very little previous experience with novels, Tsai found that fitting a novel in a language course can cause positive changes in the students' opinions about using novels as the main material for reading (Tsai, 2012, pp. 106–107). After reading the novel for a

semester, Tsai's students demonstrated 'substantial gains' in terms of their general interest in English, their motivation and affect, and there was an agreement on the suitability of novels over conventional course books (2012, pp. 106–107). Other findings of the study reported the main difficulties students faced while they were reading the novel, where linguistic difficulties (i.e. grammatical structures and difficult vocabulary) were found to be the most frequently mentioned by the students. Finally, Tsai's study concentrated similar results to Tsang's (2010) study, where technology and 'multimedia supplements' receive a fruitful appreciation since they provide the students with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the plot and the language of the novel as well as with some cultural elements and general knowledge extended by reading a novel (Tsai, 2012, p. 111).

Kim (2004) explored how literature circles function in the context of L2 instruction through a rigorous investigation of classroom interactions in an ESL university class. She noted the students' emotional and intellectual engagement with the literary texts, also noticing the positive reading experiences of the students in the L2. She also interviewed the students and observed and reported the students' responses regarding the literature discussions. The students found that the literature discussions had a positive effect on their reading comprehension, since they could understand the text better, and they expressed their enthusiasm for their active involvement with the literary text (Kim, 2004, p. 162). Moreover, the students mentioned the enjoyment they felt when they expressed themselves freely and without hesitation, since they could express their ideas without restrictions or limitations even though they might be 'wrong' (Kim, 2004, p. 162). More importantly, Kim stresses how interview data demonstrated that the students were 'more deeply involved in the reading in the process of responding to

the text...they could comprehend the text better...and they experienced the pleasure of reading' (Kim, 2004, p. 163).

Similar to Kim's (2004) study, Yang (2001) explored literature circles in four adult ESL classes, where two of the classes used a novel in addition to the textbook, and the other two classes only used the textbook. Like Kim (2004), Yang interviewed the students at the end of the course, asking questions regarding their 'reading habits, content knowledge, and how the novels affected their language performance' (Yang, 2001, p. 458). The students considered reading the novel a very positive experience and felt that they overcame their initial hesitations and worries regarding reading an English novel. They agreed that their fruitful discussions on the novel motivated to do the required reading at home, and they were satisfied with the speaking activities that raised considerable speaking opportunities because the discussions were 'more "substantial" than simply answering grammar questions' and because the in-class discussions sounded like 'real conversation in daily life', unlike answering grammar questions (Yang, 2001, p. 459).

Paran (2008) asserts that contrary to the students' positive attitudes resulting from the students' reactions to courses where literature was used, there are also some surveys (Martin & Laurie, 1993) that have demonstrated the 'scepticism' with which learners confront literary works. Martin and Laurie, for example, investigated 45 university students in a French course where French was taught as an L2 in order to find out the students' reasons for continuing their French studies as well as their goals for the course. They also examined the students' general attitude towards literature, where they discovered that the students who were labelled as 'anti-literature' because of their stance towards the study of literature considered 'the obligation to study literature, as distinct from reading it for enjoyment or personal development. Literature did not

interest them...not only because of scepticism about its contribution to the four skills, but because they did not feel that competent to deal with it in a way which would oblige them to discuss it in public forum' (Martin & Laurie, 1993, p. 201). The findings of the study also revealed that the students' insecurity that emerged during the study was only partially linked to the linguistic challenges that the students faced (ibid.). What is even more interesting, however, is that the researchers found out that there were some methodological issues where the techniques used for literary analysis 'made literature study inappropriate' (ibid.), and there was a need for a more student-centred methodology that could help value the role of the learners in the study of literature. Clearly, this has some implications on the role of the teacher in the language classroom when it comes to using literary texts. Therefore, an investigation of what teachers have to say in relation to the use of literature in language courses is also necessary and will be the main focus of the following section.

### 2.12.3 Teachers' views on literature and language teaching

The picture that emerges from the discussion in the previous section regarding the students' perception(s) of using literature in language classrooms is that students favoured the use of literary texts provided they had been exposed to positive experiences with them, responded to the reading of literature, and participated in fruitful classroom discussions. These students are thought to 'both benefit linguistically [as well as] enjoy the experience' and are more likely to consider the inclusion of literature in language courses productive and rewarding (Paran, 2008, p. 480). However, what is very important to consider when examining the students' perceptions to courses

incorporating literature is the role that the teacher has to play in them as well as the teachers' perceptions on the use of literature in ELT.

Donato and Brooks (2004) examined the discourse of class discussion in an undergraduate Spanish literature course in order to determine how discussion in university literature courses offer discourse opportunities to students to develop certain language functions. The findings that arise from that study demonstrate a teacher-centred lesson where the teacher dominates and does most of the talking in class, leaving students with very limited talking time. Responding to the study by Donato and Brooks (2004), Paran (2008, p. 473) noted that the teacher failed to 'push the students to recast their language, instead reinforcing their elliptical and undeveloped responses'. The data from the findings also revealed that during the literature discussion, the teacher was unable to 'move beyond the IRE<sup>9</sup> script' and guide the students to do more with their foreign language (Donato & Brooks, 2004, p. 196).

In another study, Weist investigated the role of literary texts in an intermediate level Spanish classroom and focused on the understanding of the teaching of literature and reading comprehension. The study examined one particular classroom context where the teacher's intention was to help students understand the literary texts, and this is why he made an extensive use of the English language. The findings of the study indicated that there was a noticeable difference of opinions between the students and their teacher regarding the primary goals in the course. The students, for example, perceived literature as an important tool for expanding one's world knowledge, and they were primarily interested in the historical and cultural contexts of the literary texts as well as using literature as a means for learning to do more with the language (Weist, 2004, p.

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<sup>9</sup> IRE – Initiation-Response-Evaluation – is a teacher led sequence where the teacher asks a question, receives an answer by a student, and then evaluates the student's response.

213). In contrast to the students' beliefs, the teacher felt that teaching literature is more than just reading it aloud or understanding it, and it has to do with getting into 'other level[s] of the deeper sense of it' (Weist, 2004, p. 213). Weist noted on the teacher-centred nature of the course, since during the observations, the teacher did 90% of the talking, and he only occasionally asked questions (Weist, 2004, p. 214). Weist considered that the course followed 'the traditional view of the instructor as the dispenser of knowledge, and the students as passive recipients of that information...[where] the instructor was viewed as the one who knew what was important about the texts, and the students often expressed a feeling of tremendous responsibility to develop the ability to interpret the texts like the instructor' (2004, p. 214). This study notes the teacher's dominance during the lesson and shows the vast difference between the teacher's perceptions and what he perceived he was doing and the actual outcomes of the lesson, which did not seem to match with the students' expectations.

The studies mentioned above demonstrate the effects a teacher's dominance has on students using literature for language purposes and reveal issues that have to do with the role of the teacher during these courses. Moreover, the limited interaction that the students have as well as the lack of active involvement and limited student talking time should be dealt with by (re)defining the role of the teacher during the classes in which literature is used for language purposes. In that, the teacher's role in promoting student engagement with the text should be examined in order to facilitate students' involvement with it and promote fruitful discussions that will endorse student contribution (Kim, 2004). Unquestionably, the teacher has to play a vital role in 'orchestrating and supporting both student interaction with the text and interaction with other students' (Kim, 2004, p. 163). However, one important argument here is that



many foreign language teachers do not receive formal training in using literature in the language classroom (Paran, 2008, p. 480), and they lack the methodological background to use literary texts in the classroom. As a result, these ‘feelings of inadequacy’ (Kramersch, 1993, p. 137), and the ‘lack of training...means that if teachers want to use literature later on their teaching, they do not have the methodological wherewithal to do so...perpetuating teacher-centred approaches’ (Paran, 2008, p. 480).

Another important point to reflect on in this context is that apart from the teachers’ positive outlook regarding the use of literature as an authentic material in the classroom (AbdulHussein, 2013, p. 338), there is a need to consider the teachers’ ability to evaluate their own methodological stance in using literature in language classrooms (Paran, 2008). In Fonder-Solan and Burnett’s study (2002, p. 74), the examination concentrated on the methodological comparison of beliefs and practices in relation to teaching a reading and literature course. Burnett feels different to Fonder-Solan in relation to her teaching, in that she is less confident in teaching literature, mainly due to the negative experiences she has had with literature as a student (Burnett & Fonder-Solano, 2002; Fonder-Solano & Burnett, 2004). They also report on their ‘differing views on how to teach a reading/literature course’, suggesting that their divergent ways of thinking may be ‘directly related to former training’, which prepared them to deal with literature from different perspectives (Burnett & Fonder-Solano, 2002, p. 80).

This, of course, raises some additional important issues for investigation since previous training or even the teachers’ educational qualifications and previous experiences may have some implications for other contexts as well as shaping the teachers’ beliefs regarding the way literature should be used in language classrooms. Paran (2008, p. 481) asserts that since the focus of attention has now shifted on literature, this means that ‘we now have descriptions of courses which aim to train teachers in this area...It

is therefore possible, that the generation of teachers being trained now are less worried about their ability to use literature in L2 settings.’

### 2.13 Setting and Participants: Contextualising the Study

This part addresses the need for a clear and specific contextualisation of the project. To that aim, a description of the settings and participants is necessary in order to depict the context that has been investigated. This study does not apply to the whole of the ELT education in Cyprus, since it only examines the use of literature for ELT purposes in the private sector. In Cyprus, despite the fact that magazines, newspapers and other authentic materials are seen as common supplementary materials for ELT in the public education sector, authentic unabridged novels are very rarely used – even on the occasions that are included in the curriculum. Despite the suggested benefits of introducing novels in the language classroom (Gareis, Allard, & Saindon, 2009; Lazar, 1990; Vandrick, 1997) as a means for language teaching, the regular and systematic use and implementation of literary texts can only be found in private schools in Cyprus – where literature has a more renowned status. Gareis et al. (2009) consider that using novels as the primary material for instruction may appear to be ‘too radical leap from tradition’, and this may partially ‘justify’ the exclusion of novels from the public ELT education in Cyprus. The school that I have based my research on is a private, seven-form secondary school in Cyprus. The school has been chosen on the basis of use and implementation of literary texts for ELT purposes, since novels and other literary works are currently being used from form 1 to form 7 for ELT purposes. A total of 144 students from this school participated in this study, and the majority of them (97) were form 1 students, whereas the rest (47) were form 4 students. The form 1 students, aged 12–13,

were mixed ability students, and they began the year with an intensive grammar focus, with a duration of six weeks, before reading children's literature (*The Tweets* by Roald Dahl) for another six weeks and ending the course with the novel *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson, which they read and used in the classroom for four months. Form 4 students, aged 15–16, read Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and Lawrence's short story *The Rocking Horse Winner*. I made a conscious decision to select participants from different years and ages in order to have a sample from two distinct age groups and levels (i.e. form 1 and form 4), so that I can present a more complete image of their perceptions, even though the final decision was to merge the two forms in order to have an extensive idea of all the students' views on this topic without concentrating on comparing and contrasting their views. It is worth mentioning that the academic curriculum had been designed to give students the opportunity to acquire a solid secondary education, and the English department has a catalytic effect towards that direction. This is because the English department aims to enable students to develop intellectually and culturally, and using literary texts in the language classroom is considered as a means to achieve that purpose. The head of the department of English language noted that the school's aim for using literature with their learners is not only limited to the fluency in the English language, which is certainly the primary purpose, but also to develop students' critical thought and increase their cultural awareness.

As I have aforementioned, this study examines the possibility of using literary texts as reading materials in ELT classrooms in private schools in Cyprus, and it focuses on the students' and teachers' subjective perceptions of the use of literature in general, and novels in particular, for ELT purposes. It is important to find out precisely how

literature is being used in Cyprus, since despite the recent trend that saw a resurgence of interest in the use of literature in ELT, in the EFL context in Cyprus, no studies exist that examine either the possibility and evaluation of teaching literary texts in the language classroom or the students' and teachers' perceptions of its use and implementation in language courses in the private or public sector. In this context, the subjective views of learners and teachers are important since their attitudes towards the literature-reading experience will help us support the use of literature in language learning contexts.

### 2.13 Designing the Research Questions

At the beginning of section 2.12, I noted the need for an empirical turn as put forward by Paran (2008) and Hall (2015). In EFL context, the general picture of students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the use and implementation of literary texts in language courses remains underexplored, and this study aims to bridge this research gap by looking at this area more emphatically. Therefore, it should be made clear that the discussion and arguments mentioned in this chapter refer to the existing literature and work of theorists drawing on linguistics, literary theory (i.e. reader response), EFL contexts and SLA. In that, the main aim of this study is certainly not to prove that integrating literature in language teaching ensues in language mastery and language proficiency, since this would definitely necessitate testing methods for measuring these outcomes (see Yang, 2001). Understandably, I would like to avoid labelling this as a thesis that objectively evaluates an increase in students' language proficiency or proves that students' competence improves with literature because simply, it does not. Rather, this study focuses on subjecting some theorists' arguments regarding the benefits of using literary texts for language learning under empirical scrutiny by specifically

looking at how literature is being used in private schools in Cyprus and examining the students' and teachers' subjective views and attitudes regarding its role and value in language classrooms. Based on the notion that sees novels as an authentic source of reading, which carries 'specific features' that can provide learners with 'unique opportunities for educational and linguistic development' (Lazar, 1990, p. 204), I would like to explore and evaluate the outcomes of literature teaching (by putting emphasis on novel teaching) in relation to both the students' as well as the teachers' subjective perceptions. This will add to the repository of very limited studies examining students and teachers' attitudes towards using literary texts in language courses, and the findings will help us understand both the students' perceptions and involvement with literary texts as well as the teachers' reflections regarding their use and implementation. The research questions that will be examined are:

1. Is literature being used as a means of English language teaching in private ELT schools in Cyprus?
2. What is the role and implementation of literature in ELT in private schools in Cyprus?
3. Are novels being used as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus?
4. What are the students and teachers' perceptions regarding the most appropriate form of literature in the process of ELT in private schools in Cyprus?
5. How do the ELT teachers in private schools in Cyprus view the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in ELT courses?

6. How do EFL students in private schools in Cyprus view the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in ELT courses?

In what follows, the methodological procedures and considerations for this study will be presented and a rationale for the construction and use of the selected instruments that explicitly outlines the relationship between the various research questions and the specific data collection instruments will be offered.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 has offered a brief overview of the incentive that led to the initiation of this study and the examination of the use of literary texts, with particular emphasis on novels with second language learners. Chapter two has been focused more closely on a broad overview of research into the role of literature in English language learning, the language of literature, the readership of literature, and the uses of literary texts in language learning pedagogy. Chapter 2 has also been concentrated on the authenticity of literary texts, the cultural access they provide to their readers and their capacity to develop linguistic competence. Most importantly, I have pointed towards the need for further research and empirical evidence to support the claims put forward by the proponents of the use of literature for language learning. Despite the recognition that ‘literature is back, but wearing different clothes’ (Maley, 1989, p. 59), there is still a call for a new research discipline that has remained underdeveloped until now, the views of both the students as well as the teachers in relation to the use of literature in English language classrooms. Therefore, this thesis aims to be situated in the ‘empirical turn’, which promotes the need for data-driven empirical research in order to substantiate the claims of theorists who have been suggesting the need for empirical scrutiny (Hall, 2105; Paran, 2008). In exploring these key issues, we will be prompted to consider why the subjective views of both the students as well as the teachers are important in promoting the use and implementation of literature in language learning. In this chapter, the focus of attention shifts to my own research questions in the context of the use of literature for English language learning in private schools in Cyprus. This interest has been informed by the existing literature (Kim, 2004; Tsai, 2012; Tsang, 2010; Yang, 2001) as well as promptings to ‘practical and feasible research projects in

the light of some applied linguistics research methods literature' (Hall, 2015, p. 158). Thus, the intention of Chapter 3 is to provide the methodological framework based on which the assumptions discussed in Chapter 2 are investigated in order to confirm their validity or advance their performance in the light of further empirical scrutiny.

### 3.2 Towards choosing a research strategy: Qualitative and quantitative research

It is very frequent among scholars that defining methodological strategies and orientation entails distinguishing between the two major types of research, qualitative and quantitative research. On the surface, delineating the differences in a very naive way would be to assume that the main dissimilarity concentrates on the fact that quantitative research involves measurements whereas qualitative research does not (Bryman, 2012). However, the differences are not of such a superficial level and they are rooted deep in their ontological and epistemological foundations which separate research in two approaches: the subjectivist approach to social science, and the objectivist approach to social science, where qualitative researchers are nominalists, anti-positivists, voluntarists and idiographic, and the quantitative researchers are realists, positivists, determinists and nomothetic (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2011).

Nevertheless, I would not like to outline the differences between the qualitative and quantitative research mainly because both techniques can be jointly employed to achieve the purpose of a study. It is, therefore, with the principle of applying a mixed paradigm that I will be most concerned with in the following section, since it is also the paradigm that I have found the most useful for my study.



### 3.2.1 Defining Mixed methods research

First of all, I would like to elaborate on the meaning and implications of the phrase ‘mixed methods research’. There is a tendency to combine methods within a particular paradigm, for example someone who decides on the use of a qualitative method may combine unstructured interviews with unstructured observations. However, that would be an integration of methods being used in only one research strategy – namely, qualitative research. The combination of mixed methods to which I am referring to blends the two research strategies, combining some of their approaches. Over the last two decades, mixed methods research has been seen as a “third approach in research methodology” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 43), a “third methodological movement” (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009) or alternatively, as a “third research paradigm” (Johnson at al., 2007, p. 112)

Therefore, it would be probably better to assume that qualitative and quantitative research methods are not ‘extremes’ but rather, form a continuum; we simply still tend to compare them all the time. Perhaps one of the most illustrative descriptions regarding the role of this ‘hybrid’ method comes from Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 34)<sup>10</sup>. Their notion enables the researcher to make combinations and associations between the two distinct kinds or research methods and combine them in order to offset their weaknesses by drawing on their strengths (Bryman, 2012; Denzin, 1978). This idea as well as some

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<sup>10</sup> “Qualitative and quantitative forms of research both have roles to play in theorising. The issue is not whether to use one form or another but rather how these might work together to foster the development of theory. Although most researchers tend to use qualitative and quantitative methods in complementary or supplementary forms, what we are advocating is the true interplay between the two. The qualitative should direct the quantitative and the quantitative feedback into the qualitative in circular, but at the same time evolving process with each method contributing to the theory in ways that only each can”.

others will be further investigated in the sections that follow. I would nonetheless like to stress that the matter of selection between these two types of research depends exclusively on the discretion of each researcher. It is not to assume that the one is better than the other; instead, there can be a selection or preference that are based on the needs of the research itself.

### 3.2.2 Mixed methods research: A more effective paradigm

The integration of qualitative and quantitative research enabled me to give greater prominence to the “strengths of the data collection and data analysis techniques with which quantitative and qualitative research are each associated” and therefore allow them to be fused (Bryman, 2012, p. 631). In conducting my research I set six research questions which investigate the use of novels in the English language learning classroom for ELT purposes. However, a more thorough investigation of this topic and a sufficient answer to the questions<sup>11</sup> could only be achieved by combining some of the methods from both qualitative and quantitative fields (semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, self-completion questionnaires).

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<sup>11</sup> What seems to be of high importance in mixed methods research are the research questions. Research questions are extremely important in mixed methods research because they dictate the methods to be used and they specifically influence the type of research design used including the sample size, instrumentation and data analysis techniques (Newman and Benz, 1998; Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006a; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003).

Even though it is pointed out that there are some arguments against mixed research methods<sup>12</sup>, it is nonetheless through this methodological pluralism that we can enable possible errors to be recognised and mended (Johnson et al., 2007).

To exemplify this further, even though questionnaires answered by a number of teachers allowed me to have a clear stance of their views and attitudes towards literature in general, and novels in particular, yet a structured interview enables me to deal with their responses in much more depth by dismantling their thoughts on the answers provided in the questionnaire and providing some more insight in areas which cannot be investigated by the use of questionnaires in isolation.

Additionally, despite the thick data that I managed to collect through interviews and questionnaires, part of my research required me to observe the teachers in the classroom. By doing so, I would be certain that teachers actually did what they said they did in the classroom, as it comes from the questionnaire responses, and students could be examined in actual class time.

In stressing the importance of adopting a mixed methods research approach, I nevertheless needed to take a “priority decision” (Bryman, 2012) and select a method as the principal data-gathering tool. Since the two research methods could not have equal weight, I consider that adopting the qualitative method as my dominant tool suits the purposes of my research the most. What is meant here is not that the quantitative component of the study has a less effect or importance to the study; besides, the questionnaires have been used on a fairly large scale, which indicates their significance and impact on the data collection and on the study as a whole. Rather, my aim is to

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<sup>12</sup> For example, that “research methods carry epistemological commitments and the idea that qualitative and quantitative research are separate paradigms” (Bryman, 2012, p. 629)]

indicate that the use of qualitative methods for my research purposes outnumbers the use of quantitative ones since interviews, classroom observations and most of the open-ended questions in the questionnaires belong to the qualitative paradigm and will therefore be analysed qualitatively, whereas only questionnaires with closed questions were used from the quantitative paradigm. Furthermore, qualitative research often allows the researchers to ‘get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover rather than test variables’ (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 12). It is with this possibility of discovery that I am most concerned with, since one of the benefits of qualitative research is the boundless prospect to learn more about people and minimise the distance between what is given and the unknown. However, I have to make clear once more that even though my study will be predominantly using more qualitative and interpretive models rather than quantitative ones, an extensive use of the quantitative methodology through the use of questionnaires is necessary in order to be able to interpret and analyse some of the findings (further details about the choice of mixed methods is given in the description of the settings).

The pattern to be used is based on Corbin and Strauss’ (1998) *grounded theory* methodology which focuses on the theory derived from data and in the ways those data are analysed and interpreted during a research. According to Corbin and Strauss (ibid.), basing the research on grounded theory means that the researcher develops a close relationship between data collection, the methods being used and data analysis in order to come up with a theory. Specifically, employing the grounded theory in a research

means that the researcher does not begin with one explicitly predetermined theory in mind<sup>13</sup>.

In this thesis, the term grounded theory is used in a more generic sense to denote theoretical constructs derived from qualitative analysis of data. In that, the rationale for using grounded theory with the classroom observations comes from the explicit goal of the method to help develop a new theory. With the observations, my aim is to produce new theoretical insights, which will be generated on the basis of empirical data. The rationale for using grounded theory with the observations was based on the idea that little was known about firstly, how the novels and literary texts are communicated within the classroom and secondly, the patterns of teaching that were inherent in what the study participants did and how they responded to the use of literature. The lack of knowledge of what concerned the students' and the teachers' beliefs and how they interacted with literature meant that the researcher approached the study with an open mind as to what might be found. In chapter 2, I mentioned the lack of empirical evidence and by extension the absence of theory based on an empirical investigation of the use of literature for language teaching and learning focusing mainly on the teachers' and students' beliefs. At the same time, the need for an empirical turn dictated the use of an approach that could build theory from data. Within this framework, the reasons I have decided that it would be useful to observe the classrooms include an interest in students' and teachers' behaviour, in interaction between teacher and students, or between students, and so on. Furthermore, grounded theory with its progressive inductive

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<sup>13</sup> "grounded theory... begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data. Theory derived from the data is more likely to resemble the 'reality' than is theory derived by putting together a series of concepts based on experience or solely through speculation...Grounded theories, because they are drawn from data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action" (Corbin and Strauss, 1998, p.12).

analysis could cover more empirical observations than other approaches and help me go beyond mere description and categorization in order to offer a basic understanding of the relationships and principles underlying the use of literary texts with language students respond to the research questions.

### 3.2.3 Offsetting and completeness

It is often argued that mixed research methods allow for the meanings in data to be probed, corroboration and triangulation to be practised and thicker data to be gathered (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 23). Additionally, it is highly possible that qualitative and quantitative research have their strengths and weaknesses, and therefore by integrating them it ‘permits’ the researcher to “offset their weaknesses and draw on the strengths of both” (Bryman, 2012, p. 633). To explain this idea further, a reference to one of the potential difficulties of my research should be mentioned.

One of the methods used for the data collection was the questionnaire survey where teachers were requested to reply to different kinds of questions – mainly closed questions. This would allow me to have a rather large collection of data bearing in mind the limited time I had to carry out the research. Even though I had managed to receive most of the questionnaires given out, I had soon realised that the respondents’ replies were a bit shallow and that a further exploration of their beliefs and of more complex ideas mentioned, but not adequately explained, was required.

This inherent weakness of questionnaires was remedied by some follow-up interviews, during which the respondents successfully provided more illustrations, explanations and descriptions of their beliefs regarding the role of using novels in the language

classroom. This offset, then, enabled the insufficiencies of the one approach to be rectified by the effectiveness of the other, putting flesh on the bones of the methodology.

Apart from the idea of mixed research methods referring to the suggestion of offsetting the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research, there is also another important notion – that of completeness. Bryman (2012, p. 637) maintains that completeness may indicate that in order to have a more complete answer to the research questions, a combination of both qualitative as well as quantitative methods is needed. It infers that the gaps of the one method can be bridged by utilising the other. In the case of this research, this phenomenon appeared in the relationship between teachers' self-completion questionnaires and classroom observations.

On the one hand, a questionnaire could not be provided to the teachers, requesting their beliefs about teaching English through literature, without actually observing their views being put into practice. On the other hand, the need for information from the part of the teachers about the nature of their teaching and their personal beliefs about the role of novels in language teaching could not be accessible through the isolated use of a 'monomethod' and during the time of the observation. Consequently, this interweaving of the two methods enabled me to complement the one by the introduction of the other.

### 3.3 Framing the research questions and establishing boundaries

As in the case of any kind of research, a question or questions are essential in order to guide the investigation process in a meaningful and unambiguous way<sup>14</sup>. The technique

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<sup>14</sup> Shavelson and Towne (2002, p. 55) suggest that "many scientists owe their renown less on [sic] their ability to solve problems than to their capacity to select insightful questions for investigation".

I have used to design my research questions has also determined at a great extent the methods to be used. Thus, I have tried to avoid what Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 24) refer to as the committed researcher's need to frame the question in such a way in order to fit the method. Instead, I have attempted to provide an investigation of the area of interest based on the questions that stem from the requirements of the research itself, based on the need for more data-driven empirical studies in relation to teachers and students' perceptions and attitudes of using literature in ELT as propose by Hall (2015) and Paran (2008). However, I should not fail to mention that in designing my research questions the aim was to be as incisive as was possible, and to generate a hypothesis rather than test one. My research questions are more qualitatively oriented, since qualitative studies will allow me to frame my research questions in a manner that will provide me with "sufficient flexibility and freedom to explore a topic in some depth ... [and] tell the reader what there is something about this particular topic that is of interest to the researcher" (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 25). For example, RQ5 may initially seem a broad question, yet it cannot give rise to unlimited possibilities and distract the readers from identifying the focus of the study, since the attention is placed on the teachers, the use of literature, and more particularly, novels and the English language learning classroom.

### 3.3.1 The 'what' and 'how' of the research questions

In the process of conducting my research, I was concerned as to how I could provide a complete and comprehensible answer to my research questions. All of them are wh-type of questions ('what' and 'why'), and it is particularly important to delineate the various explanations of the outcomes of each. It is, therefore, essential to "uncover



information and perspective, increase corroboration of the data, and render less biased and more accurate conclusions” (Reams and Twale, 2008, p. 133).

For example, In answering RQ6, I have found out that 117 students have shown a positive predisposition towards learning English through literature, considering the process interesting or enjoyable. This, in itself, is a very interesting finding worth noting, but as it proves, students consider that there are different factors which have played a role in shaping their views. For example, thirty-two students have responded, saying that they regard literature highly – specifically novels – for being a very interesting method in learning (because they are “interesting, fun and exciting”). Fourteen have said that the plot of the novels was so interesting that they did not get bored; twelve stated that the novels helped them improve their English by acquiring new vocabulary and learning grammar in a better and easier way, and a few more said that learning through novels was more realistic and so on.

Evidently, in this example, the students’ views regarding the involvement of literature and novels in the classroom vary, and in some occasions, the reasons set as the basis for the students’ positive predisposition towards literature significantly differ from each other. Based on this example, even though a quantitative measurement accounts for the number of students who view the involvement of literature in English language learning in Cyprus positively, it is precisely here that a rather qualitative investigation can shed more light on a statistic analysis in explaining why students have provided these responses.

Bryman (2012, p. 629) indicates that the data deriving from mixed methods research should not only be mutually illuminating, but the researcher has to also ensure that the research design is set in a manner which certifies the integration of qualitative and

quantitative methods, avoiding, thus, any possible bias which might favour, say, a numerical survey (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 24). An example can be given by considering RQ4. In this instance, qualitative data has provided a proposal of what the most appropriate form of literature is and the rationale behind it, whereas numerical data has provided an indication of the extent to which the students have been benefited by the implementation of literature as part of their English language learning.

Lastly, related to the issue of avoiding bias, I find the explanation of the formation of RQ3 necessary. In the second chapter of this thesis, I made an extensive reference to the relationship of language and culture, and I stressed that language and culture should not be seen as separate concepts, distinct to each other. Rather, they are indispensable parts of language teaching and should be regarded by considering the one in relation to the other, especially since in the context of communication, language is bound up with culture in multiple ways (Kramsch, 1993, 1998). Having this in mind, research question three takes the relationship between language teaching and culture into consideration and aims to investigate the participants' beliefs on whether literary texts can be used to increase and promote the students' intercultural awareness or whether they fail to enrich their cultural knowledge. What is definitely to be avoided is the impression that this research question assumes that the cultural and linguistic benefits associated with language teaching can be ensured with the use of literary texts. Rather, this is to be examined by considering the students' and teachers' perceptions on the use of literary texts in relation to culture.

### 3.4 Rationale for the Construction of the Instruments of This Study

This part offers a detailed rationale for the construction and use of the selected instruments for data collection, namely questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. The aim here is to provide an explicit account of the grounds that have informed the construction of the data collection tools and led to the content of the questionnaire, the basis on which interview questions were formed, and the rationale for classroom observations, always with reference to the literature review, and in relation to the teachers' and students' perceptions and attitudes, which is the main topic for scrutiny.

To begin with, questionnaires have been used extensively with both teachers and students in order to address a number of assertions made in the literature review (chapter 2). For example, items 7–10 in the teachers' questionnaire looked at the teachers' general approach towards literature in ELT courses. In responding to the arguments by Carter and Long (1991) and Carter et al. (1989) concerning the distinction between the study of literature and the use of literature as a resource, the teachers' perceptions on the matter could reveal information that could help delineate the way literature is treated with language learners in private schools in Cyprus. Thus, questions 7–10 could be targeted at a categorization of the role of literature in ELT classrooms in Cyprus by looking at the teachers' perceptions in relation to the two roles of literature – as a product and as a process (Carter & Long, 1991). Furthermore, the teachers' interviews could provide further insight into the application of literary texts in order to explore the notion of representational vs referential materials in the context of language learning (McRae, 1996) and examine the teachers' perceptions on the students' development of language competence and other educational opportunities by reference to the use of literary texts in ELT in that respect. Similarly, classroom observations

could reveal information regarding the nature of the courses for which literary texts were used, paying close attention to the evidence that could help distinguish between the treatment of literature as discipline and the use of literature as a resource. Additionally, the teachers' interviews but also classroom observations could help us examine whether the teaching of literature in private schools in Cyprus agrees or disagrees with Carter and Long's (1991) process-based pedagogy and whether a student-centred approach is preferred over a teacher-centred one.

Another suggestion mentioned in the literature review that needs to be investigated by collecting the teachers' views and data from classroom observations refers to the exploitation of literary texts by employing EFL strategies directly extracted from the language classroom (e.g. role play, vocabulary exercises, games) and some other language-based approaches. The data from interviews and observations could therefore help us examine the language learning techniques that teachers use with their students during the lesson and decide, based on these observations, whether these are transferred from the language learning classrooms and then modified to the use of literary texts. Consequently, a thorough investigation of the teachers' use of literature by using questionnaires, interviews and most importantly observations would help explore the use of literature as a resource for increasing students' linguistic awareness and development by employing EFL techniques; it would further help decide whether a student-centred approach is preferred over a teacher-centred one (Carter, Walker, & Brumfit, 1989; Carter & Long, 1991; Carter & McRae, 1996; Lazar, 1993).

Questionnaires were also necessary for looking at the link between literature and cultural awareness and language teaching (Lazar, 1993; McKay, 2001, Duff & Maley, 2007). Item 17 in the students' form 1 questionnaire aimed to examine the students' perceptions on the importance of novels in helping them learn more about new cultures,

whereas items 19 and 20 in the teachers' questionnaires examined the teachers' perceptions on the role of culture in language learning in relation to the use of novels. Since these closed questions could not concentrate on detailed descriptions, follow-up interviews could closely examine the teachers' beliefs on the role of novels as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language as well as of other cultures in EFL classrooms in Cyprus. The data collection aims to examine culture in the area of language teaching by reference to Adaskou et al. (1990) and their explanation of the different meanings of culture in this field as well as Duff and Maley's (2007) view of literary texts as depictive mediums of culture of the target language. Lastly, classroom observations could help in the investigation of the relationship between culture and language teaching with the use of literary texts by collecting evidence of the students' cultural enrichment by looking at specific elements of the novels used with the learners that attest the cultural enrichment and promotion of intercultural awareness.

It has been argued in the literature review that the selection of the literary texts that should be used with the language learners depends on a number of criteria of appropriateness (Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Carter & Long, 1991; Collie & Slater, 1987). One of the criteria that should be taken into account has been noted to be the students' ability to engage with the text and identify with its themes, motifs<sup>15</sup> and characters. Furthermore, the students' preferences in certain literary genres and the negotiation of the students' interests and expectations when these are brought into the classroom play a vital role in their overall enjoyment and applicability for ELT purposes. It is exactly on the examination of the students' preferences in certain literary genres that the

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<sup>15</sup> A motif is a "conspicuous element, such as a type of incident, device, reference, or formula, which occurs frequently in works of literature". For example, "The "loathly lady" who turns out to be a beautiful princess is a common motif in folklore" (Abrams, 1999, p.169)

students' questionnaires seek to focus with questions 9–10 from students' form 1 and 11 from students' form 4 questionnaires. Additionally, the teachers' questionnaires and their responses to questions 11–13 could be used to link or reflect on the students' beliefs in order to establish a relationship between students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the most effective genre of literature to be used in the language classroom. Related to the examination of the most favoured genre to be used with language learners, follow up interviews with the teachers could reveal more information regarding the rationale, the appropriacy and the reasons for selecting one particular genre over another (e.g. length of the literary texts, the level of the students, vocabulary, etc.).

The investigation of the ELT teachers' beliefs and attitudes in private schools in Cyprus concerning the use of literary texts, and more specifically novels in ELT courses, was one of the most important objectives of this study. The number of similar types of studies is very limited, and in some occasions are not done in the same context, as the use of literary texts is examined by looking at university settings (Paran, 2008). For examining the teachers' perceptions, three instruments have been used.

To begin with, questionnaires aimed to examine the suggestion that there is now a resurgence of interest in using literature for language purposes (items 8 and 9). Additionally, the benefits of including literature in the English language learning curriculum were also examined by looking at the teachers' perceptions (item 10) on the 'subtleties' that accompany literary texts and which are not present in other teaching materials (Carter & McRae, 1996). Further, the teachers' attitudes in relation to the role of novels in the language classroom is also examined (items 14–17) with reference to the claims that novels have certain characteristics that can be exploited in order to

deliver opportunities to increase the learners' language awareness and offer further educational opportunities (Collie & Slater, 1987; Duff & Maley, 2007; Lazar, 1993).

However, these claims could be better examined by interviewing the teachers in order to explore their attitudes towards the use of novels with language learners in more depth. Emphasis could be given in the use of novels as a complementary authentic material and the ability of novels to increase linguistic awareness and competence paying close attention to the learners' increase of vocabulary, the development of grammar and language skills as well as the development of interpretative skills (Collie & Slater, 1987; Lazar, 1993). Additionally, interviews could allow for a closer investigation and expansion of the responses they gave in the questionnaires allowing for clarifications and explanations for their answers. I also found interviews to be necessary in examining the teachers' beliefs concerning L2 learners' perceptions of the use of novels and literature in general, since the inclusion of more open-ended questions in the questionnaires on this topic would extend the length of the questionnaire and perhaps tire the participants. Lastly, classroom observations could help examine the use of novels in actual classroom context by looking at the role of the teacher in the classroom (e.g. the teacher-student interaction) and their overall engagement with the literary texts in relation to the answers they gave in both the questionnaires and the interviews.

The rationale for the construction of the instruments in this study ends with the description of the instruments used for examining the students' perceptions on the involvement of literary texts and particularly novels in ELT courses. In the literature review, I have stressed the need for an empirical investigation of the students' beliefs on the use of literature since this remains an area that is clearly not adequately examined. Therefore, the absence of data-driven studies does not allow for

generalization in secondary education, particularly when most of the studies in this field are based on university settings (Paran, 2008).

The investigation of the students' perceptions is largely based on the use of questionnaires since no interviews were possible with the students. The aim here was to examine the students' beliefs on the impact that the use of literary texts has had on their learning of the English language (items 7 and 8 in form 1 questionnaire). At the same time, item 8 could examine the students' interest in learning the English language through literature and enable possible comparisons to what teachers have said concerning how interested their students' are when they use literature in the classroom. Furthermore, similar to the study by Tsang (2010), items 9 and 10 (from form 1 questionnaire) aimed to focus on the students' attitudes towards different literary genres and meant to explore the students' preferences on particular types of texts. Additionally, item 10 specifically focused on the use of novels and looked to investigate the students' attitudes towards them, asking for further explanation for their choice.

Since this study concentrates on the use of novels as a means of language teaching and learning, items 12–14 focused on evaluating the effectiveness of novels based on the students' perceptions. These questions had put emphasis on the language skills that students felt they improved with the use of novels, concentrating on the four language skills as well as on vocabulary and spelling; this was done to explore the students' beliefs based on the claims that literature can result in language enrichment and encourage language acquisition (Collie & Slater, 1987; Lazar, 1993). Additionally, item 11 aimed to survey the aspects of novels that may motivate the students to read a novel in English. The three options offered to the students in question 11, namely language, characters and plot, were based on the recognition that they can attract students into reading a novel. Most importantly, the suspense that unravelling the plot offers to the



learners and the identification with the novels' characters with whom they can share feelings and emotions may add to the incentive of using them in the language classroom (Colie & Slater, 1987, p. 6; Lazar, 1993, p. 15).

In the literature review, I stressed the importance of using authentic materials in complementing the selected course book – if one is used. In this respect, I referred to some benefits that accompany the selection of novels, noting their 'genuine and undistorted language' (Colie & Slater, 1987, p. 3). However, examining the students' preferences in certain types of authentic materials could help the teachers combine the use of novels with some of those materials to achieve greater effects (i.e. using the internet to accompany the use of a novel). This is precisely what item 15 aims to examine since students are asked to select the authentic materials that they find the most enjoyable and interesting.

Item 16 intends to identify the most common problems that students face when reading a novel and for that reason, the vocabulary, the length and the plot have been chosen as the possible answers to choose from since they fall into the category of the criteria of appropriateness that need to be examined before selecting a literary text (Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Carter & Long, 1991; Collie & Slater, 1987). The three options acknowledged as problems were formulated on the basis of the most common difficulties that students and teachers experience when using a novel in the classroom (Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Carter & Long, 1991; Collie & Slater, 1987; Duff & Maley, 2007; Lazar, 1990 and 1993). Lazar (1990, p. 206) identifies that the length of the novel is one aspect that needs to be addressed when it comes to text selection in order for the novel to be adequately managed in the classroom. Additionally, a novel must be short enough so as to prevent demotivating the learners, but at the same time, long enough to be challenging. Similarly, Collie and Slater (1987, p. 11) recognize that the length of

some literary works might be daunting for students, especially considering the fact that only some sections can be read in the classroom and the rest will be read by the students at home. Moreover, vocabulary has also been offered as a potential problem that the students may face while reading a novel. Collie and Slater (1987, p. 5) argue that some teachers and students may object to the use of literary texts on the grounds of lexical appropriacy, and that is the reason why teachers should take a 'judicious choice of the text to be read' in order to avoid selecting a novel that demands from the learners to bridge a huge linguistic gap where the vocabulary does not match the learners' level. Since vocabulary might be 'adduced' by learners as the 'main drawback to encouraging reading', it has been selected as a possible difficulty or problem that students may face when reading a novel. Lastly, plot has been chosen as another problem that students may encounter when reading a novel. Even though a good novel may be gripping, in that 'it involves students in the suspense of unravelling the plot' (Lazar, 1992, p. 15), likewise an overcomplicated plot that fails to absorb the students and does not match with their expectations, needs and experiences, and background (cultural and linguistic) may hinder the learning process and discourage them from reading. Other options may have also been considered for the question, such as understanding characters, but since I could not provide further explanation as to what this option entailed, I wanted to refrain students from choosing this category based on their attitudes towards an unpopular character they disliked, disagreed with, or had opposing views with. Another option that could have been considered for the question is 'themes' but similar to the arguments regarding 'understanding characters', I felt that further clarification would be necessary to help students distinguish between the plot of the novel and its themes. This appears as a common difficulty that students have when distinguishing between the differences of a novel's plot (the term that is used to describe the events that make

up a story and are related to each other in a sequence) and its themes (a term that refers to a story's central message or underlying messages that run beneath the story's surface, conveyed through a literary work).

Item 18 aims to examine the students' preference regarding the way a novel should be read, distinguishing between reading the novel silently or aloud. This question also requires the students to explain their choice as this could enable us to discover the concerns that students may have in relation to the reading of literature and help us explain their preferences. Then, we could have a list of possible explanations, for instance, for someone who is afraid or is reluctant to read aloud and will therefore help us decide on the measures we should take to combat that fear (if we find reading aloud necessary). Lastly, item 19 looks into the students' perceptions on the role of novels in learning new features of grammar, also asking for a justification as to how novels have contributed (if they have) to their development of grammar knowledge, thus responding to the claims that literary texts can help increase the students' language awareness.

Apart from questionnaires, classroom observations were also done in order to examine students' responses and attitudes while they were involved in the educational activities with the literary texts. Observations allowed me to 'see' what otherwise goes unnoticed in the classroom, looking at the students' attitudes and engagement with the novel. I was mainly focusing on their 'behaviour' in class examining their confidence and performance, as well as their engagement with the language of the novel and how well they were responding to the text. Most importantly, classroom observations permitted the investigation of students' attitudes towards literary texts by looking for evidence that would reveal whether they found the novel interesting or boring, and evidence concerning their enjoyment or comprehension of the text. Moreover, examples of how students' responded to the novel could also reveal information regarding their

engagement with the text (e.g. whether students responded personally or emotionally) and an examination of how meanings and interpretations arrived in the classroom would be possible (After Lazar, 1993: Chapter 8).

### 3.5 Description of participants

A detailed rationale for the two age groups selected for study, as well as the decision for examining private as opposed to public schools and the selection of proficiency level has been provided in the literature review chapter (see 2.13, Setting and participants).

Questionnaires were distributed to 144 students of a private school in Cyprus and 26 teachers of two private schools in Cyprus. Of the student respondents, 139 students (the majority) were Cypriot, two were British-Cypriot, one was Greek, and two did not provide a nationality. From the total number of 144 students, 97 were first-year students of secondary school (grade: Form 1<sup>16</sup>) and 47 students were first-year students of high school (grade: Form 4).

Of the 26 teachers, 18 were Cypriot, three were British, three were Greek, one was South African, and one was Canadian. All of the teachers were of advanced level, being postgraduate level students of certified BA and MA programmes in ELT, Applied Linguistics, English Literature or some aspect of Theoretical Linguistics. All were, at the time, teachers of EFL, EAP, or ESP. All had some professional teaching qualification and all were teaching as a full-time professional career.

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<sup>16</sup> The students' level was represented in 'Forms' where students would begin from Form 1 in secondary school and progress in Form 4 at a later stage in high school (in their fourth year). That was also representative of the students' classroom allocation.

### 3.6 Ethical procedures

As is any type of research, certain ethical procedures needed to be followed when undertaking the research. I personally discussed the ethical procedures required by the private school I visited with the school's head of English Department. At the meeting, I informed the head of the department for issues of trust and protection, and for protecting the participant's privacy by anonymity and confidentiality. After explaining the procedure and aims of my research, my request for distribution of questionnaires to the school's students and staff as well as the classroom observations planned to take place at the school had to be approved by the school's principal. As a result, a signed consent letter was written by the principal, in which I was informed about being granted consent for classroom observations of form 1 and form 4. Additionally, in the same consent letter, I was given written permission for the distribution of questionnaires for the research purposes of this study (see appendix M). Added to these, an ethical approval was granted by the University of Essex committee prior to the data collection process in which the aims and requirements of the research were described.

### 3.7 Data collection

#### 3.7.1 Questionnaires

The ultimate aim of this chapter is to describe how my research was carried out in the context of ELT through novels, by using questionnaires to gather the responses from both teachers as well as students of two age groups. For that reason, I will separate this

part of my paper into two parts: the first will refer to the design of a questionnaire for teachers (See *appendix A* for an example of the teachers' questionnaire) and the second will exclusively deal with the design of two questionnaires for students (See *appendix B* for an example of the students' questionnaire).

The basic idea behind using questionnaires for this research is the general acknowledgment that the ideas, features, attitudes and behaviours of a larger group of people (in this case, L2 learners of English in Cyprus and EL teachers) can be defined, labelled and analysed based on the questioning of a considerably smaller fraction of the general population. Additionally, questionnaires have historically made a considerable and extensive contribution to the field of ELT (Dornyei, 2010) and in the case of this study, they have allowed me to make inferences that refer to the involvement of literature for language learning purposes and the potential benefits of this occurrence.

One of the greatest benefits of using questionnaires for my research was that a large amount of data had been obtained in a fairly short period of time and among all the available means for data collection, this was arguably the most cost-effective method<sup>17</sup>.

### 3.7.2 Ensuring anonymity

This is one of the most frequently used techniques for distributing questionnaires which contain 'sensitive' matter. In the case of my questionnaire, the sensitivity of the content involved included the students' implicit judgment and evaluation of the course and its usefulness for language teaching purpose. Similar views are expressed by Dornyei

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<sup>17</sup> Dornyei (2010, p. 6) emphasised the questionnaire's versatility arguing that it could be used effectively for a wide range of people in various situations aiming at a diversity of topics.

(2010, p. 17) who supports the view that anonymity is likely to encourage the respondents to give answers that are “less self-protective and presumably more accurate than respondents who believe they can be identified”.

### 3.7.3 The structure of the questionnaire: Question types

I would like to begin the exploration to the various question types I have used in my questionnaire with a reference to closed questions. These kinds of questions are arguably the most frequently used for questionnaire design since they allow the researcher to “generate frequencies of response amenable to statistical treatment and analysis ... [enabling] comparisons to be made across groups in the sample” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 382). One of the major benefits of closed questions is that they allow for a very straightforward and uncomplicated coding since the options can be very easily numerically coded (Dornyei, 2007, 2010). Even though closed questions consist of a range of different items, yet they all share the same feature which refers to the predefined response options offered to the respondents. The type of closed questions used in my questionnaires were Likert scale<sup>18</sup> (e.g., item 8 of students’ questionnaire), where the range of possible answers that the respondents might give needed to be exhausted, *Yes/No* questions and *Circle the right answer* questions<sup>19</sup> (see Items 7 and 9 in students’ questionnaire) and open-ended questions<sup>20</sup> that do not have fixed response

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<sup>18</sup> Likert scales are the most common rating scales, and they deliver a range of available responses to a question or statement

<sup>19</sup> These were used to exclude the possibility of producing unnecessary and unwanted information, and reduce the risk of complicating the respondents since “too many shades of judgment may be required” (Burns, 2010, p. 82).

<sup>20</sup> They enable the respondents to have “greater freedom of expression and offer graphic examples... [and] lead us to identify issues not previously anticipated” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 107).

options from which the respondents may choose (see Item 10 in teachers' questionnaires).

In the case of my topic of investigation, some areas and 'complex' issues could not be investigated by providing simple answers, and therefore, using open-ended question has given me the opportunity to generate items which could not be listed down in categories of responses similar to that of a closed question simply because the responses were unknown and unpredictable.

#### 3.7.4 Piloting the questionnaire

Having designed the final draft of the first version of my questionnaire, I then moved on with what Dornyei (2010) calls the "fine tuning" of data collection by piloting. To ensure that the pilot study stands out as valid, reliable and most importantly representative, and to make sure it collects only genuine and spontaneous responses, I decided not to carry it out on people who would take part in the full study.

Therefore, the piloting of the questionnaire was based on a small set of respondents (six teachers and twenty students) who were comparable in a very similar way to the participants of the full study. That is, the students selected for the piloting were of the same age group and proficiency level, sharing the same learner characteristics with the members of the students from which the sample of the full study was taken.

Similarly, the teachers who participated in the piloting process shared analogous background knowledge, experience, qualifications and exposure to the subject matter to the teachers who participated in the study. When the data were obtained, I proceeded by making an item analysis, checking the response patterns for:



- a) Gaps and missing responses that might be a sign of misinterpretation of the instructions. In cases where items were left out, that was an indication that there was a potential problem or confusion resulting from poor wording, threatening phrasing, or instructions which were misunderstood (Bryman, 2012; Dornyei and Csizer, 2012).
- b) The range of responses, focusing mainly on the open-ended questions looking for variety and diversity of responses.
- c) The flow of the questions, by concentrating on repetitive or similar responses which might indicate that I should change the order in which the questions appeared.

The pilot study was not limited merely to the aforementioned examination, since pre-testing was of paramount importance since it also served the following functions in finalising the layout of the questionnaire:

- Getting oral feedback from the respondents about the validity and difficulty in effectively completing the questionnaire (two questions were left out because they were considered too difficult for the level of the students).
- Checking the time required for the completion of the questionnaire (I had four questions removed from the questionnaire to reduce the time needed for completing it to no more than 20 minutes).
- Getting oral feedback on the layout (the layout kept its original form).
- Identifying and dealing with any redundant questions
- Getting oral feedback on open-ended questions (especially in order to identify possible coding patterns).

The above outline describes the importance of piloting the questionnaire. It has helped me improve the clarity of the instructions and obtain feedback on several features which

resulted in finalising the layout. Additionally, the piloting contributed to the elimination of unwanted difficulties, ambiguities, and threats (e.g., participant mortality, see appendix K for a more detailed definition) and gave me a very good idea of the whole procedure of using the questionnaire for data collection, from administering the questionnaire to analysing potential findings.

### 3.7.5 Administering the questionnaire

The decision upon administering my questionnaire was based on the fact that I had to deal with two groups of respondents, namely, the teachers and the students. For that reason, I decided that it was better to follow a one-to-one administering for the teachers and a group administering for the students. However, a very limited number of teachers who were willing to respond to my questionnaire could not arrange for a meeting because of time restraints, and therefore I was asked to administer my questionnaire via email<sup>21</sup>. Dornyei (2010, p. 67) suggests that the personal interaction that the researcher has with one-to-one administering increases the chances of returns of the questionnaire, and in retrospect, this seems to have worked to a large extent since all of the teachers have returned their questionnaires on time.

On the other hand, I believe that group administering<sup>22</sup> suited the completion of my questionnaire by language learners the most. This can be attributed to the fact that I

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<sup>21</sup> In these cases, the questionnaire was sent via email, and a special arrangement was made because some of them did not have adequate knowledge to circle the items requested by them. Rather, I asked them to respond to the questions by highlighting the right answers in a yellow colour. Once more, the response rate was the highest I could expect since all of the teachers successfully returned the questionnaire back to me, only this time in an electronic form.

<sup>22</sup> Group administering can be applied for overcoming problems with regard to postal surveys or one-to-one administering, where the return rate is far lower (Dornyei, 2010, p. 68).

could visit the students in their classrooms, mainly because classroom observations were also arranged, and while they were assembled together I could give them general instructions and guidelines of what was expected from them and what needed to be done. Additionally, I asked their teachers to collect the questionnaires and this created a feeling of responsibility and obligation on the part of the students in returning them (the response rate was unexpectedly 100%).

### 3.7.6 Interviews

Interviews have been widely used for applied linguistics contexts, second language acquisition purposes, linguistic variation and cross-cultural communication (Nunan, 1992). The versatility and flexibility of the use and implementation of this research instrument among language researchers rendered it one of the most frequently used in qualitative inquiries (Cohen et al., 2011; Dornyei, 2007).

One of the greatest benefits of using interviews as one of my data collection methods is that it has allowed me to use it not as the primary research tool, but rather, as a mechanism for triangulating the data gathered from my other sources (questionnaire and classroom observations). Even though the importance of using questionnaires for my research cannot be questioned, one problem associated with the use of questionnaires (especially from a qualitative point of view) is that they have provided a typically ephemeral engagement to my subject matter. That is, there seemed to be a lack of rich data and substantial interpretations and opinions, mainly because of the low number of open-ended questions. Dornyei (2010, p. 109) notes that “adding a subsequent qualitative component to the study can remedy this weakness. For that

purposes, in a follow-up interview (either in an individual or focus group format), we can ask the respondents to explain or illustrate the obtained patterns and characteristics, thereby adding substance to the questionnaire. Therefore, interviews hold an ancillary role in my research where my questionnaire survey can be combined with the interviews to have an all-around and complete investigation of my topic, where the data collection methods complement one another in a more creative and accomplishing manner by having a sequential explanatory design (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann and Hanson, 2003).

The type<sup>23</sup> of interview I have chosen was determined by the level of control I wanted to have during the interview, and for that reason I have decided on the use of semi-structured interviews which I will discuss in the following section (see *Appendix C* for two examples of interviews).

#### 3.7.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

I have favoured the selection of semi-structured interviews mainly because of their flexibility – they are not as rigid as other interview types, and allow for more deviation during the interview process. One of the major advantages of semi-structured interviews<sup>24</sup> is that the discussion is not completely predetermined by a specific set of questions, nor it is guided by an inflexible plan. Rather, it involves having a general idea of where you want the interview to go and what outcomes you are expecting, but you are the controller of its course (Nunan, 1992, pp. 149-150). The semi-structured

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<sup>23</sup> Interviews can be typically characterised by their ‘degree of formality’ and they are essentially placed on a “continuum ranging from unstructured to semi-structured and structured” (Nunan, 1992, p. 149).

<sup>24</sup> McDonough and McDonough maintain that semi-structured interviews allow for more personalised responses than the “quasi-automaton interviewer armed with entirely pre-coded questions” (1997, p. 184).

interviews have also contributed in enabling me to follow-up interesting discussions and developments. By not using “ready-made response categories that would limit the depth and breadth of the respondent’s story” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 136), I have achieved in getting the interviewees to elaborate on topics and ideas which were essential for my research. For instance, answers to the questions could be probed further, as in the following example taken from one of my interviews:

Interviewer: *What genres of literature have you used for language teaching?*

Interviewee: *I have tried to use novels but I found it better for the students to use short stories instead of novels.*

Interviewer: *In what ways are short stories better than novels for language teaching?*

As it can be seen in the example above, the interviewee could elaborate on issues that might be of particular interest to the interviewer and it has allowed for productive interaction.

### 3.7.61.i Using probes and prompts

In framing my questions for the interview, I have considered and used the technique of prompts and probes (Morrison, 1993, p. 66). Prompts have enabled me to make the necessary clarifications in the cases where the interviewees misunderstood some points or needed more guidance in order to frame their answers, as in the example that follows:

Interviewee: *I have tried to use novels but I found it better for the students to use short stories instead of novels.*

Interviewer: *You said that you found it more useful, why was that?*

Interviewee: *Perhaps because short stories are short stories so I think that it is something that the student... (10<sup>25</sup>)*

Interviewer: *Perhaps we should think of novels and maybe make a comparison of how and why you would use the one over the other. For example, what are the advantages of using short stories instead of novels, and vice versa?*

Probes, on the other hand, have allowed me to ask the interviewees to expand, elaborate, clarify and provide detail, thereby “addressing richness, depth of response, comprehensiveness and honesty that are some of the hallmarks of successful interviewing” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 420).

For the most part, the questions for the interviews were organised based on the responses I received (or did not receive) in the questionnaires and there was an immediate relation between the questionnaire results and interview design. That is, the interviews were organised to achieve a more qualitatively featured investigation of the participants’ responses in the questionnaires, a fact which initiated further explanation or the development and elaboration of ideas presented in the questionnaire (i.e. responses to Item 12 in teachers’ questionnaire).

#### 3.7.6.2 Selection of participants

The selection of participants was primarily based and limited on the respondents of my questionnaire. It is necessary to stress that teachers were the only participants in the

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<sup>25</sup> Here, number 10 indicates the number of seconds that passed waiting for the interviewee to articulate his thoughts before intervening to provide some guidance and paraphrase my original question.

interview process, even though my initial plan included some student interviewing. Time limitations and exam preparation did not allow for getting the students involved in the interviewing.

I should also note that the original plan included interviewing ten participants, and not just the five teachers who were finally interviewed. Moreover, the small number of participants in the interview can be attributed to the rigid time schedule of all of the teachers who participated in my questionnaire, since my data collection coincided with the students' preparation for forthcoming English exams and therefore most of the teachers were busy taking extra classes, and preparing and correcting mock exams<sup>26</sup>. It is important to note that from the five teachers who participated in the interview, four were Cypriots and non-native speakers of English, and the fifth was South African, and a native speaker of English.

### 3.7.6.3 Piloting

After finalising a sampling plan, I then prepared an interview guide which functioned as the basic research instrument, and it included all the steps to be taken before the interview session. In order to ensure the functionality and effectiveness of my interview guide, I organised a pilot test with two participants who were also respondents of my questionnaire, and who did not take part in the final interview stage. The trial sessions enabled me to pilot the interview questions and gave me the opportunity to examine whether the questions were generating sufficiently rich data.

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<sup>26</sup> It should be noted that the participants were selected on the basis of having used literature for ELT purposes before. All five participants should be working as ELT teachers at the time of the interview but no academic qualifications related to literature were a prerequisite.

Additionally, piloting has not only helped me avoid dominating the discussion, but it also allowed me to eliminate ambiguous questions or complex wording which the participants found confusing or difficult to answer. Piloting was a good opportunity to test my elicitation techniques and find out what type of responses were provided. I asked for my participants to give me some oral feedback on the interview procedure, the probing and the questioning techniques – a fact which has helped me identify potential pitfalls and avoid repeating them in the actual interview.

#### 3.7.6.4 The setting of the interviews

##### 3.7.6.4.i The location

The interview was organised to take place at my house. This was done after discussing the location of the interview with the participants and it was their own wish that the interview would take place somewhere quiet and comfortable, without the presence of other people who could potentially intervene in the whole process.

##### 3.7.6.4.ii Recording the interview

I have recorded the responses of my participants by using a digital recorder and I have ultimately avoided taking notes during the interview<sup>27</sup>. Additionally, another reason for avoiding note-taking was because the encoding process could interfere with the

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<sup>27</sup> Dornyei (2007) argues that there is a “general agreement” in the literature that semi-structured interviews should be recorded since taking notes is not enough to ‘catch all the details of the nuances’ of the message.



interview and distort the respondents' answers. Thus, in order to avoid any bias and preserve the actual language used, I decided to use a recorder which allowed me to reanalyse the data after the interviews had finished.

#### 3.7.6.4.iii The language of the interview

Before making the final arrangements for the interview, I offered the participants the choice of making the interview in either Greek, or English. This was done to ensure that if there was someone who was not feeling comfortable with the idea of being interviewed and recorded in English, they would have an alternative option and I would therefore have a more increased number of responses. Out of the five teachers who have participated in the interview, four of them have accepted to being interviewed in English, while one preferred to be interviewed in Greek<sup>28</sup>.

### 3.7.8 Conducting the interview

#### 3.7.8.1 Briefing and explanation of the rationale of the research

The participants of the interview were provided with the rationale of my research before the interviews began, explaining the nature of the interview. I presented the introductory rationale orally to them. Even though I provided an explanation of the aims of my research while initially contacting the participants asking them for an interview,

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<sup>28</sup> For the latter, a good level of linguistic sensitivity and adaptability (McDonough and McDonough, 1997) was necessary for the formulation of questions in Greek, which later allowed me to translate the transcription in English.

restating the purpose of the research enabled me to provide answers to questions that the interviewees had such as how the data collected from the interview was going to be used, and whether the data presented would be anonymised.

Therefore, I reassured the respondents that they would not be identified in any way and that the data would remain anonymous. Once ensuring that the flow of the interview was established, I used various techniques to keep it inconspicuous for example, I gave them feedback to keep them going<sup>29</sup>, supportive feedback to confirm that the interviewee's effort was valued and appreciated (Dornyei, 2007, p. 142) and thanked them for giving up their time to participate in my research.

### 3.7.9 Observations

Observations had a key role in my study in examining the use of novels in the language classroom. Even though other data collection methods were already used (i.e. questionnaires and interviews), observations as a research process have allowed me to gather 'live' data from the occurring situations in the classroom<sup>30</sup>.

This becomes particularly important since observations are perhaps the only method through which we can make a 'reality check' and examine whether people do what they say they do (Robson, 2002, p. 310). Principally, this was a fundamental reality for my research because the observations came as a follow-up of how teachers saw the use of novels in the language classroom. Four teachers who were at the time using literature

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<sup>29</sup> For this purpose, I used "backchanelling signals" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 142) like nods, utterances and sounds (like "uh-huh") and gestures such as smiling, and the eyebrow flash.

<sup>30</sup> Cohen et al. suggest that observations enable the researcher to look directly at "what is taking place *in situ* rather than relying on second-hand accounts" (2011, p. 456).

in an ELT course in a private school in Cyprus were chosen for observations on the basis of using a novel for ELT purposes with their students.

I must clarify, however, that the purpose of the observation was not to question the teachers' validity by comparing their responses in my questionnaires to what had actually happened in the classroom, nor was it to render them unreliable based on what I observed. Rather, the observations have enabled me to see things which might not have been consciously noticed by the teachers themselves. Additionally, I had the opportunity to focus on the events as they actually occurred, e.g. how motivated the students were during the class, the participation rate, the type of the activities used for language development through using novels, attitudes which could not be explored with the use of questionnaires.

#### 3.7.9.1 The setting

I was allowed to observe four different classrooms of the 1st year, secondary school students and for two teaching sessions of each classroom (i.e. eight classroom observations in total, of 50 minutes each). It should be noted that each class had a different teacher and the classrooms consisted of approximately 25 students each. I have also observed two more classrooms of first-year high school students at the same school, but the results of the observations were not included in the study since at the time of the observations the students were not using novels; instead, they were reading Drama. This occurred because of a last-minute change in the Language Teaching Curriculum of the school (see appendix J).

### 3.7.9.2 Organising the observations

During the planning period of my observations, I had to organise the way in which I would observe the classrooms since the observational data would enable me to “enter the situation” in order to gain an all-around understanding and appreciation of the situation been described (Patton, 1990, p. 202). In this process, I had to decide on a continuum of different kinds of observations from the two “dichotomies” (Dornyei, 2007) being offered; *structured* versus *unstructured* observations, and *participant* vs *non-participant* observations. In the following section, I will describe the reasons which have led me decide on unstructured, non-participant observations.

#### 3.7.9.2.i Structured or Unstructured observations?

Structured observations are often more quantitative since the observant usually enters the classroom with a more specific and concentrated focus and with “concrete observation categories” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 179). This means that structured observations involve developing some pre-defined categories that may be “spelled out in an observation schedule”, which usually include filling a form during the observation session (Mackey and Gass, 2012, p. 186).

However, one of the limitations of structured observations in relation to data collection is that the researchers should know what exactly they are looking for beforehand, and therefore, there should be some observational categories designed in advance (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 457). The most prominent disadvantage based on which I have excluded the possibility of structured observations for my research was the fact that I needed to

work out the observation categories based on what would emerge during the observation process. Since I was not so clear about what I was particularly looking for, I decided to observe the use of novels for language teaching purposes in the language classroom first, before deciding on the categories and their importance to my research.

Additionally, in the context of following the patterns of grounded theory that I mentioned early on in this study, the unstructured observations were hypothesis-generating rather than hypothesis-testing (Cohen et al., 2011). This means that unstructured observations helped me review the observational data before signifying any specific proposals for what had been observed. By deciding to follow the unstructured observations scheme, I also tried to keep my mind open to the insights provided by the students being observed, where structured observations might miss the intuitions provided by the participants (Allwright and Bailey, 1991).

#### 3.7.9.2.ii Participant versus non-participant observations

Participant observations entail the immersion of the observers in the social setting where they observe the behaviours of the members of that setting by eliciting meanings and becoming full members of the group, participating in the activities and tasks (Bryman, 2012; Dornyei, 2007). Non-participant observations, on the other hand, describe the situation in which the observer is not participating in the setting in any way. Dornyei (2007, p. 179) suggests that participant observations are the common form of observations in ethnographic studies, whereas non-participant observations are usually associated with classroom observations.

In choosing between these two forms of observation, I had to consider which of the two would allow me to concentrate the richest observational data without any potential bias of desirable behaviours (thus eliminating the threat of the Hawthorne effect, and participant desire to meet expectation, see appendix K for a more detailed definition). Consequently, in the fear of potentially leading the students, even subconsciously, towards the direction I anticipated, I decided to be a non-participant observer and be ‘detached’ from the group<sup>31</sup>. Similarly, in this research, I avoided asking questions or participating in any way, and decided to let the experience unfold as naturally as possible without creating any “new provocations” (Adler and Adler, 1994, p. 378). Additionally, in deciding on the position of the observer in the classroom, I decided not to sit at the back of the classroom as it is customary done in most classroom observations in Cyprus<sup>32</sup>. Consequently, to avoid occurrences that might distort the data at a higher extent, I decided to sit facing them from the side so that I could have a clear view of all of the students and see their expressions and their reactions during the class.

### 3.7.9.3 Recording the data

In choosing various ways to record the data, I decided to take field notes. Even though video recording the classrooms could be considered as an option for recording the data as it can replace the need for real-time coding (Dornyei, 2007, p.183), yet I decided not to use it fearing possible distraction caused by the camera. Furthermore, the process of video recording the classroom might elicit “out-of-the-ordinary” behavior on the part

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<sup>31</sup> This approach has been described by Cohen et al. (2011, p. 457) as “non-interventionist” and it is appropriate for situations where the researcher(s) do not want to “manipulate” the participants.

<sup>32</sup> This was done to prevent the danger of creating a teacher-observer relationship that excludes the students (Richards and Farrell, 2011).

of both the teachers and the students, generating greater anxiety and resulting to obtaining “distorted and unnatural data” (Dornyei, 2007, pp.184-185).

Following this decision, I have avoided using checklists and published coding schemes (i.e. COLT and MOLT) which might include fixed codes about the setting, the students, the teacher or the behaviours, because these assume testing hypotheses and not generating hypotheses, which is more relevant to structured observations. Instead, I preferred to take field notes since I did not know what was specifically going to be observed (i.e. to which teaching aspects related to the use of novels in the language classroom I would be exposed to) and any speculations would probably be inaccurate.

Therefore, I recorded the data based on what emerged from the observation itself, rather than predicting what the key elements would be. Since not all observation data need to be counted, a condition that certainly depends on the aims and requirements of the observation and the research in general, the decision taken was to produce observation data based on a descriptive and narrative style, which would avoid the structured nature of the observation checklists. Thus, the recorded data came in the form of notes made by the researcher, and they were utilized to note descriptions and accounts of what actually happened in the classroom, including the setting (i.e. private school, form 1 students, classroom 1), the physical layout (e.g. seating arrangements and the positioning of the teacher), the verbal and non-verbal information (e.g. evidence that the students found the novel interesting/relevant or boring/irrelevant), and the sequences of activities and tasks that were introduced to the students with the use of the novels in the classroom (e.g. games, instructions, reading aloud/silently, etc.). The strategy I have predominantly used was a narrative observation and involved recording the events as they happened, and it demanded a great deal of free writing. At the same time, narrative observations enabled me to develop a personal ‘shorthand’, which

included many abbreviations, a development that allowed me to record things quickly as I observed the students and teachers in the classrooms. Thus, narrative observations captured the events and behaviours in the classroom as they happened. Narrative observation belongs to grounded theory because the data were recorded without having a list of predetermined questions or checklists that would guide me towards a specific direction. The aim of the classroom observations was not to test the theory. Rather, like in grounded theory, I would allow the data to emerge from the observations in the form of narrative writing. Thus, in an attempt to put together a series of events that were collected during the observation, grounded theory can be applied to offer insight and provide a meaningful guide for action and conceptualization (this will be subsequently examined in a later chapter – chapter 6). Since grounded theory is an important method of theory generation, it can be applied to interpret the observation data inductively, as any theory will emerge from, rather than existed before, the narrative observations. In other words, this is an experiential methodology that allows for openness to data and what is emerging, and the theory is not pre-determined before the observations.

### 3.8 Research validity

In this section, I shall consider issues relating to the validity of the present study<sup>33</sup>. In other words, I will attempt to refer to the “soundness” (Dornyei, 2007) of this research and verify that the outcomes result from a systematic measurement of different factors and variables. Moreover, I will also refer to external validity which relates to the

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<sup>33</sup> In the course of this process, I will refer to internal validity as “the truth value, applicability, consistency, neutrality, dependability, and/or credibility of interpretations and conclusions within the underlying setting or group” (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006b, p. 234).



“degree to which the results can be generalized to the wider population, cases, settings, times or situations” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 186). Additionally, possible ‘threats’, reliability and stability and triangulation are some other aspects I will touch upon.

### 3.8.1 Internal validity

Before providing a further explanation of what is meant by internal validity, I would like to indicate that internal validity is a “contested term” (Miles et al., 2014) usually linked to quantitative standards<sup>34</sup> (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2011; Miles et al., 2014; Silverman, 2011).

In quantitative research, then, a research has internal validity if the explanation for the events and data presented can be reinforced and sustained by the data (Cohen et al., 2011). In other words, if the “outcome is a function of the variables that are measured, controlled or manipulated by the study” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 52). In the case of this study, the findings have not been affected by factors other than those which were initially implied that caused them. That is, for example, that the attitude and predisposition of the students who have completed the questionnaire regarding the use of literature in the language classroom ultimately result from the methodology and approaches being used by the language teachers themselves as well as the set aims of the schools’ curriculum.

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<sup>34</sup> Even though qualitative and quantitative research methods can both address internal and external validity, yet in qualitative research it is done by providing a different definition and term, and will be pointed out later in this chapter.

### 3.8.2 External validity

External validity refers to the degree to which researchers can generalise their own findings to a wider context, situations, groups, settings and to different times (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2011; Dornyei, 2007; Silverman, 2011). External validity responds to questions like: ‘Can the conclusions of the study be transferred to other contexts?’ and ‘How far can we generalise from a study to a general population?’

Even though there is a clear definition regarding external validity in research, relating it to the generalising process of the study to the wider population, there are, however, some theorists who attest that the readers are themselves responsible for supporting the transferability of the study ( Erickson, 1986; Seale, 1999). Miles et al. (2014, p. 314) suggest that among other points to consider for external validity, one of the most useful should be that the “findings include enough ‘thick description’ for readers to assess the potential transferability and appropriateness for their own settings”.

In this study, I have tried to present a “thick description” of the teaching situations, the participants and the settings in various sections. For example, in sections 3.6.2, 3.6.7.2 and 3.6.8.1, I have attempted to provide a description of the participants and the setting where the data collection took place for the questionnaires, the interviews and the observations respectively.

### 3.8.3 Reliability and stability check

The key concept of the reliability of a research fundamentally examines issues of consistency matters and affairs<sup>35</sup>.

Moreover, the more steadfast way to test the reliability of a research is by testing its stability. In this mode the most obvious method for testing the stability of a research would be to apply the ‘test and re-test’ method. This involves “administering a test or measure in one occasion and then re-administering to the same sample on another occasion” (Bryman, 2012). In the case of the classroom observations, the testing re-testing technique was crucial in establishing high correlations of the relationship between teachers, and the collection of similar data from these respondents.

To achieve this, however, I had to consider the amount of time to be allowed between the one observation sessions to the other. As Cohen et al. (2011, p. 200) suggest, “too short a time and respondents may remember what they said or did in the first test situation, too long a time and there may be extraneous effects operating to distort the data”. Therefore, in order to avoid any possible maturation in students, I decided that each teacher should be observed twice in the span of a week’s time. This would allow participants the ‘forgetfulness’ of what had been said and done in the classroom during the first observation. The outcome of stability checks was to establish a high correlation rate between the respondents, as is demonstrated below:

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<sup>35</sup> In this form, consistency can be measured “over time and over similar samples”, where a research is rendered reliable if an instrument or a “piece of research will yield similar data from similar respondents over time” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 200).

T1	T2	T3	T4
Obs1	Obs2	Obs3	Obs4

This research is reliable because of the similarity with regard to the data gathered from the teachers' observations, where an examination based on the findings of a particular research technique (in this case, observations) has produced similar data from similar respondents, after an appropriate time scale and allowance in between observations was decided.

### 3.8.4 Triangulation

Following my decision to use mixed research methods, I have consciously made the choice of using triangular techniques<sup>36</sup>. Gorard and Taylor (2004) note the significance and merits that result from combining qualitative and quantitative methods, in spite of the criticism this practice has accepted (Fielding and Fielding, 1986; Patton, 1980; Silverman, 1985). They indicate that by triangulating the methods, researchers may overcome any potential difficulties associated with method-boundedness. Denzin (2001) has famously categorised triangulation in the following distinctions:

- a. By data source (it involves people, time and place)
- b. By researchers (it involves multiple investigators)
- c. By method (it includes the use of more than two methods)
- d. By theory (it refers to multiple theories to develop only one viewpoint).

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<sup>36</sup> Cohen et al. (2011, p. 95) defines triangulation as "the use of two or more methods of data collection" which attempts to "map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint and, in doing so, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data".

Form all these, methodological triangulation is the one most frequently used (Cohen et al., 2011) and the one I have employed in my study since it was more suitable to delineate the teachers and students' perceptions of using literature in ELT courses mainly, because using different methods on the same subject matter has helped me demonstrate concurrent validity between methods.

#### 3.8.4.1 Results from triangulation

The purpose of triangulation is none other than to show either corroboration or inconsistency in the findings of a research (Miles et al., 2014, p. 299). As a result of a planned strategy and self-conscious choice, I have managed to establish that my findings from both qualitative and quantitative research have corroborated each other and were consistent.

After a close examination of the data collection, the findings (which will be later presented in the Data Analysis chapter) revealed a profoundly positive attitude towards the use of literature – and more specifically, novels – in the language classroom. This attitude has emerged after using multiple sources of evidence which have elucidated my confidence to the methods being used. For example, the outcomes of my questionnaires correspond to those of my observations, which in turn demonstrate consistency with my interviews. Furthermore, triangulation has assisted me in getting to the findings “by seeing or hearing multiple instances of it from different sources by using different methods” (Miles et al., 2014).

### 3.9 Outlining the Relationship between the Research Questions and the Data Collection Instruments

The aim of this part is to explicitly outline the relationship between the research questions and the instruments selected for data collection. For that aim, the three instruments used in this study will be examined in relation to the research questions that each has aimed to address.

#### 3.9.1 Students' questionnaires

As previously indicated, one of the instruments used to investigate students' and teachers' perceptions of literature was the questionnaire. A pair of questionnaires were designed to measure students' perceptions regarding the literature-reading experience in the English language course, with particular emphasis on the reading of novels. The design of the two questionnaires was almost identical with the only difference being an additional question added in the 'form 4' questionnaire (item 11) that examined the genres the students liked the most. That item could not have been measured with 'form 1' students since they had not been introduced into a variety of novel genres by the time of this study.

The questionnaires targeted primarily two research questions in this study (RQs 4 and 6), looking to respond to the students' perceptions regarding the most appropriate form of literature for ELT purposes in private schools in Cyprus (items 9, 10, 12, 13, 15 in students' form 1 questionnaire and items 9–11, 13, 14, 16 in students' form 4 questionnaire) as well as their opinion on the involvement of literature and specifically novels in ELT courses in private schools in Cyprus (items 7–14, 17 in students' form 1 questionnaire and items 7–10, 12–15, 18 in students' form 4 questionnaires). However, the information gathered by the questionnaires could also shed light on RQ 1, which

examines whether literature is used for ELT purposes in private schools in Cyprus (item 6 in both form 1 and form 4 students' questionnaire) and RQ3, which examines the relationship between novels, language and culture in the context of language classrooms in private schools in Cyprus (item 17 in form 1 questionnaire and item 18 in form 4 questionnaire).

### 3.9.2 Teachers' questionnaires

Similarly, the questionnaire was one of the instruments used to investigate the teachers' perceptions and attitudes on the use of literary texts for ELT purposes. The questionnaire consisted of six demographic questions, followed by 14 closed questions, open-ended questions and Likert scale items pertaining to measure the teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards reading literature and particularly novels with the language learners. The questionnaire largely responds to RQ5, which examines how ELT teachers view the involvement of literature in general and novels in particular in ELT courses (items 7–18). Additionally, the teachers' questionnaire partially responds to RQ1 (items 7 and 14), which investigates whether literature is used in the ELT context in private schools in Cyprus, and RQ2 (items 8–10), which intends to examine the role of literature in ELT in private schools in Cyprus. Lastly, items 19 and 20 are specifically designed to consider RQ3 and the role of novels in representing the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus, whereas items 12, 13 and 16 examine the teachers' views on RQ4, regarding the most appropriate genre of literature to be introduced with ELT students in private schools in Cyprus.

### 3.9.3 Interviews

An additional instrument that has been used extensively in this study was interviews. In an attempt to answer the research questions as fully as possible, semi-structured interviews could add more depth to the teachers' responses in the questionnaires as well as give more detailed accounts on the aspects related to the use of literature, as these are inquired in the research questions. Specifically, RQ1 could be more effectively answered through the interviews as the teachers' general approach to literature could be investigated with reference to the assimilation of literary texts in the language and literature interface. That is, teachers would have to respond as to how they are currently using literature in the language classrooms and whether they are using it as a means of language teaching rather than in its purely 'academic' and 'institutionalised' sense (e.g. literature as a discipline vs literature as resource). Similarly, RQ2 demands the examination of the general role of literature in ELT in private schools in Cyprus, and the teachers' responses in the interviews could offer some insight in order to decide whether literature is being used as a means of English language teaching in private ELT schools in Cyprus. Therefore, interviews could collect the teachers' perceptions in relation to the current role of literature in ELT classrooms and help decide on the way literature is studied (i.e. product-centred vs process-based teaching).

In another development, even though RQ3 is also examined with the use of questionnaires, the nature of the questionnaire items in both the students' and teachers' questionnaires could not gather detailed descriptions of the relationship between novels and the culture of the English language in private schools in Cyprus. This necessitated the use of interviews in order to further examine the teachers' beliefs on the treatment of novels in relation to the culture of the English language as well as of other cultures in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus. The next research question, RQ4, partly asked



the teachers' perceptions on the most appropriate form of literature in the process of ELT in private schools in Cyprus.

Even though the teachers' questionnaires were designed in a way that they could respond to this question (items 12, 13, 16), interviews could help develop the teachers' responses and examine their perceptions on the efficiency of the genres mentioned in the questionnaires. Additionally, the benefits and drawbacks of each of the preferred genres stated in the questionnaires could be further examined with the teachers during the interviews in order to receive the rationale for their responses.

Lastly, RQ5 is perhaps the question that necessitated the use of interviews the most, as it requires extensive reference to the ELT teachers' perceptions in relation to the use and implementation of literature and more specifically novels in the ELT courses. Interviews, in this case, could help collect responses that explain the teachers' attitudes towards the involvement of literature in these courses and further examine the justification either for the inclusion or exclusion of literary texts in the language classrooms. The questions asked in the interviews could encourage responses in relation to the use of literature as an authentic material and for linguistic development, and examine further educational opportunities that the literary texts may offer to learners.

#### 3.9.4 Classroom observations

The final instrument that has been used in this study was observations. Observations were also found necessary in addressing some of the research questions, as they were an instrument employed to further investigate the use of literature in ELT in private schools in Cyprus and decide as to whether literary texts are being used as a resource

for developing the learners' linguistic competence (RQ1). By doing so, the observed classrooms could reveal the nature of the language courses and help decide whether literature is used as a means of promoting ELT in this context (e.g. student-centred vs teacher-centred lessons, the level of interaction, the use of L1, etc.).

Taking this one step further, observations were also helpful in deciding on the role and implementation of literature in ELT in private schools in Cyprus (RQ2). In other words, the classroom observations helped explore how literary texts are 'exploited' in the classroom for ELT purposes and verify 'in practice' whether literary texts are treated as objects of product-centred study or as a linguistic resource. Moreover, this examination could focus on the general treatment of literature in the classroom and the students' attitudes in class based on the use of literary texts. Consequently, data regarding the activities, techniques and strategies used with literary texts for the language learners could be observed in situ.

In terms of RQ3, the classroom observations do not come up with a forthright yes or no answer as to whether novels are being used as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus. This is more likely a question that can be answered more straightforwardly by looking at the students' and teachers' perceptions on this matter by examining their responses in the questionnaires and interviews. What can be done, however, with classroom observations is to validate the relationship between novels and the culture of the language by examining potential reference to cultural elements found in the novels that may attest the existence and significance of this relationship and promote intercultural awareness and learning.

Classroom observations are treated in a very similar way for answering RQ5 and RQ6 as in RQ3, in that they may not be the primary instrument to be used for answering

these questions, yet they may gather observational data that will offer additional nuances and information to support the answers to these questions. The teachers' and students' perceptions regarding the involvement of literature, and specifically novels in the ELT courses can be most effectively answered by looking at their responses in the questionnaires and the interviews. However, classroom observations can be used to corroborate the findings of these instruments by examining the language used in the classroom (e.g. stylistic devices and figurative language), evidence to show the students' interest (or lack of interest) in the lesson and in the activities, the teacher-student interaction, and the opportunities for language development (e.g. practice of the language skills).

In what follows, the data analysis procedures will be presented, explaining the techniques used for analysis of qualitative and quantitative data and the rationale behind the use of each.

### 3.10 Data analysis for quantitative data

#### 3.10.1 Introduction

Before beginning the exposition of the techniques I have used for quantitative data analysis, it is to state that the choice regarding how the data I have collected would be analysed was made before the data collection began. Bryman (2012, p. 330) warns us that deciding on the techniques to be used after the data collection is a common error that "arises because quantitative data analysis looks like a distinct phase that occurs after the data have been collected".

Even though the data analysis typically falls at a late stage, yet the consideration of how the data will be analysed was not left until the final phase. For example, I had decided on the data analysis technique and instruments to be used (computer software SPSS) when designing the questionnaire and before collecting the data. This was done to take into consideration the relatively big number of participants and other limitations associated to the nature of my sample (e.g. missing data, different types of variables, the type of analysis, etc.).

### 3.10.2 Quantitative data analysis with SPSS

As explained in the introduction, IBM SPSS has been the software through which I have analysed the quantitative data collected. At the time of writing this chapter the current version of IBM SPSS out on the market was IBM SPSS 22.0, but the version I have used is IBM SPSS Statistics 19<sup>37</sup>.

#### 3.10.2.1 A description of the process

Earlier in the descriptions I gave about the setting and the participants of my study in the methodology chapter (section 3.5), I explained that questionnaires were answered by students who belonged to two different age groups, and therefore had different proficiency levels (Grade: Form 1 and Grade: Form 4), and were taught by four teachers.

To get started in SPSS, I chose to enter the data by creating different files for each of the group of respondents. Thus, I designed different queries for Grade: Form 1 students

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<sup>37</sup> This was due to the fact that the university had provided me access to the software with a minimum cost of 50 pence. This, together with the relatively small number of changes that came with the latest edition, were key reasons for not purchasing the most recent version.

and Grade: Form 4 students who took part in my research by answering the questionnaire. This distinction was primarily made for future research plans since I would be in a position to make any possible comparisons between them and examine the students' views on the use of novels by contrasting the exposure they had to literature in their first year at school to the fourth. I then merged the data I collected from the two groups of students into a separate folder.

Additionally, I created a new file for the teachers' responses which was later used to compare and contrast it to the students' answers, as well as draw conclusions regarding their attitudes and perceptions on the use of literature, particularly the novels, in relation to language teaching.

#### 3.10.2.2 Aggregating Form 1 and Form 4 questionnaires.

The decision taken to aggregate the questionnaires from Form 1 and Form 4 students was principally based on the fact that one of the primary aims of the study was the examination of the students' beliefs and perceptions towards the use of literature in the language classroom as a whole. This essentially means that I was not interested in the examination of the students' responses by comparing and contrasting their views based on their demographic characteristics (i.e. age and gender) or their proficiency level. Rather, I favored the summative results from Form 1 and Form 4 in order to investigate the entirety of students' attitudes towards the use of literary texts in the language classroom as well as their opinion about literature in general and novels in particular. The implication that the integration of the two student Forms might have for the study is the exploration of the general students' attitudes and perceptions towards the use of literature, without concentrating on factors that may yield dissimilar results. Most

importantly, the aggregation will present a general picture of the students' reflections on the subject matter, addressing the research questions without necessitating a comparison between the students' responses based on differing criteria of selection.

### 3.10.2.3 Entering the data: assigning value labels

To assign value labels, I coded my answers by attaching a number to each response of the question. For Likert scales, there was often a choice between five responses. Question 8 from the students' questionnaire is perhaps the best example to refer to: *How interesting/enjoyable is learning English through literature? Please put a tick in the box.* This question provided four possible responses and respondents had to tick the answer of their preference<sup>38</sup>:

- a. not at all                    [ ]
- b. a little                        [ ]
- c. quite a lot                    [ ]
- d. a very great deal            [ ]

Each of these four answers was attached to a number which served as a label for coding. It is also mentionable that when coding Likert scales, there is strength of agreement which increases as you read down the answers. This will also be reflected when assigning numbers to the responses. For example, for '*not at all*' I assigned number 1, for '*a little*' number 2, for '*quite a lot*' number 3 and for '*a very great deal*' number 4. Therefore, the higher the score, the more positive attitude we have in SPSS. As the

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<sup>38</sup> This was done to avoid having a midpoint option because of the tendency respondents have to choose the midpoint option response and the implication that to some extent, response set to the midpoints exist (Weems and Onwuegbuzie, 2001)

respondents tick lower down, this means that they are scoring higher. That is, the higher the score in SPSS, the more positive attitude the respondents have.

A similar kind of coding was also done with other questioning techniques used in my questionnaire like *yes/no* questions and *circle the right answer* questions (a complete exemplification of the procedure concerning how each question was coded can be found in Appendix H).

#### 3.10.2.4 Missing values

Even though I have strived to collect complete sets of data, I still had some missing responses. During most occasions where I had missing data, the questions asked were not particularly difficult or demanding, and this leads me to infer that the respondents may have accidentally missed out on questions. This can be inferred by considering the results of the pilot testing which did not return particularly problematic questions which the participants failed to respond to. The pilot testing helped me to improve the overall quality and clarity of both the instructions as well as the wording of the questions to avoid ambiguity and unwanted complications and the results of the pilot testing did not indicate difficulty in answering any of the questionnaire items. However, since I have no further evidence regarding this claim, I cannot draw any concrete conclusions.

#### 3.10.3 Univariate analysis

The dominant type of analysis I have chosen for my quantitative data is the univariate analysis. This type of analysis involves analysing one variable at a time (Bryman,

2012), and it has been applied to all of the closed questions found in my questionnaire for data analysis purposes. In the following section, the approaches that I have used for analysing the data will be outlined by making a reference to the two eminent ways of presenting results used for univariate analysis: frequency tables and graphs. I would also like to stress that in descriptive statistics, most of the analysis is based on the visual techniques of data presentation (Cohen et al., 2011). However, even though only one of the two approaches could be used for analysing the variables without having any distortion or complication in the process of the data analysis, I have decided to use both of them because they add to the explanation. Further reasons will also be described in the section that follows.

#### 3.10.3.1 Frequency tables

Frequency tables allow for drawing a frequency distribution which usually provides both the number of people and the “percentage belonging to each of the categories for the variable in question” (Bryman, 2012, p. 337). Therefore, two categories are created: the column of numbers deriving from the participants’ answers to the questionnaire and the frequency of each score. I decided on the use of frequency tables for two reasons. Firstly, they can be used in relation to all types of variables (Bryman, 2012), and secondly – and perhaps most importantly – they are more descriptive, including information which may often remain unseen in graphs (i.e. percentage rates) and other types of presentations. An example of a frequent table that best presents this description is given below for Item 8 in students’ questionnaire:

Question 8: How interesting/enjoyable is learning English through literature?



*How interesting/enjoyable is learning English through literature?*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not at all	7	4,9	4,9	4,9
A little	25	17,4	17,4	22,2
Quite a lot	81	56,3	56,3	78,5
A very great deal	31	21,5	21,5	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

*Note.* The first column labeled ‘Frequency’ reports the total number of cases that belong into each category of the variable being investigated. The second column, ‘Percent’ presents the percentage of the total cases that fall into each category. The third column, ‘Valid Percent’ refers to the percentage which does not include missing cases. The fourth column labeled ‘Cumulative Percentage’ accumulates the percentages of each of the categories, from the top of the table to the bottom, culminating in 100%.

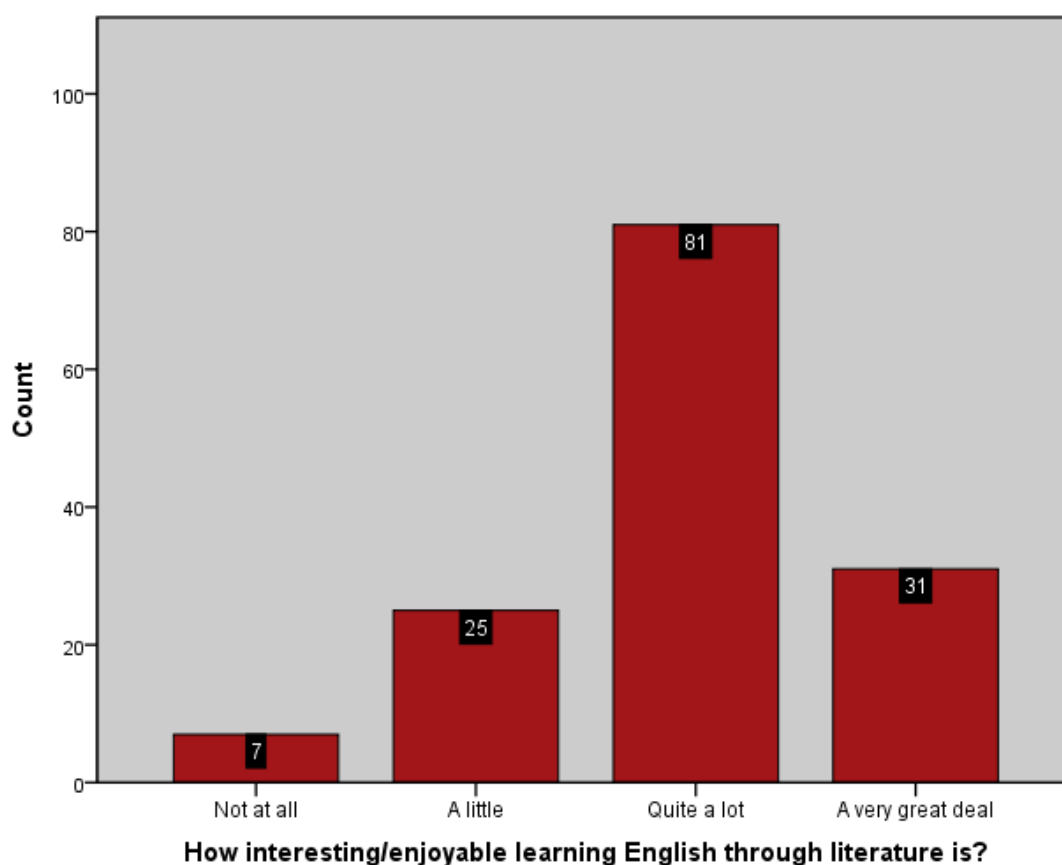
From this table, we can tell that:

- a) 144 students completed the questionnaire and this indicates a 100% return rate of the questionnaire,
- b) There were no missing values,
- c) Most respondents believe that learning English through literature is a “quite a lot” interesting and enjoyable task (with a modal<sup>39</sup> score of 81, i.e. 56.3%)
- d) More students enjoyed learning English through literature “a very great deal” than they thought it was “not at all” or “a little”.
- e) Overall, it appears that students have a positive predisposition and attitude towards learning English through literature since 77.8% of them consider learning English through literature an enjoyable task (with different scales of interest i.e. 56.3% for “quite a lot” and 21.5 % for “a very great deal”).

<sup>39</sup> The modal score is the category or score which is given by the highest number of respondents (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 623).

### 3.10.3.2 Graphs and diagrams

An additional technique of data presentation is through graphical presentations or diagrams. One major advantage regarding the use of graphs for displaying quantitative data is that they are relatively easy to understand and interpret (Bryman, 2012) and they are more appealing to the eyes of the reader(s). This becomes particularly obvious when working with nominal and ordinal numbers, as in the case of my study, since using bar charts easily presents categorical and discrete data, even though the matter of choosing which method to apply is really a matter of convention. This can be seen in the example below using the same question and answers as in section 4.4.1 above (Question 8: How interesting/enjoyable is learning English through literature?):



*Figure 1.* This figure illustrates the students' interest in learning English through literature.

Clearly, the above bar chart is much more accessible to the reader, and the graphical presentation makes the information processing easier to comprehend. However, this chart, and generally some other types of graphs and charts, are prone to not telling the reader anything more than can be seen. For example, even though the count of responses to the four categories can easily be marked, yet no information is provided regarding possible missing values or percentage of responses (%) to each of the categories.

### 3.11 Data analysis for the qualitative data

In this thesis, I have followed some general strategies of qualitative data analysis for all the types of qualitative data I have collected. I have rejected the idea of analytic induction<sup>40</sup> and I have based my analysis on grounded theory – that is, the disclosure of theory through data analysis and through cumulative coding cycles, as I will explain further in my discussion. On the absence of both empirical evidence as well as theory concerning how novels can be used in the classroom for second language learning and how teachers and students see their contribution, I found that analytic induction may not have a lot to offer for this study. For example, analytic induction begins with a rough definition of research questions and proceeds to a hypothetical explanation of the problem and then continues on the collection of data (Bryman, 2012, p.566). If a case is inconsistent with the hypothesis, then a redefinition of the hypothesis is required in order to exclude the deviant or negative case and a reformulation of the hypothesis is necessary. However, the problem that arises in relation to this study is the lack of empirical evidence that could result in a hypothetical explanation of the research

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<sup>40</sup> Analytic induction begins by providing a definition of the research questions, followed by a hypothetical examination of the problem and the collection of data. However, if a particular case is found to be inconsistent with the set hypothesis, there is a need to redefine or reformulate the hypothesis and continue with further collection of data (Bryman, 2012, pp. 566-67).

questions in the first place. Additionally, if the study began by examining a small number of either teachers or student participants' perceptions on the use of novels for ELT, for example, there was a high chance of producing dissimilar results that would fail to point to common factors representing casually homogeneous categories. This could be explained by looking at the nature of the enquiry, since perceptions are seen as subjective beliefs that may be dissimilar or diverse from one respondent to another and are based on a number of different factors (e.g., experience, background, qualifications, proficiency level, etc.). Therefore, the examination of cases following the hypothetical explanation of research questions may result to deviant cases not confirming the hypothetical explanation, a development that I consider to be customary because of the nature of the examination which is based on subjective opinions which may differ from one participant to another.

On the other hand, since a large part of this study depends on the investigation of teachers and students' perceptions (i.e. RQs 3-6), I consider grounded theory a more suitable method for developing theory which emerges from the data and specifically from the examination of students and teachers' beliefs regarding the use of literature in ELT in general, and the use of novels in ELT in particular. In that, I consider the construction of theory derived by putting together a series of concepts (Corbin and Strauss, 1998) more likely to resemble the reality (i.e. grounded theory) than simply providing a hypothetical explanation or construct theory which is based either on experience or speculations (i.e. analytic induction). Therefore, I believe that grounded theory could offer insight and would help enhance understanding by examining close relationships between data collection, the methods being used, and data analysis in order to produce a theory which will respond to the "paucity" of empirical investigation and data-based studies in order to substantiate the claims of theorists presented in

chapter 2 concerning arguments for or against the use of literature in ELT, students and teachers' perceptions of the use of novels in ELT, etc.

This part has three main sections. The first refers to the strategies for qualitative data analysis of open-ended questions, and the second and third refer to the strategies for qualitative data analysis of the interviews and classroom observations reflectively.

### 3.11.1 Coding in grounded theory

Coding can be described as perhaps the most important feature in grounded theory – it entails reviewing the data to assign labels which add a symbolic meaning to descriptive or inferential information gathered during a research (Miles et al., 2014). As Charmaz suggests, codes serve as “shorthand devices to label, separate, compile, and organise data” (Charmaz, 1983, p. 186).

It is to be noted, however, that coding in quantitative data is a completely different process from coding in qualitative data, since the first refers to coding as a process for managing data whereas the latter concentrates on the generation of theory. As Charmaz maintains (2000, p. 515), in this process the “researcher’s interpretation of data shape his or her emergent codes in grounded theory”. The emergent codes refer to the coding process of emerging data as we collect it since unlike quantitative research, grounded theory does not require from the data to fit in “preconceived standardised codes” (ibid.).

Since I found myself to be in a state of constant revision and formation of various codes, I decided to separate the coding process into first cycle coding and second cycle coding. For both cycle codes and for the coding of all of my qualitative data (open-ended

questions in questionnaire, interviews and field notes from observations) I have used a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), namely NVivo 10.

I found the use of CAQDAS essential in making the editing, storage and retrieval of the coding process faster and more effective. This, together with the relatively large data set made me decide on the use of NVivo 10. The choice from a long list of many other software programmes was relatively easy mainly because of its worldwide recognition and availability, since a buy was offered at the University at an extremely low cost for university members and research students. In the following section, I will exclusively deal with the first and second cycle coding I have used for analysing the open-ended questions in my questionnaires, and how this analysis was done by using NVivo 10.

### 3.11.2 Inductive coding

In choosing between the deductive and inductive approaches I decided that the coding scheme that best suits the purposes of my research is inductive coding. In choosing between the deductive and inductive approaches I decided that the coding scheme that best suits the purposes of my research is inductive coding. By applying a bottom-up approach, I intend to begin by collecting the data through the data collection techniques chosen for the study, and based on the findings I will start to detect possible patterns and recurrent themes that can be explored in order to develop some general conclusions based on the teachers and students' perceptions concerning the use of novels in ELT.

Consequently, instead of having a predefined list of certain codes prior to my research, namely deductive coding, I decided on the progressive emergence of data that would arise during the data collection and data analysis processes. This can be partially

attributed to the lack of empirical evidence regarding the teachers and students' perceptions on the use of literary texts for language teaching and its conceived benefits. This prevented me from applying the deductive approach because of the need for empirical validation of the claims concerning the contribution of literature to language learning and the teachers and students' interest in it before being able to apply a top down process to confirm the existing theory on the topic.

Consequently, my aim is to ground my coding and theory empirically, trying – at the same time – to uncover any potential findings that can contribute to the discussion regarding teachers and students' beliefs and attitudes on the use of literary texts in ELT.

### 3.11.3 Using NVivo for first and second cycle coding

NVivo was selected to code the teachers and students' responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaires. Outlining the codes resulting from the data involved first and second cycle coding as outlined below.

#### 3.11.3.1 First cycle coding

The very first operation when starting with NVivo 10 was to import the documents I wanted to code. In this case, the documents were the answers to the open-ended questions in the questionnaires given by both the students as well as the teachers who participated in my research. Once the documents were imported, they were edited in order to be able to proceed with the coding. The editing process involved the application of first and second cycle coding which were particularly helpful for clustering the

segments related to analysis and interpretation of the data and specific research questions.

The first cycle coding ranged in magnitude, from a single word to a sentence, and in most cases the second cycle coding was the exact same unit or a reconfiguration of the codes given in first cycle coding. Explaining the first cycle coding further, codes were initially assigned to the data chunks in an attempt to create a link between the data collected and their exploration of meaning. First cycle coding included four different methods explained below (adapted from Miles et al., 2014) and the type of procedure I applied to my data considered my RQs:

i. Descriptive coding

This method was used to assign labels to data by summarising in a word or short phrase the main topic of each answer of qualitative data I received in my questionnaire. This was particularly helpful for answering RQs 3-6, as these questions necessitated the categorisation of the participants' answers in open-ended questions in the questionnaires, the interviews and the narrative writing for the classroom observations. Miles et al. (2014, p. 74) suggest that this type of coding can be used to provide an "inventory for indexing and categorising". An illustration of this is presented by providing an example of an answer I received by a student. Note that the numbers that appear in the data chunks are codes initially assigned to them in order to summarise a single notation or code (this also applies to subsequent examples provided in the following four coding methods).

<sub>1</sub>Sometimes I can relate with the characters  
and sometimes it is like you can imagine what the  
book says clearly and bring it to life which is really

<sub>1</sub>Engage imaginatively.



fascinating. .

In the analysis of the data, I extracted all the answers coded ‘Engage imaginatively’ from various questionnaires and I composed what Miles et al. (2014) define as “an inventory of the case” constructing a code describing the personal involvement of the students in relation to novels.

## ii. Emotion coding

As the name of the heading might suggest, this type of coding marks the emotions elicited or experienced by the participants and were mentioned in their responses to the questions in the questionnaire. This was particularly helpful in addressing RQs 5 and 6 since the teachers and students’ perceptions of how they view the involvement of literature and specifically novels included emotional descriptions, such as the students’ emotional engagement with novels, their enjoyment of literary texts, aspects they find to be particularly boring or interesting, or the teachers’ appreciation of literary texts, suspense and anticipation of unravelling the plot, etc. Additionally, there were also instances where the emotions appeared indirectly in the participants’ responses and were therefore deduced. Miles et al. (2014) propose that coding the emotions of the participants (in relation to their interactions with the text) is especially appropriate for intrapersonal and interpersonal investigation of the participants’ experiences. It is, therefore, essential for my study since labelling the participants’ emotions in relation to the use of novels in the language classroom may reveal their attitude towards them.

It should be noted that in most of the cases, students have explicitly shown their emotions in their responses, and for that reason the coding was done in NVivo and appeared in quotation marks as in the examples below:

<sup>1</sup>I recently started enjoying novels and in general reading. <sup>1</sup>Enjoying novels'  
 I found out that it is an interesting hobby from which you  
 can learn.

<sup>1</sup>I like reading novels because I relate to the characters <sup>1</sup> 'Like reading novels'

### iii. Subcoding

Subcoding is a secondary code that I assigned after a primary code was decided in order to provide more details about each account. This decision was made after assigning rather general codes which needed to be narrowed down so that the classification scheme became more specific. This was particularly apparent in RQs 3, 4 and 5 due to the large amount of codes amassed from interviews and observations which provided an answer to these questions. In most cases, the secondary codes were tagged on the primary codes since my aim was to demonstrate some interrelationships or shared features emerging from each code, as shown in the examples below:

The novel gives me the chance to <sup>1</sup>escape from <sup>1</sup>Personal involvement-Engage  
 homework and stress. Reading allows me to escape <sup>1</sup>imaginatively.  
 into a whole different world which is much more  
 fascinating than mine. I especially like fantasy  
 novels such as Harry Potter.

#### iv. Simultaneous coding

I have mainly used this coding method in the cases where two or more codes applied to a single answer to a question, or when my data necessitated for more than one codes to suggest different or multiple interpretations. This was especially applicable for RQ5, which asked how ELT teachers in private schools in Cyprus view the involvement of literature in ELT course, since an answer to this question was given by largely considering the data from the interviews where teachers provided long and extended answers and exemplification to their responses. Moreover, this method is also important when the “data’s content suggest multiple meanings (e.g. descriptively and inferentially)” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 80). An example of the application of this coding scheme is provided below:

I really like the language they use, <sub>1</sub> I learn new words and	1Vocabulary
I also like stories. <sub>2</sub> I want to see how the novel will end and	2Suspense of unravelling
how tension was created and how we reach the climax	the plot

#### 3.11.3.2 Second cycle coding

The second cycle coding for my data analysis follows the summarising nature of first cycle coding, looking at possible constructs and emergent themes in more detail. It is during this process that major themes and categories have arisen, generating the main codes I have used by condensing large data chunks from first cycle coding. In other words, the second cycle coding has allowed me to form pattern codes which are in a sense ‘self-explanatory’ or palpable codes and they have helped me to identify and classify a developing and significant theme. I have not considered a third level of coding since the first cycle coding of data generated what Miles et al. (2014, p. 89) call “an

array of codes which was associated with their respective data chunks”, followed by second cycle coding which enabled me to form patterns which categorised an emerging theme effectively and sufficiently. In what follows, I will provide an extended example of how the first cycle codes can be used into the second cycle coding. For this purpose, a selected series of first cycle codes has been chosen in a random order related to the teachers’ views on the most beneficial aspects of using novels in the language classroom (Question 16 of the teachers’ questionnaire):

- Contextualisation
- Develop writing skills
- Vocabulary enrichment
- Develop critical thinking
- Promote intellectual development
- Relate to the characters

In approaching the pattern coding of the above codes, I decided to disperse them by type. For example, the first three codes refer to the linguistic engagement of the students and therefore they were patterned as ‘Language development’. Similarly, the last three codes relate to the students’ active involvement in the reading of novels resulting in patterning them as ‘Personal engagement’. While the code “Relate to the characters” does not need any further explanation as to why it refers to the students’ personal engagement, yet the other two codes may need to be explained further to justify their relationship with Personal engagement. The codes Critical thinking and Promote intellectual development are subsumed under the parent code Personal Engagement

mainly because of their contribution in the students' engagement with a text. Thinking critically enables the students to develop their ability to express an opinion and argue their case since they are personally involved while reading a novel. Additionally, it helps them initiate their own reflections on a topic which may sometimes result in relating to a novel and its characters, and illustrating their opinions and emotional reflections with examples from the text. Similarly, intellectual development involves a facilitation of the students' personal engagement to a novel, and literature in general, by enabling them to see relationships between events, draw inferences, and evaluate and synthesize evidence in order to allow them to "inhabit" the text. In other words, the students' intellectual development facilitates the process of perception and helps them take decisions related to the text.

The same process has been applied for all the codes gathered in first cycle coding in order to have a more detailed categorisation of emerging themes and condense the data into fewer and more detailed analytic units. In the following part, I will concentrate on the detailed presentation of the data as they were analysed through coding and patterning by using NVivo 10. This means that I will be particularly focusing on the presentation of codes in relation to all of the open-questions that appeared in both the students as well as the teachers' questionnaires.

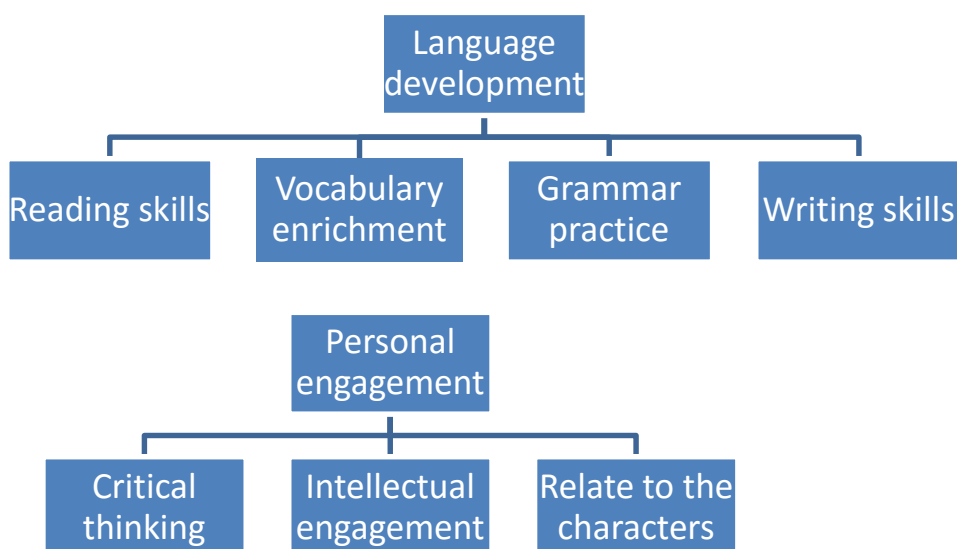
#### 3.11.4 Analytical presentation of data

In this part, I focus on the analysis of the data as they were coded, organised and presented in NVivo 10. An explanation of the process of creating codes based on the data collected will be provided, also explaining the relationship between them. In

creating codes, I chose between free codes and tree codes, and the difference between them is defined in the hierarchical relationship that the tree codes have. That is, tree codes are hierarchically organised, showing interrelationships between the outlined codes, whereas free codes are not hierarchically organised whatsoever. It is to note that NVivo 10 now refers to the hierarchical categorisation of codes as ‘children codes’ and the free codes as codes without ‘children’.

The codes that I used as an example in figure 1 are relevant to Question 16 found in the teachers’ questionnaire even though not all of the recorded codes are presented here: Question 16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?. Notice that there are two groups of hierarchically organised codes and two groups of non-hierarchically organised codes.

### **Hierarchical codes**



*Figure a)* Hierarchical codes.

## Non-hierarchical codes



Figure b) Non-hierarchical codes.

Organising codes in a hierarchical order enabled me to move from general topics (parent codes, i.e. *Language development*, *Personal engagement*) to more specific codes (child codes, i.e. *Reading skills*, *Vocabulary enrichment*). When working with my codes in a hierarchy in NVivo 10, I aggregated all the materials in child codes and rolled it up into the parent code as in the example below:

- Language Development
  - Reading skills
  - Vocabulary enrichment
  - Grammar practice
  - Writing skills

In this example I analysed how novels promote language development or use the aggregation for the code *Language development*, and examined each of the types of language development that are involved through the use of novels in the language classroom. Additionally, I understand that there seems to be some overlap between the nonhierarchical codes Motivation and Personal engagement, mainly because the personal involvement of students may have beneficial effects upon the students' language learning, and by consequence, on their motivation for using literary texts in the classroom. However, the two codes were separated at this stage on the basis of lack of explanation on behalf of the teachers concerning what they mean by Motivation, as

opposed to a more explicit description of how students can be Personally Engaged while reading a literary text. As a result, I made a conscious decision to separate the two in order to have an image which reflects on the teachers' considerations without forming a hypothesis which links the two at this stage, leaving this to be done at a later stage in the discussion of the findings.

### 3.12 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the methodological framework which was adopted in order to advance the need for empirical investigation concerning the students and teachers' perceptions of the use of literature and novels in particular. The choice of the research paradigm implemented in the study has been discussed and a rationale for the construction of the instruments of the study has been provided. Additionally, the relationship between the research questions and the data collection instruments was outlined. In what follows, the results of the study will be presented by considering each of the RQs separately based on the data resulting from the students and teachers' questionnaires, the interviews and the classroom observations.



## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated in the presentation of the findings resulting from the teachers and students' questionnaires, the teachers' interviews and the classroom observations. The results will be presented by considering each of the RQs separately in order to indicate how all of them were addressed. For that purpose, the frequencies and percentages resulting from the teachers and students' questionnaires were calculated and are presented together with the results that were amassed from the teachers' interviews and classroom observations. Naturally, some of the results which did not offer an explicit answer to the research questions were not included in this chapter and are found in the appendices (e.g., The students and teachers' demographic characteristics, Appendix L).

### 4.2 Results of Research Question One: Is literature being used as a means of English language teaching in private ELT schools in Cyprus?

In order to answer the first research question, the frequency and percentage of students' responses to Items 6 and 7 in the students' questionnaire and the teachers' responses to items 7 and 14, the teachers' interviews and the classroom observations were considered.

#### 4.2.1 Students' Questionnaire:

Item 6: Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Item 6 in the students' questionnaires attempts to answer RQ1 by investigating the students' beliefs on whether literature is been taught in the ELT courses. Unsurprisingly, the majority (142 students, making up 98.6% of the group) have replied that they have been taught literature for English language learning purposes in their classrooms, and very unexpectedly, two students (1.4%) have declared that they have never been taught literature in their ELL classrooms.

Table 1: *Examining whether students have ever been taught literature in their English language learning classroom*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	142	98,6	98,6	98,6
	No	2	1,4	1,4	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 6.

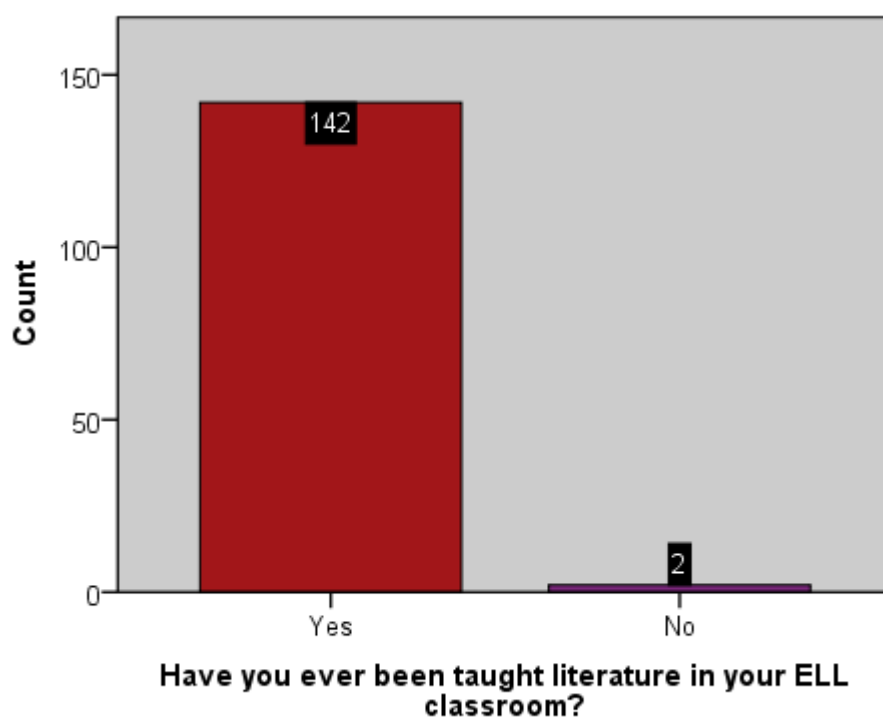


Figure 1. Figure 1 illustrates whether students have previously been taught literature.

Item 7: Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

a. Yes

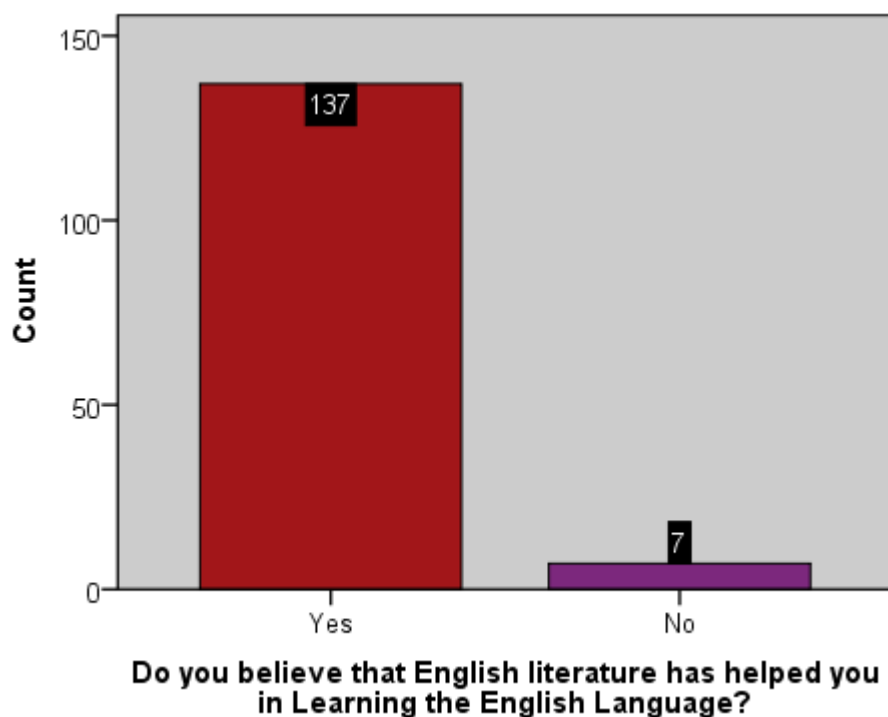
b. No

Table 1b examines whether English literature has helped students in learning the English language, in the occasions that it has been chosen as a language teaching material. A very high number of 137 students (95.1%) have responded, saying that literature in English has facilitated the English language learning process, whereas seven students (4.9%) have not found English literature beneficial in learning the English language.

Table 1b: *Examining whether English literature has helped students in learning the English language*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	137	95,1	95,1	95,1
	No	7	4,9	4,9	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 7



*Figure 1.b. This figure illustrates the students' beliefs regarding the effect of English literature in learning the English language.*

#### 4.2.2 Teachers' questionnaire:

Item 7: Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms? Please circle.

Yes

No

Item 7 attempts to answer RQ1 by examining whether teachers have used literature in the ELT classrooms. The data gathered show that the majority of the teachers have previously used literature in their classrooms since a total number of 22 teachers (84.6%) have replied *yes* to the questions. On the other hand, four teachers (15.4%) have indicated that they have never used literature in their classrooms.

Table 2: *Examining whether teachers have used literature in their classrooms*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	22	84,6	84,6	84,6
No	4	15,4	15,4	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 7:

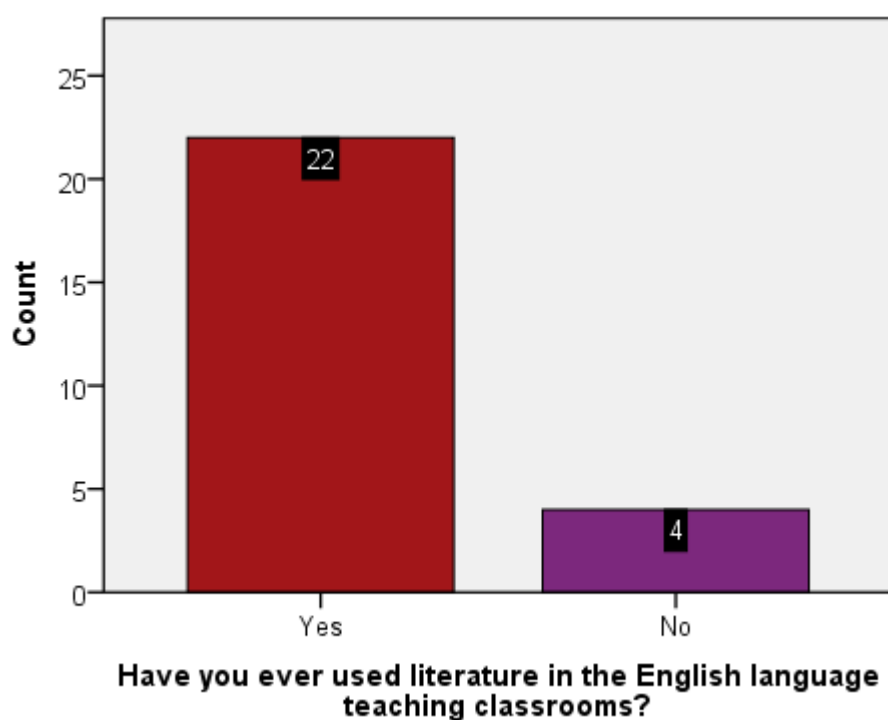


Figure 2. *This figure examines whether teachers have used literature in their classrooms.*

Item 14: Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes

No

Item 14 examines whether teachers have ever used novels in their language classroom.

The data from the table show that the majority and a total number of 18 teachers

(69.2%) indicate that they had previously used novels to teach language, while eight teachers (30.8%) said that they had never used novels before in their language classrooms.

Table 3: *Examining whether teachers have used novels for Language teaching purposes*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	18	69,2	69,2	69,2
No	8	30,8	30,8	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Question 14 (SPSS edited output):

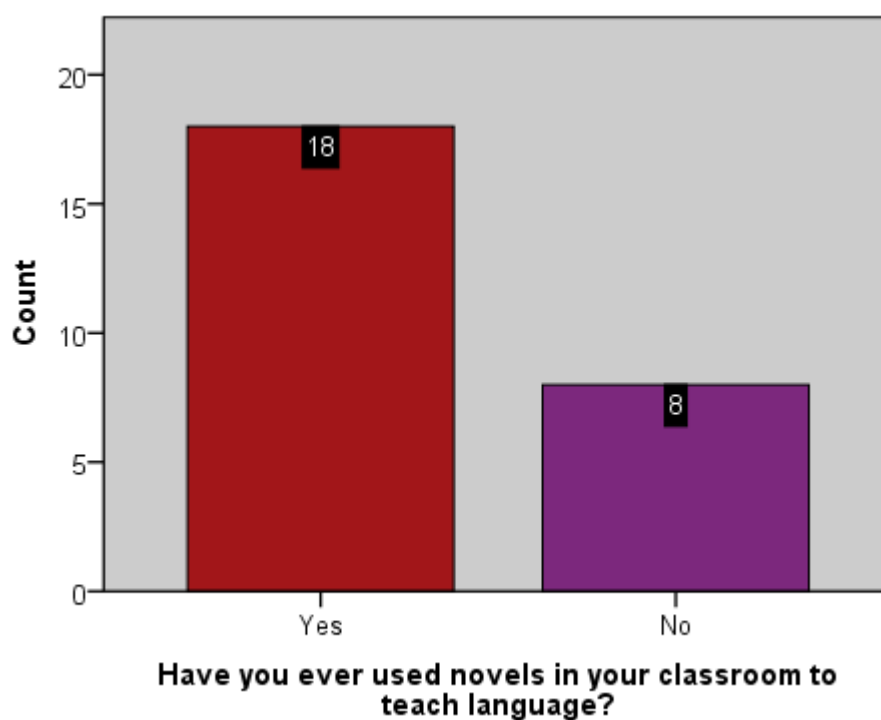


Figure 3. This figure shows whether teachers have ever used novels to teach the English language.

#### 4.2.3 Interviews:

The general approach to literature and the way that it is used in the classroom (i.e. literature as a discipline vs. literature as a resource) can also be seen by examining the teachers' interviews and the teachers' beliefs on the assimilation of literary texts in the language classroom. Their responses to the interviews answer to how they are currently being used in their classrooms, considering their linguistic benefits:

What are the linguistic benefits of the use of novels in language classrooms, if any?

- *Language enrichment:*
  - Contextualisation
  - Familiarity with various linguistic clues
  - Grammar
  - Listening skills
  - Reading skills
  - Receptive vocabulary
  - Speaking skills
  - Subskill
    - Pronunciation
  - Writing skills

The parent code *Language enrichment* has emerged based on the recurrent themes of all of the participants' responses in relation to the linguistic advantages of the use of novels in language classrooms. Based on this fact, eight further non-hierarchical codes and one hierarchical code have arisen from the data. The distinction into codes has been made by taking into account the impact of novels on all four language skills as it has been pointed out by the interviewees and this justifies the creation of a code for each

one of them. However, there was also extensive reference to other language points and aspects that can also result, be improved, or practised through the use of novels, namely *Contextualisation, Grammar, Receptive vocabulary* and *Various linguistic clues*. Lastly, there was an indication by two of the participants that pronunciation should be considered as a subskill that may become habitual and on which students can receive further practice through novels. A notable observation related to the data collected for *Language Enrichment* is that it has received responses by all of the interviewees since *Writing skills, Speaking skills, Reading skills* have been referenced by all five interviewees and the rest concentrated a reference by three of them (e.g. *Receptive vocabulary, Grammar, etc.*). A presentation of the teachers' perception on the linguistic benefits which resulted in the students' language enrichment seems to suggest the use of literature as a means of language teaching in private ELT schools as there is no indication that teachers responded to literature critically and by considering it as a subject or discipline without relating it to ELT.

#### 4.2.4 Classroom observations:

Finally, the results from classroom observations revealed more information regarding the way literature is being used in private ELT schools in Cyprus. Specifically the data showed that the use of literature benefits the students' linguistic development in the ways that are shown below:

- *Linguistic development*
  - Exposure to standard and non-standard uses of language
  - Extremely limited use of L1
  - Grammar



- Comparatives and superlatives
- Use of adjectives for descriptions
  - Appearance
  - Character
  - Feelings and emotions
  - Objects
- Use of past simple tense
- Increase students' awareness of language range
- Introduce abbreviations
- Questioning techniques
  - Comprehension questions
  - Display questions
  - Referential questions
  - Wh- questions
- Speaking skills
  - Ample opportunities for speaking practice
- Stylistic and rhetorical devices
  - Metaphors
  - Repetition
  - Similes
- Summarise
- Teach students to maintain the right tone, stress, pitch and intonation
- Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary
  - Conceptualising a word visually
  - Definitions

- Demonstration
- Gap-fill
- Guess the meaning out of context
- Hangman game
- Hot spot
- Mimicry
- Synonyms
- Translate the words visually
- Words take figurative meanings beyond their fixed definition
- Write the definition of a word on the board in the students' L2
- Writing skills

The analysis of the aspects and features related to the linguistic development of the learners with the use of novels has resulted in the creation of seven non-hierarchical codes which demonstrate the treatment of literature in language classrooms based on what it offers to students:

- *Exposure to standard and non-standard uses of language* which focused on the different levels language was presented in.
- *Extremely limited use of L1* which concentrates on the dominant language used in the classroom.
- *Increase students' awareness of language range* which offers the 'endless' possibilities of how language can be used to achieve different purposes.
- *Introduce abbreviations* which refers to the introduction and explanation of abbreviations found in literature.

- *Summarise* which concentrates on the techniques and effects of providing summaries.
- *Teach students to maintain the right tone, stress, pitch and intonation* which is directly related to pronunciation.
- *Writing skills* which code everything that relates to the students' enhancement and practice of their writing skills.

On the other hand, the five hierarchical codes identified above were *Grammar*, *Questioning techniques*, *Speaking skills*, *Stylistic and rhetorical devices* and *Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary*. The first hierarchical code *Grammar* comprised of two further non-hierarchical codes and one hierarchical code. The two non-hierarchical codes were *Comparatives and superlatives* and the *Use of past simple*, and exclusively dealt with these two grammatical features. The hierarchical code was *Use of adjectives for descriptions* and included the child codes *Appearance*, *Character*, *Feelings and emotions* and *Objects*. Understandably then, this hierarchical code examines the four different types of adjectives which were introduced with the use of the novel during the observations.

The second hierarchical code was *Questioning techniques* and included four further child codes: *Comprehension questions*, *Display questions*, *Referential questions* and *Wh- questions*. All these codes refer to the types of questions and techniques that were introduced with the use of the novel in the classroom.

The third hierarchical code is *Speaking skills* and one child code is attributed to it named *Ample opportunities for speaking practice* and refers to the opportunities students have for further speaking practice.

The fourth hierarchical code is *Stylistic and rhetorical devices* and includes data about how these devices can be used with novels for the students' linguistic development. This code consists of three child codes, *Metaphors*, *Repetitions* and *Similes* and it investigates how their use and implementation may complement the language development process.

The final hierarchical code is *Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary*, and it has admittedly earned a lot of attention, resulting in 12 child codes. This can be attributed to the emphasis on receptive vocabulary through novels and the variety of techniques applied to achieve this. The child codes coded for this code are *Conceptualising a word visually*, *Definitions*, *Demonstration*, *Gap-fill*, *Guess the meaning out of context*, *Hangman*, *Hot spot*, *Mimicry*, *Synonyms*, *Translate the words visually*, *Words take figurative meanings beyond their fixed definition* and *Write the definition of a word on the board in the students' L2*.

A look into the data resulting from classroom observations aims to provide further insight that will help answer to whether literature is being used as a means of English language teaching in private ELT schools in Cyprus. By considering the linguistic benefits of the involvement of literature in language courses, the EFL techniques and student-centred approaches used with the literary texts the teachers employed during observations, and the results from tables 1-3 it might be suggested that literature is used by language teachers as a resource rather than as a discipline.

### 4.3 Results of Research Question Two: What is the role and implementation of literature in ELT in private schools in Cyprus?

#### 4.3.1 Teachers' questionnaire:

In examining the role and implementation of literature in ELT in private schools in Cyprus, items 8-10 in the teachers' questionnaire, as well as the results from classroom observations should be considered.

Item 8: Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning?

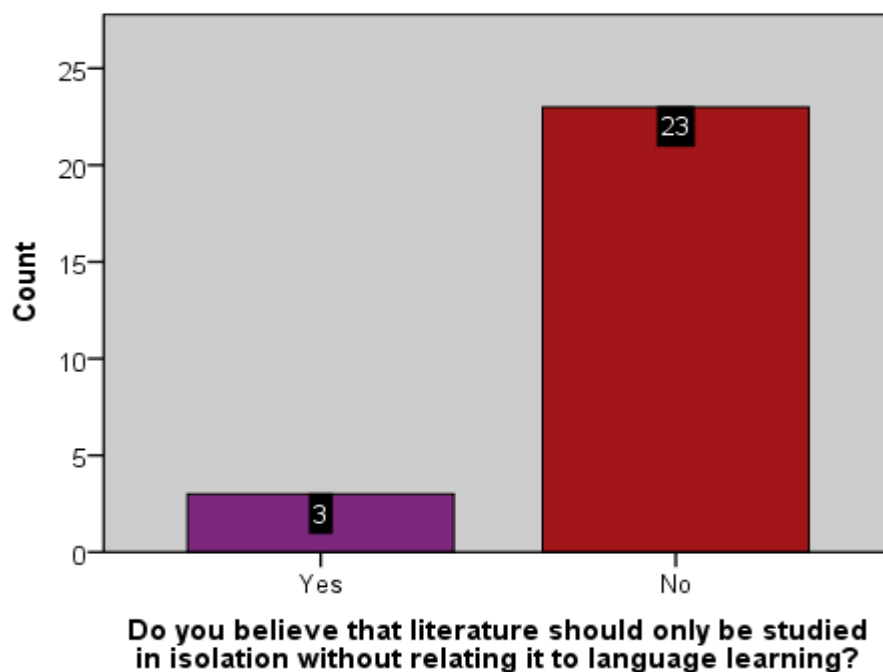
Yes                      No

In item 8 of the teachers' questionnaire, the majority and a total number of 23 teachers (88.5%) indicated that literature should not be studied in isolation and only three teachers (11.5%) said that literature should not be related to language learning. Thus, most teachers consider literature as a supplementary material that could be used by relating it to language learning.

Table 4: *Examining teachers' beliefs on whether literature should be studied in isolation*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	11,5	11,5	11,5
	No	23	88,5	88,5	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 8:



*Figure 4.* This figure examines teachers' beliefs on whether literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning.

Item 9: Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

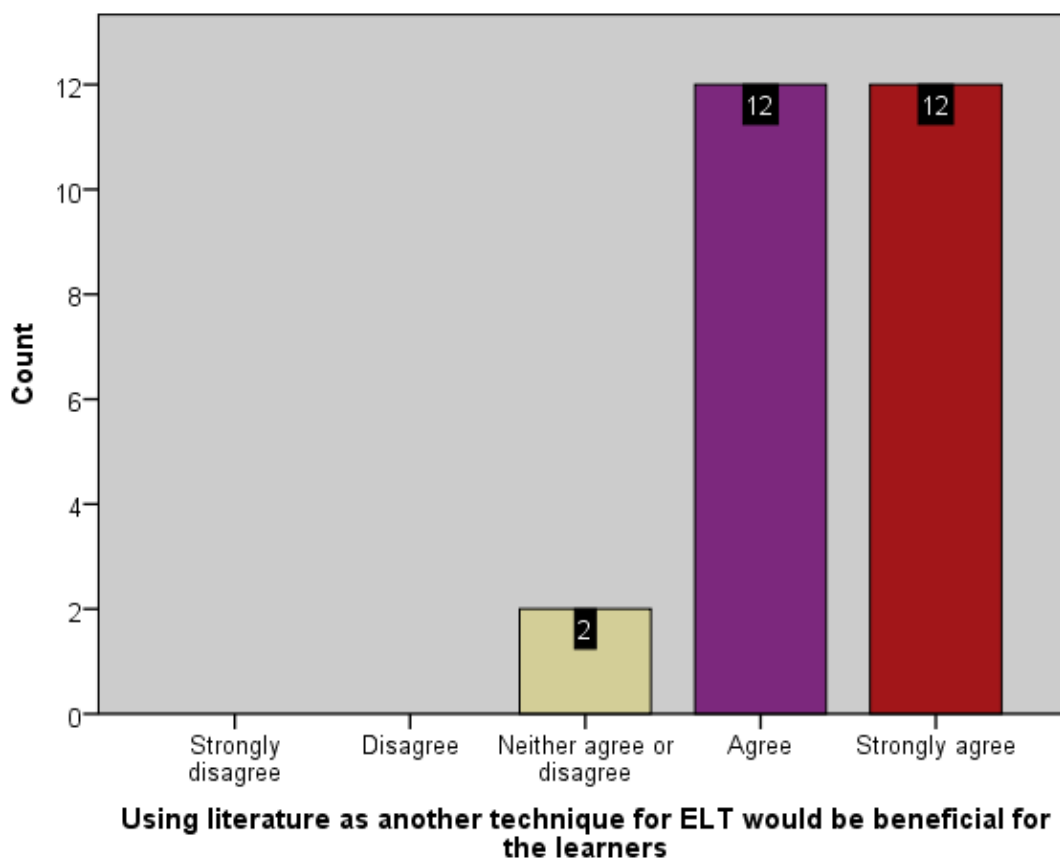
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Item 9 of the teachers' questionnaire examined whether using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners. Since this is a Likert scale question which measures multiple items, five predefined categories were offered to the respondents of the questionnaire. The data concentrated from the categories indicate that none of the teachers disvalues the beneficial properties of using literature for ELT purposes. Analytically, 12 teachers (46.2%) stated that they "strongly agree" and 12 more teachers (46.2%) said that they 'agree' that using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners. Lastly, two teachers (7.7%) stated that they neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Table 5. *Examining teachers' beliefs on whether using literature would be beneficial for English language learners*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree or disagree	2	7,7	7,7	7,7
Agree	12	46,2	46,2	53,8
Strongly agree	12	46,2	46,2	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 9:



*Figure 5. This figure illustrates teachers' beliefs on whether English language learners can be benefited by using literature in the classroom.*

Item 10: What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

Item 10 was an open-ended question aiming to elicit teachers' opinions about the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum. The responses I received to this question have generated results which provide an answer to RQ2 regarding the role of literature in ELT private schools in Cyprus by considering the teachers' general approach to literature and the perceived advantages of including it in the ELL curriculum. The results from item 10 are presented below:



Question 10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

- Language development
  - Vocabulary
  - Grammar
  - Expressive language skills
  - Contextualisation
  - Writing skills
  - Reading skills
  - Implementation of all 4 language skills
  - Figurative language
  - Speaking skills
  - Syntax
- Personal engagement
  - Critical thinking
  - Argument skills
  - Emotional engagement
  - Intellectual development
- Motivating teaching material
- Literature to supplement language learning
  - Authentic material
- Cultural knowledge
- Other
- Literature for pedagogic activities
- Develop interpretive expertise for making meaning

In item 10, teachers have expressed the belief that literature has helped in the students' language development and they have mentioned the personal engagement that the students experience with literature. Literature is also considered by teachers as a motivating teaching material which can also be used to supplement language learning. Other results show that teachers believe that literature adds to the students' cultural knowledge, it can be used for pedagogic activities and that through literature students can develop interpretative expertise for making meaning.

As the results from the teachers questionnaires (items 8-10) showed, there is an agreement among the teachers that literature should not only be used in isolation without relating it to language learning. Rather, the role and implementation of literature in ELT is perceived to promote language learning, the students' personal engagement with the text, and their overall linguistic development, where literature is used a resource for language teaching and not as a subject, in its own right and can be regarded as a motivational material to supplement other materials in the classroom. Additionally, some results from classroom observations can also be considered in examining the role of literature in the language classroom, as explained below.

#### 4.3.2 Classroom observations:

In order to avoid unnecessary repetitions in the presentation of data which happen to appear in more than one RQ, I will refer to them by presenting the page number or tables/figures these can be found in this chapter. To begin with, the observational data presented in pp.178-180 attest the use of novels for *Linguistic development* where students are exposed to standard and non-standard uses of language, are taught *Grammar* and are introduced to various *Questioning Techniques*. Moreover, literature

is seen to encompass *Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary* where students learn new vocabulary items through games (e.g., hot spot, hangman, etc.), guessing the meaning out of context, or by using synonyms, to name a few.

Another important element that aims to address RQ2 is the teachers' recognition of literature as a material that can be used to *Develop interpretive expertise for making meaning* (item 10 in the teachers' questionnaire, p.63). Classroom observations seem to confirm this belief and show the involvement of literature in providing literary experiences which involve students in the reception and construction of meaning as the novels in the classroom were observed to *Develop students' interpretative abilities* by encouraging them to make inferences from linguistic clues, discover implications and assumptions and form hypotheses and make predictions (see page 121).

Lastly, the results from the classroom observations in relation to the students' attitudes and engagement in class (p. 161-162) also attempt to demonstrate the motivational role of literature in involving the students in the language learning process, were students' responses during the lesson and their overall contribution to it were recorded and their overall involvement, interest and reaction to the lesson were documented. The students' attitudes and responses were suggestive of their high interest, participation, motivation and response at the time of the lessons and this might add to the role of literature in involving the students in the process of learning the language by keeping them motivated in the lesson.

#### 4.4 Results of Research Question Three: Are novels being used as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus?

In order to answer the third research question, which examines the use of novels in relation to the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus, the frequency and percentage of students' responses to item 17 on the students' questionnaire and the teachers' responses to items 10, 16, 19 and 20 on the teachers' questionnaire were calculated.

##### 4.4.1 Students' questionnaire:

Item 17: Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

- Yes
- b. No

First, item 17 in the students' questionnaire (Table 6.) examined whether students believe that novels have helped them learn about new cultures with the majority responding that they have (116 students, 80.6%), considering them helpful and effective in learning new cultures. 27 students (18.8%) replied negatively to the question, considering novels as not beneficial for learning new cultures. One student (0.7%) did not provide an answer.

Table 6. *Examining students' beliefs on whether novels have helped them learn about new cultures*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	116	80,6	81,1	81,1
	No	27	18,8	18,9	100,0
	Total	143	99,3	100,0	
Missing	99,00	1	,7		
Total		144	100,0		

Chart for Item 17:

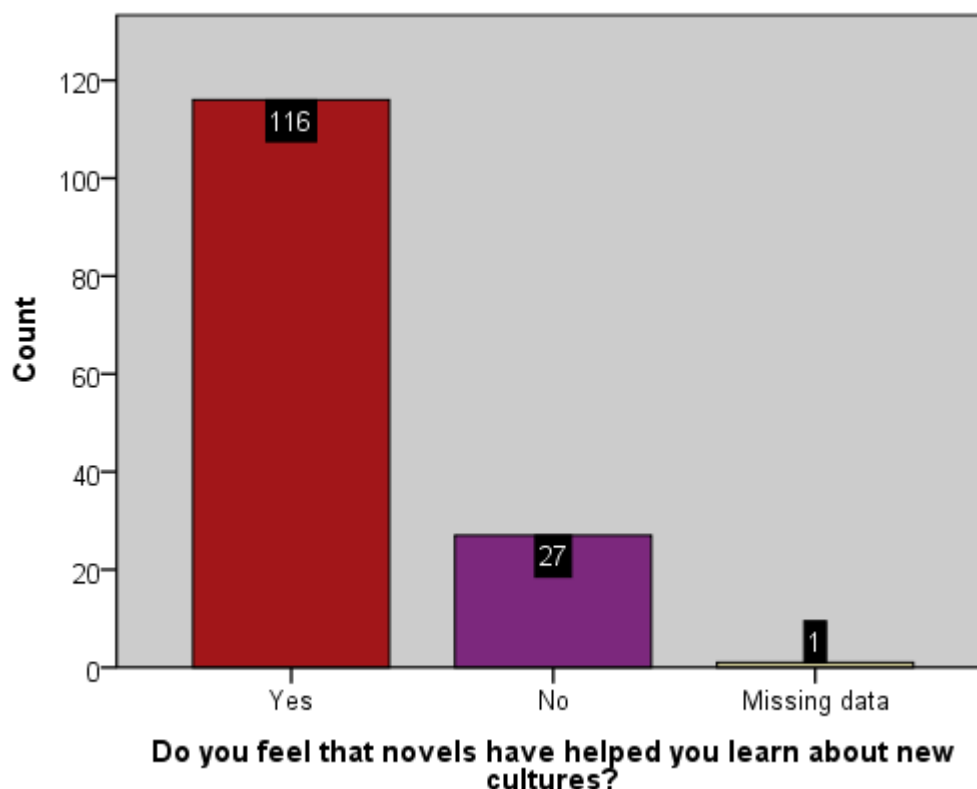


Figure 6. This figure shows whether students feel that novels have helped them learn about new cultures.

#### 4.4.2 Teachers' questionnaire

Item 10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

Further, the teachers through their responses on item 10 of the teachers' questionnaire have identified *Cultural Knowledge* as one of the perceived benefits of including literature in the ELL curriculum (see page 62). The teachers' responses to the open-ended question have generated responses such as:

- a) “through the given literature students can learn more about the target language culture in different eras (Elizabethan, Victorian etc.) and different places of the world (America, South Africa or Europe) where the language is used.
- b) “Learning about the culture and society of the target language”.
- c) “Students become familiar with the English culture”.
- d) “The students learn more about the British/ American culture”.
- e) “Exposure to English phrases, idioms, ideologies and cultures”.

Their responses were coded as *Cultural Knowledge* as they attempt to respond to whether novels are being used as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus and the teachers seem to consider novels for providing new cultural information always in relation to language learning.

Item 16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?

With item 16, on the teachers’ questionnaire (which is seen as an extension of item 15: Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom?) teachers were asked to consider some of the most favourable and beneficial aspects following the use of novels for ELT. It is very compelling that in item 15, all 26 teachers have stated that learners can be benefited from the use of novels in the language classroom. Therefore, it is to suggest that Question 16 included the responses from the totality of the teachers (26 teachers).

The analysis was particularly important since it provided further insight as to why students can be benefited from the use of novels in the language classroom linguistic

engagement. From the codes generated for the teachers' responses for this question, the one which attempts to respond to RQ3 is the code *Intercultural learning* which results from the responses of five teachers who provided answers related to the use of novels for cultural representation of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus (see page 94). Some of the answers based on which this code emerged include:

- a) "Novels can help the students improve their writing skills and raise their awareness of the use of the target language and culture".
- b) "Linguistic wealth, better assimilation of structure, deeper understanding of norms and culture of L2"
- c) "Exposing students to different cultures and issues hence creating opportunities for both discussion and writing".

Therefore, based on the teachers' responses on item 16 it can be suggested that some teachers perceive novels as being used as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus.

Item 19: If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all            [ ]

2= a little            [ ]

3= quite a lot            [ ]

4= a very great deal [ ]

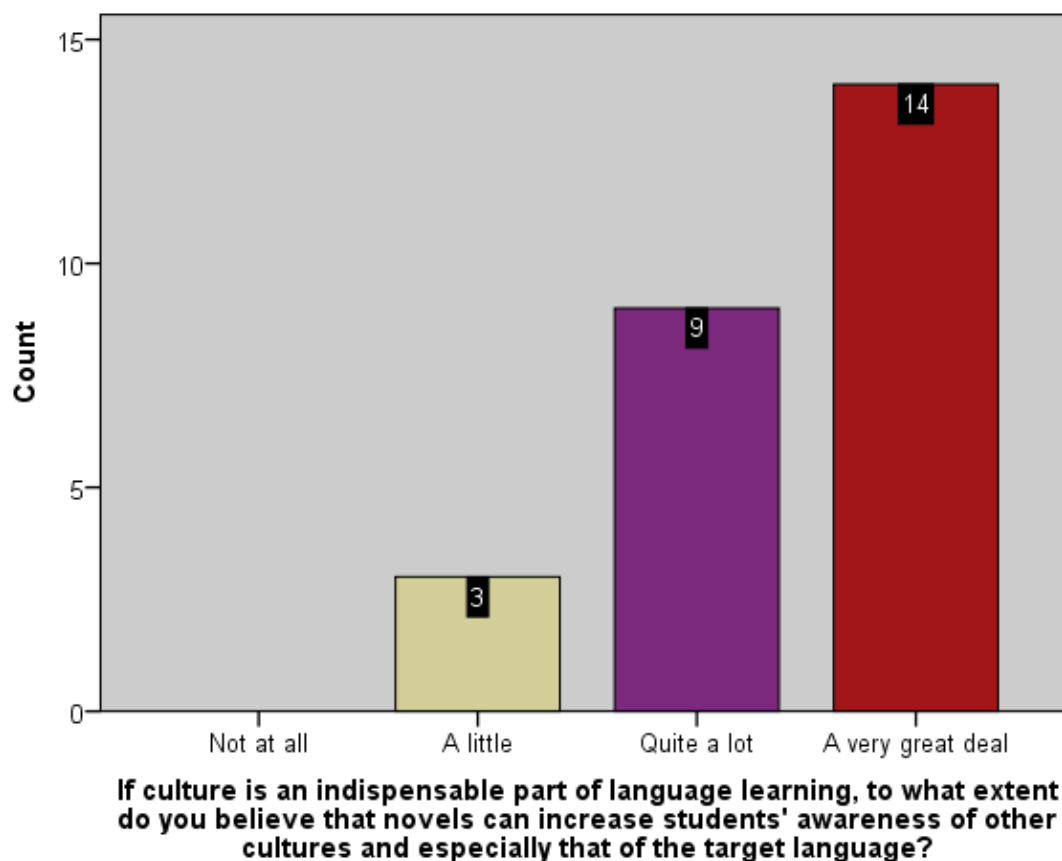
With item 19, the aim was to investigate, based on teachers' perceptions, the extent to which novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures – especially that of the target language (Table 7). The majority (14 teachers, making up 53.8%) consider novels to be able to increase cultural awareness 'a very great deal', while nine teachers (34.6%) believe that novels can increase the students' awareness of other cultures 'quite a lot'. Merely three teachers replied that novels can increase cultural awareness 'a little' (11.5%).

Table 7. *Examining the degree at which novels can increase the students' awareness of other cultures based on teachers' beliefs.*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid A little	3	11,5	11,5	11,5
Quite a lot	9	34,6	34,6	46,2
A very great deal	14	53,8	53,8	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Question 19:





*Figure 7. This figure illustrates the degree at which novels can increase the students' awareness of other cultures.*

Item 20: Would you ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language?

Yes

No

With item 20 teachers were asked to respond to whether they would use novels as a means for cultural representation of the target language. The data from Table 8 indicate that the teachers unanimously answered 'yes' to the question (all 26 responses in favour, a 100%) proving the importance of novels for cultural representation of the English language.

Table 8. *Examining whether teachers would use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation.*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	26	100,0	100,0	100,0

Chart for Question 20:

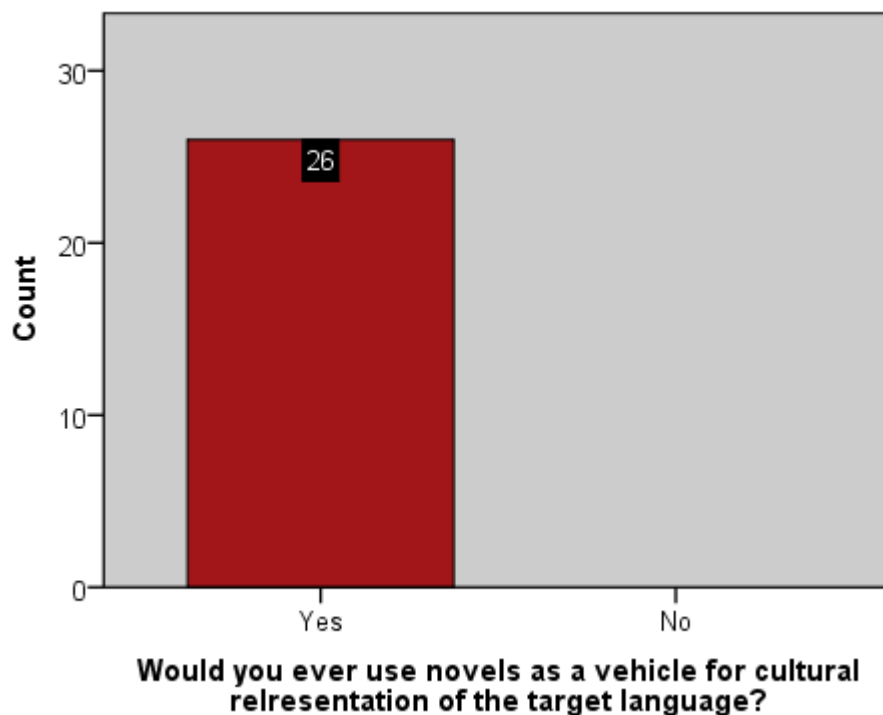


Figure 8. *This figure shows whether teachers would use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the English language.*

#### 4.4.3 Interviews

Teachers who participated in the interviews were asked a number of questions related to their beliefs concerning the use of novels in relation to the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus. Some of the most frequent questions asked aiming to provide an answer to RQ3 were:

- a) Is in your opinion necessary to introduce the students to the target culture when teaching English, or should English should be isolated from any cultural elements?
- b) Would you go as far as to introduce the target culture to the students which is often found in literature?
- c) Do you think that novels could add to the students' awareness regarding the culture of the language?
- d) Is it necessary to introduce the students to the target culture or should we isolate the cultural elements which are often associated with language learning?
- e) Can you think of any novels that can be used for cross-cultural representation?

The answers to the above questions have amassed a great deal of information which was then coded to classify the teachers responses based on recurrent themes. It is to note that all five teachers participating in the interviews considered novels as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus and they have reflected on the benefits of using novels for cultural knowledge. In what follows the codes resulting from the interviews are presented:

- *Cultural knowledge*
  - Culture enhances the understanding of the text
  - Culture nowadays swifts away from literature
  - Culture projects itself through novels
  - Exposure to culturally defined language restrictions
    - Feminism
    - Freedom of speech
    - Oppression

- Racism
- Language and culture are interrelated
- Novels bridge the cultural gap
- Novels are vivid cultural representations
- Novels increase cross-cultural awareness
- Novels reflect their culture
- Novels seen as peoples' televisions
- Novels show how language and culture evolve
- Raise awareness on diverse ways of thought and lifestyles
- Timeless literature: culture of the people and culture of language
- Use novels for cultural comparisons
- Areas for cultural representation
  - Caribbean literature
  - Charles Dickens
  - Chinua Achebe
  - David Copperfield
  - George Eliot
  - *Gulliver's Travels*
  - *Hard Times*
  - Jane Eyre
  - John Steinbeck
  - *Pride and Prejudice*
  - *The Great Gatsby*
  - *The Notebook*
  - 'The Yellow Wallpaper'

The code *Cultural knowledge* addresses all the aspects around the use of novels for language reaching purposes with reference to the cultural elements that accompany them and has resulted in 13 non-hierarchical and two hierarchical codes.

By reading all the created codes, I found it extremely difficult to reduce their number even though at first glance the impression someone may have is that some of them are repetitive. However, when reading and re-reading the content of all these codes in Nvivo 10, I realised that regardless of the familiarity the codes may appear to have with each other on the surface, their actual reference by the participants was quite distinct and very difficult to merge into existing codes.

Furthermore, an additional factor that has functioned as a catalyst in retaining this relatively large number of codes is the fact that they refer (and very well provide a part of the answer) to RQ3. As such, I contemplated this as a very important consideration in keeping all of them in an attempt to provide the best possible answer.

Another observation is that the last hierarchical code *Areas for cultural representation* refers to the literary works and genres that the participants have mentioned to be used in the language classroom for Cultural knowledge purposes. In presenting these texts I have created codes that may refer to both the writers' names as well as some of their works. I willingly decided to keep both since this might be a more detailed evaluation of the writers who are considered to be key figures in dealing with cultural elements, and some of their works which might be considered more appropriate or culturally-driven than other of their works. For example, Charles Dickens has been referenced by all the participants as the writer who could have a cultural influence on the learners, but I have also kept the specific reference to his works *David Copperfield* and *Hard Times*. By doing so, I wish to present a more detailed account for both the writers as well as

their specific literary works that can relate to the students' cultural enrichment and knowledge.

4.5 Research Question Four: What are the students and teachers' perceptions regarding the most appropriate form of literature in the process of ELT in private schools in Cyprus?

In providing an answer to the fourth research question, the frequency and percentage of the students' responses to questionnaire items 9, 10, 15 and 11 (from Form 4 questionnaire) and teachers' questionnaire items 12 and 13 and were considered. The results will be subsequently divided providing firstly the results from the students' questionnaires, followed by the results from teachers' questionnaires.

#### 4.5.1 Students Questionnaires:

Item 9 : What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

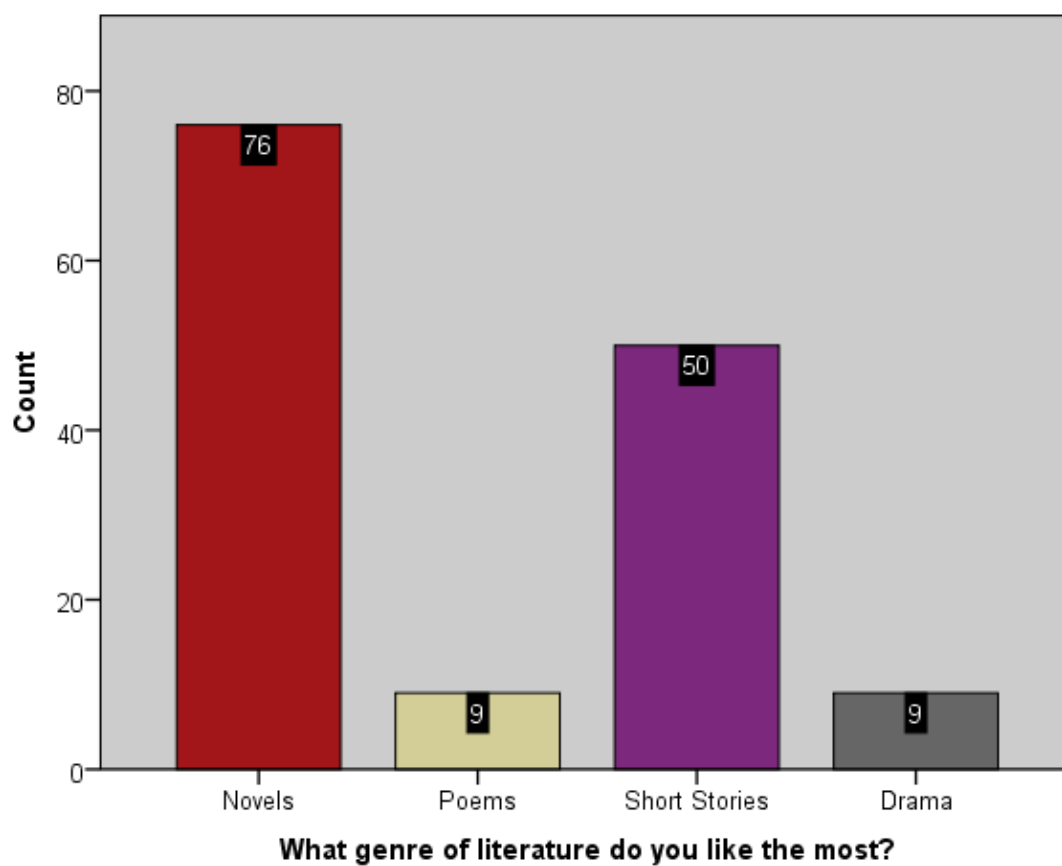
a. Novels                      b. Poems                      c. Short stories                      d. Drama

Item 9 examines the students' preference in specific genres of literature (Table 9). Four distinct predefined categories were offered to students, with the majority saying that they preferred novels (76 responses, amounting to 52.8%). The category 'short stories' was the second most popular choice with 50 students selecting it (34.7%). The categories 'poems' and 'drama' were selected by an equal number for each category (nine students each, 6.3% for poems and 6.3% for drama). No missing responses were noted for this question.

Table 9. *Investigating the students' favourite genre*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Novels	76	52,8	52,8	52,8
Poems	9	6,3	6,3	59,0
Short Stories	50	34,7	34,7	93,8
Drama	9	6,3	6,3	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 9.

Figure 9. *This figure illustrates the students' favourite genre.*

Item 10: Question 10: Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain why:

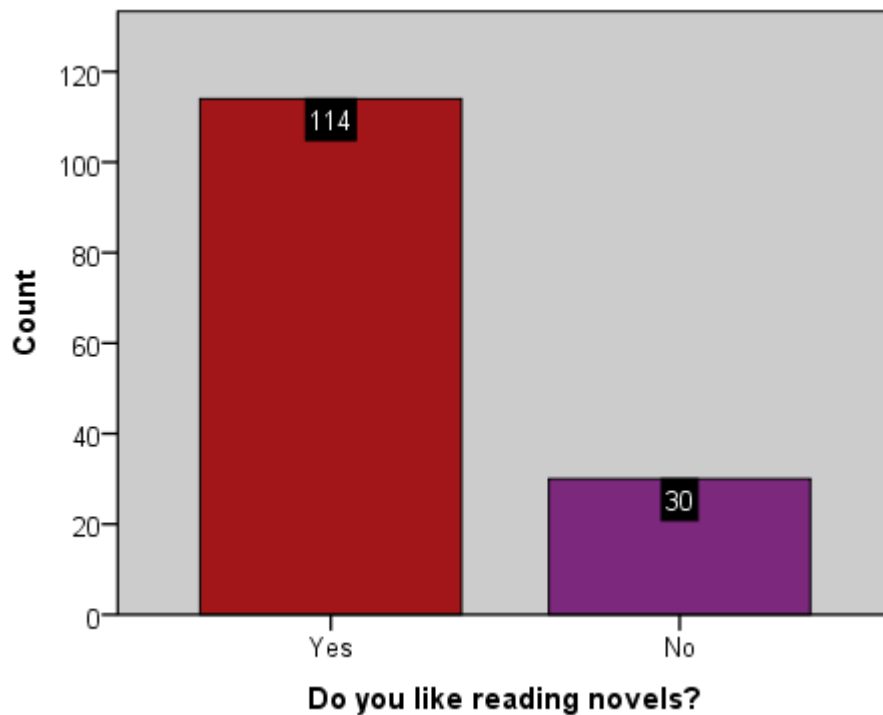
The results of question 10 follow the recognition of novels as the students' most preferred type of literature (Table 9) where item 10 aims to examine whether students like reading novels (Table 10). The majority of the students have stated that they like reading novels with 114 responses (79.2%), while 30 students (20.8%) have stated that they do not like reading novels.

Table 10. *Examining the students' attitude towards reading novels*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	114	79,2	79,2	79,2
	No	30	20,8	20,8	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 10:





*Figure 10.* This figure illustrates whether students like reading novels.

The open-ended part of the question has been answered by concentrating a total of four hierarchical and five non-hierarchical codes in the following order:

- Motivation
  - Motivating
  - Demotivating
- Linguistic engagement
  - Vocabulary enrichment
  - Grammar practice
  - Speaking skills
  - Writing skills
  - Spelling

- Syntax
- Personal engagement
  - Engage imaginatively
  - Relate to the characters
- Interactive engagement
  - Analysis

Non-hierarchical codes:

- Cultural enrichment
- Educational opportunities
- Plot
- Other
- Missing data<sup>41</sup>

It is to note that the students' responses were coded based on the interest they demonstrated while reading a novel, a fact which motivated them to read further (*Motivation*), the linguistic engagement they had with the novel and the practice and development of their language skills (*Linguistic Engagement*), their personal engagement with the novel which enabled them to identify with the characters and engage imaginatively (*Personal Engagement*) and the opportunities for analysis of the literary works (*Interactive Engagement*). Other reasons the students have identified to have added to their enjoyment of reading novels have been coded to *Cultural*

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<sup>41</sup> Henceforth and throughout this study, the term 'missing data' is used to refer to data that are missing from certain respondents of the questionnaires (either teacher respondents or student respondents). For example, not receiving an answer for one of the questions in the questionnaire.

*Enrichment*, the *Educational Opportunities* the novels have provided them, and the satisfaction that the *Plot* of the novels offered them.

Item 15: Which of the following do you find to be the most interesting/enjoyable?

Please circle.

- a. Novels      b. Newspapers      c. Magazines      d. Internet materials

Even though students perceive novels as their preferred genre of literature (Table 9), yet their preference towards other language learning materials was examined (Table 11). Despite their inclination towards novels, the results to item 15 show that they still consider other materials more favorable for helping them to learn the language. The frequencies and percentages of students' responses to Question 15 explore the materials that students find the most interesting and enjoyable. The data show that most students show preference for internet materials, with 57 students (39,6%) selecting that option, followed by magazines with 41 students (28,5%). Novels are the third most preferable option, with 38 students (26,4%). Newspapers are the least preferred option, receiving only eight (5,6%) responses.

Table 11. *Examining which materials the students find to be the most interesting*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Novels	38	26,4	26,4	26,4
Newspapers	8	5,6	5,6	31,9
Magazines	41	28,5	28,5	60,4
Internet Material	57	39,6	39,6	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 15:

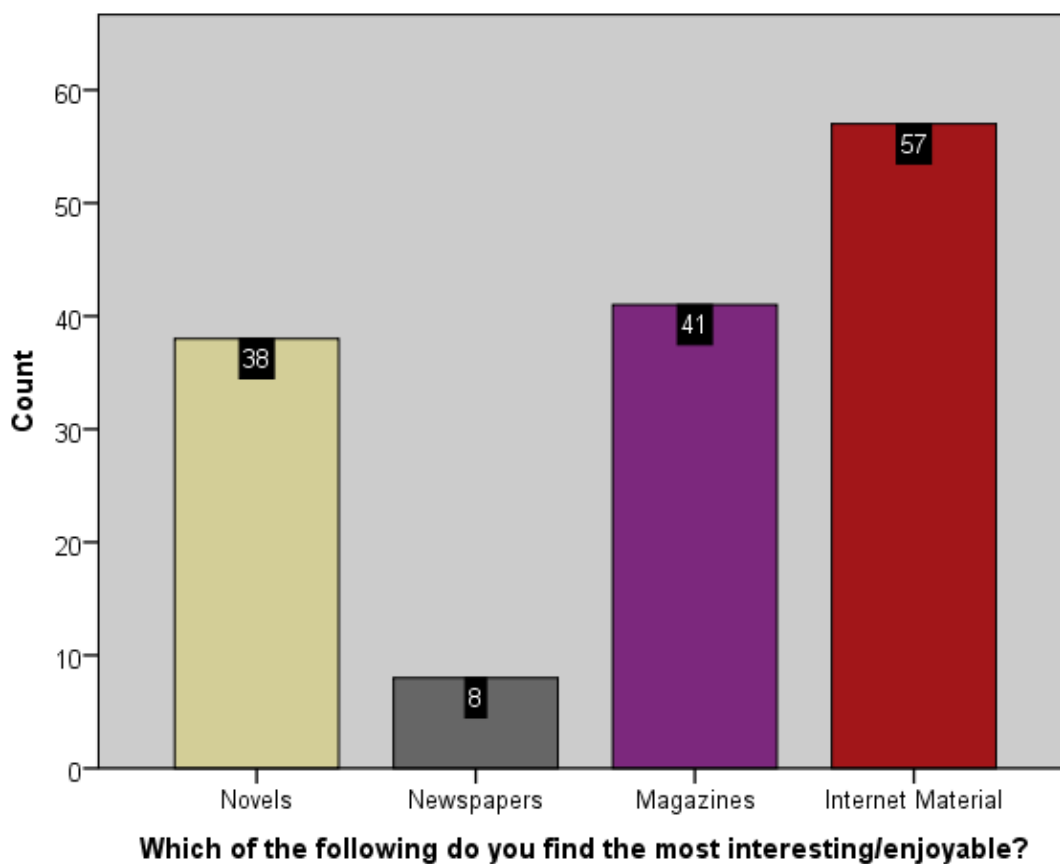


Figure 11. This figure illustrates the materials that the students find to be the most interesting and enjoyable.

Item 11 (Student's Form 4): What genre/type of novels do you like the most? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- |              |           |              |               |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| a. Romance   | b. Horror | c. Comedy    | d. Historical |
| e. Adventure | f. War    | g. Victorian | h. Fantasy    |

Before presenting the results from Item 11 (which is a dichotomy question with yes/no answers), it is to be noted that this question is a multiple indicator which produces eight

variables. For that reason, eight tables were created to look at each of the variables individually.

Table 12 examines whether students like Romance novels the most; the data show that 25 students (53.2%) have replied *yes* as opposed to 22 students (46.8) who have replied *no*.

In addition, Table 13 indicates that 37 students (78.7%) have responded negatively as to whether they like Horror novels the most; just 10 students (21.3%) have stated their preference for them.

Table 14 indicates that 25 students (53.2%) do not like Comedy novels the most, and a number of 22 students (46.8%) stated that they prefer them over other genres of novels.

Table 15 has received the second highest number of negative responses, with 39 students (83%) disliking Historical novels, and eight students (17%) replying in favour of Historical novels as their favourite genre.

Table 16 shows that Adventure novels have, interestingly, obtained the highest number of positive responses with 36 students (76.6%) stating that they considered them as the genre they were the keenest on, and 11 students (23.4%) stating otherwise.

Table 17 indicates that students tend to disregard War novels since the majority (35 students, making up 74.5%) do not like them and only 12 students (25.5%) consider them their favourite.

Similar results are shown in Table 18 which also receives the highest number of negative responses. Victorian novels are the least-liked genre, with only three students (6.4%) showing their preference for it, and a remarkable number of 44 students (93.6%) showing their disinclination in reading them.

Finally, Table 19 examines whether students like Fantasy novels the most. The data indicate that this is the second most favourite genre, with 28 students (59.6%) considering it their favourite and 19 students (40.4%) having a different opinion.

Table 12. *Examining whether romance is the students' favourite genre*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	92	63,9	63,9	63,9
	No	52	36,1	36,1	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Charts for item 11: Romance.

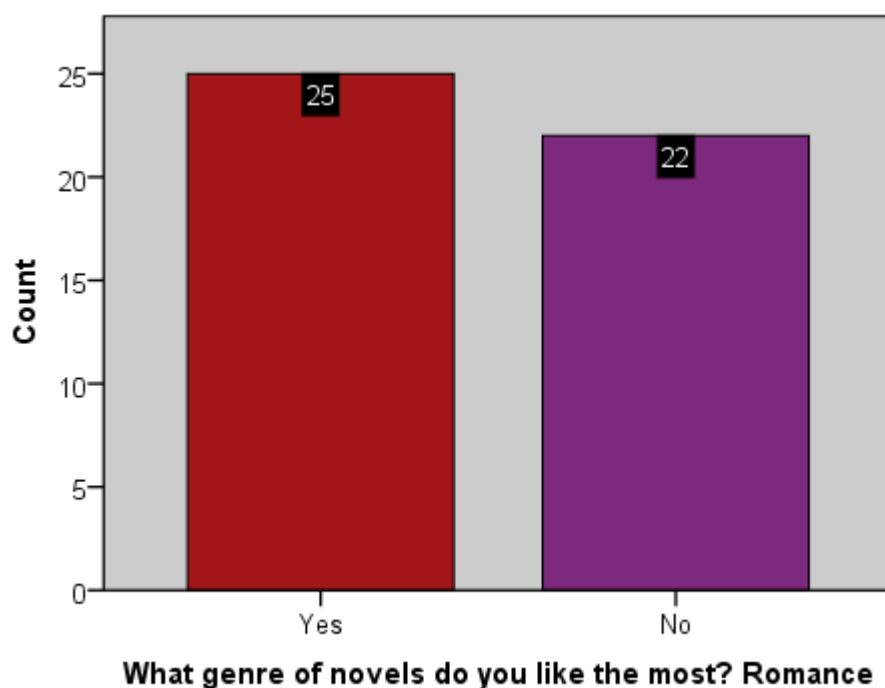


Figure 12. *This figure shows whether students like 'Romantic' novels the most.*

Table 13. *Examining whether horror is the students' favourite genre*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	21,3	21,3	21,3
	No	37	78,7	78,7	100,0
	Total	47	100,0	100,0	

Chart for item 11: Horror.

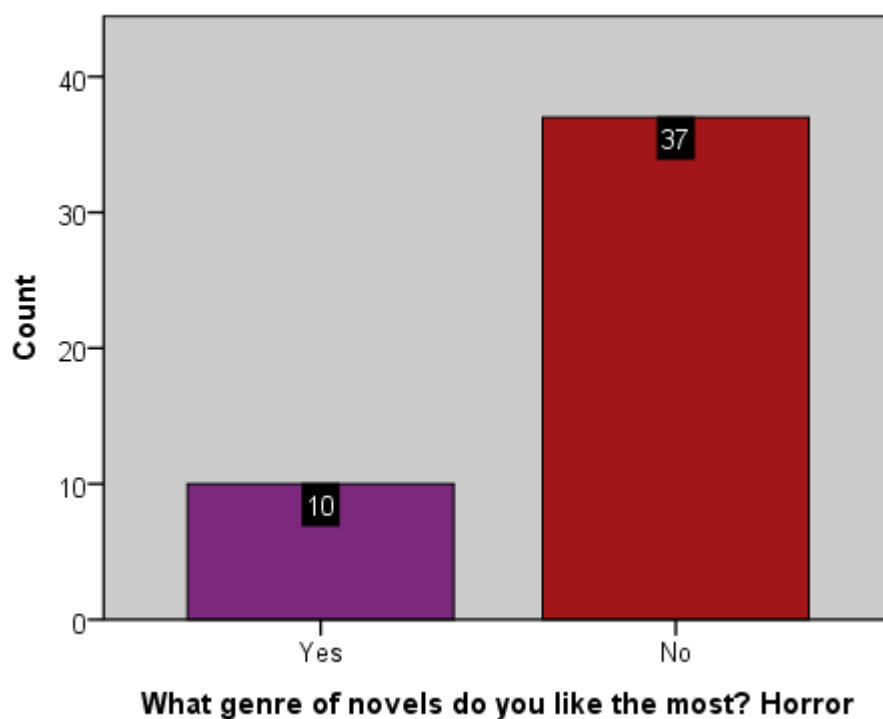


Figure 2. *This figure shows whether students like 'Horror' novels the most.*

Table 14. Examining whether comedy is the students' favourite genre

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	22	46,8	46,8	46,8
	No	25	53,2	53,2	100,0
	Total	47	100,0	100,0	

Chart for item 11: Comedy.

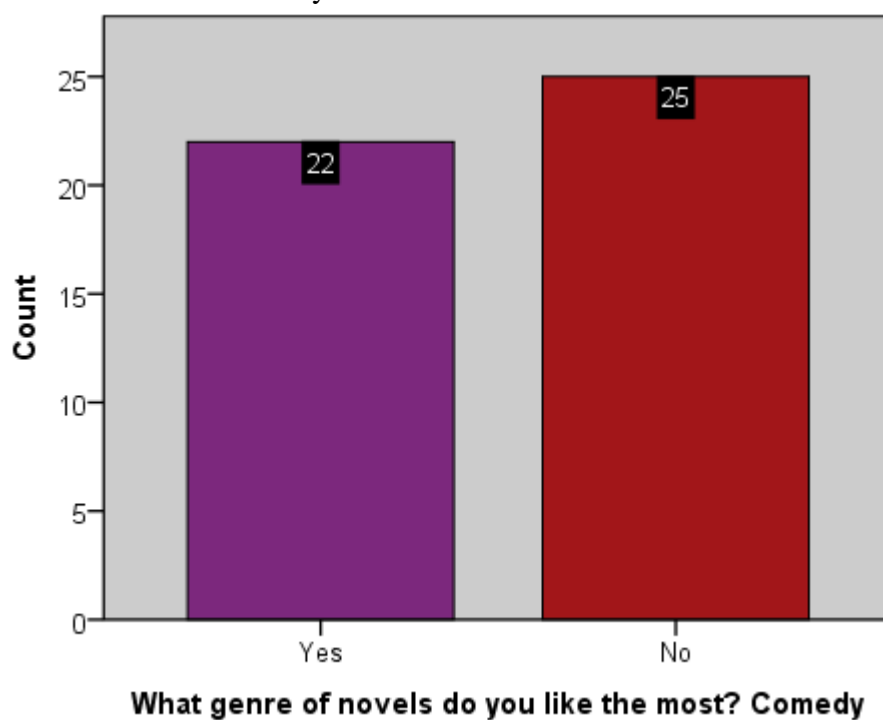


Figure 3. This figure shows whether students like comedy novels the most.



Table 15. *Examining whether historical novels are the students' favourite genre*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	8	17,0	17,0	17,0
No	39	83,0	83,0	100,0
Total	47	100,0	100,0	

Chart for item 11: Historical.

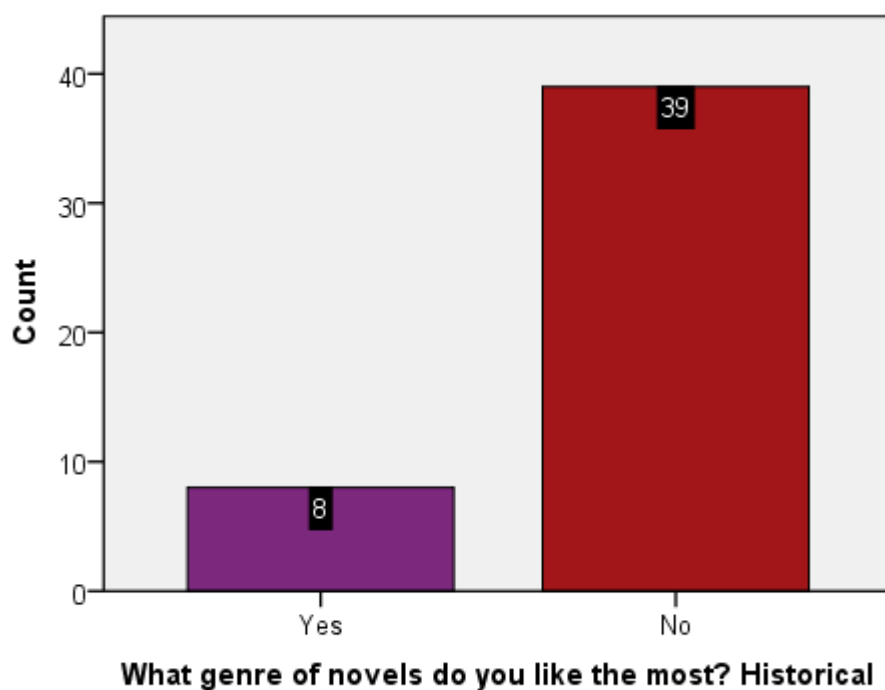


Figure 15. *This figure shows whether students like historical novels the most.*

Table 16. *Examining whether adventure is the students' favourite genre*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	36	76,6	76,6	76,6
	No	11	23,4	23,4	100,0
	Total	47	100,0	100,0	

Chart for item 11: Adventure.

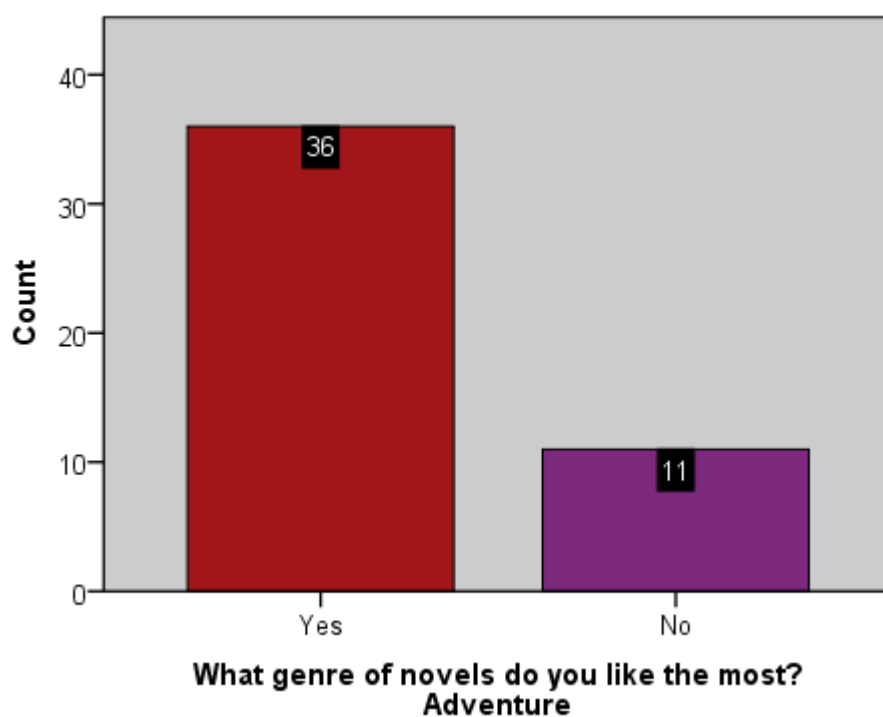


Figure 16. *This figure shows whether students like adventure novels the most.*

Table 17. *Examining whether war novels are the students' favourite genre*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	25,5	25,5	25,5
	No	35	74,5	74,5	100,0
	Total	47	100,0	100,0	

Chart for item 11: War.

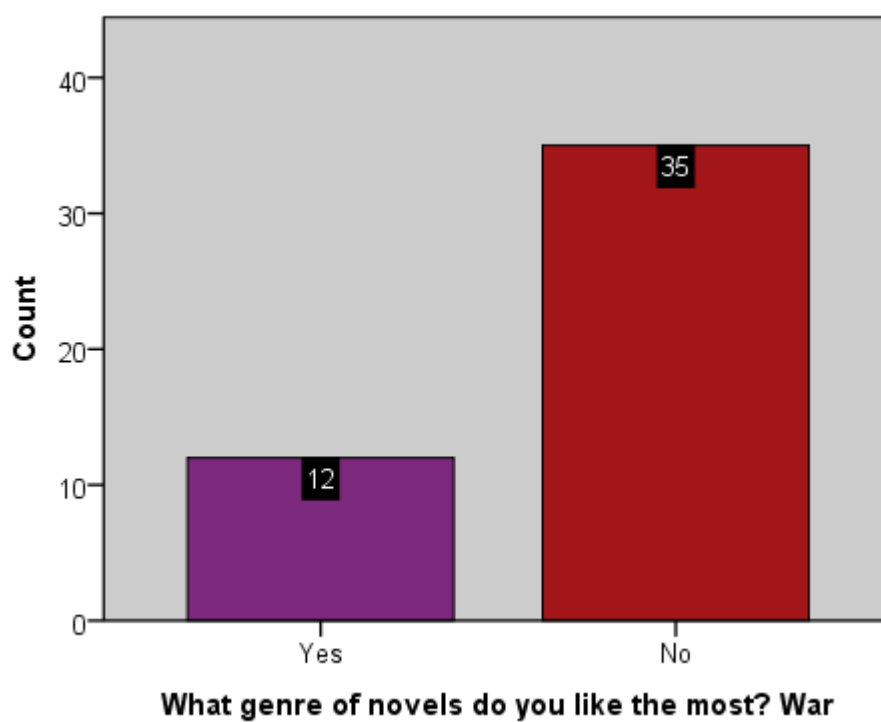


Figure 4. This figure shows whether students like war novels the most.

Table 18. *Examining whether Victorian is the students' favourite genre*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	3	6,4	6,4	6,4
No	44	93,6	93,6	100,0
Total	47	100,0	100,0	

Chart for item 11: Victorian.

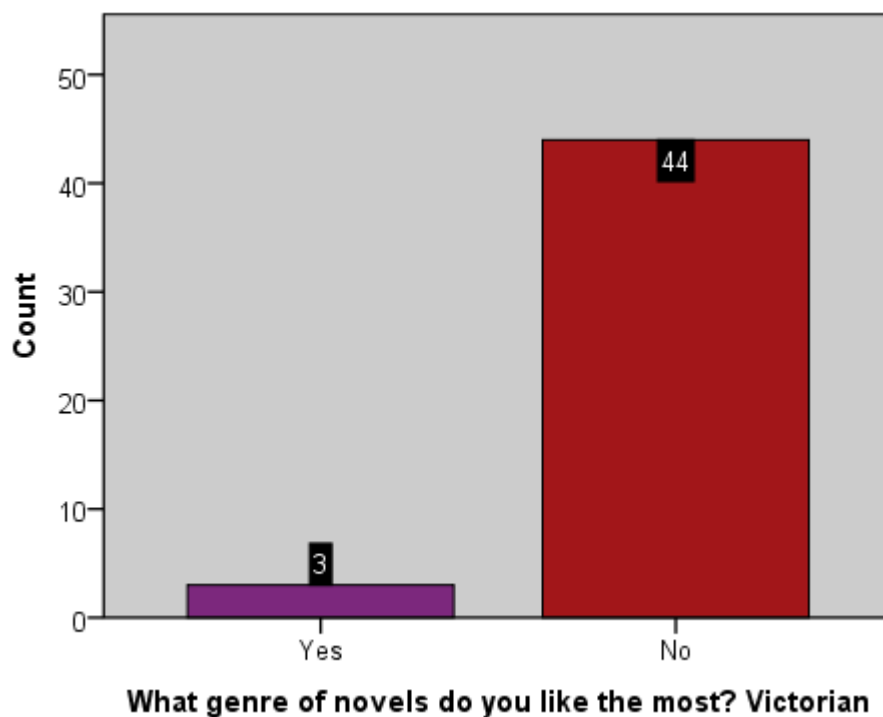


Figure 5. *This figure shows whether students like Victorian novels the most.*

Table 19. *Examining whether fantasy is the students' favourite genre*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	28	59,6	59,6	59,6
	No	19	40,4	40,4	100,0
	Total	47	100,0	100,0	

Chart for item 11: Fantasy.

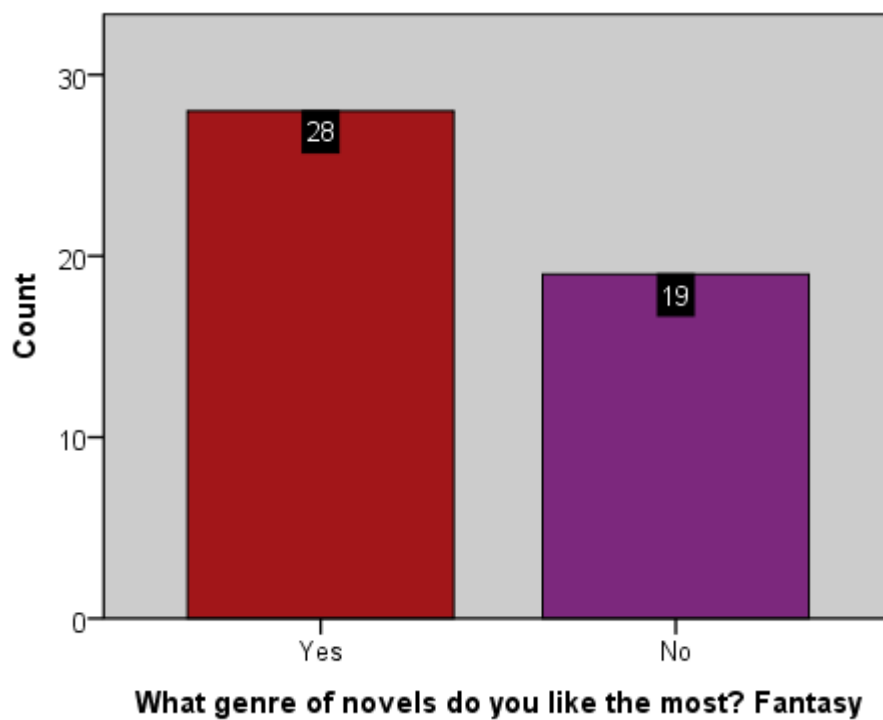


Figure 19. *This figure shows whether students like fantasy novels the most.*

#### 4.5.2 Teachers' questionnaires:

Item 12: What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why?

The most characteristic feature in coding the answers to this question is that most of the parent codes share the same aggregation, namely *Reasons*, which explains the reasons for the teachers' choice of whichever genre can be introduced to accompany the textbook in the classroom.

Another worth mentioning point is that even though most of the codes are self-explanatory and more specific, yet some of them are broader as to what can be included in their categorisation (e.g. prose and fiction narrative). It is to note that many teachers replied to the question by offering multiple genres that they believe can be effective in the language classroom. A final observation is that, as can be seen below, all of the major genres have been mentioned by the teachers apart from an explicit reference to Drama. :

- Novels
  - Reasons
    - Language related
    - Personal engagement
    - Age/level related
    - Motivating
    - Other
  - Type
    - Contemporary novels
    - Modern classics

- Mystery/adventure/romance
  - Science fiction
- Other
  - Type
  - Reason
  - Missing
- Short stories
  - Reasons
    - Age related
    - Practical
- Fiction narrative
  - Reasons
- Poems
  - Age/level related
  - Interpretation
  - Personal engagement
- All of them
  - Reasons
    - Activate students' schemata
    - Motivation
- Plays

Based on the results of item 12, two interesting facts became apparent. Firstly, that the category *Novels* was the most commonly mentioned genre by the teachers (19 teachers)

providing more justification as to why it should be used in the language classroom, followed by *Short stories*, *Poems* and *Plays* (which concentrated the least responses). Secondly, the category *Other* has been ranked as the second most frequently mentioned option and this should be discussed and explained since it appears high in the list because it includes many genres/types of literature which have not been explicitly categorised in the teachers' responses and could therefore not be included in any of the above codes. For example, the category *Types* includes codes (genres) like: action, crime, detective, comedy, fairy tales, etc. However, they could not be listed as novels or short stories simply because both of these two categories embrace the aforementioned genres and it would have been improper to suggest the inclusion to any of them.

Item 13: At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT?

Please circle.

- a. Beginner                      b. Elementary                      c. Intermediate                      d. Advanced

Even though this question sought to find out the level at which learners should be introduced to novels for ELT purposes, yet it can also be considered in order to answer RQ4 since in many instances the distinction between the teachers' preference in certain literary genres (i.e. novels, short stories, poems and plays) was based on the age and level of learners (i.e. item 12 of the teachers' questionnaire and the code *Age related*). The frequencies and percentages of Item 13 (Table 20) investigate the level in which learners should be introduced to the use of novels in ELT. The data demonstrate that the majority of the teachers with 14 responses (53.8%) believe that learners should start using novels at an elementary level, while seven teachers (26.9%) believe that students should begin using novels at an intermediate level. Four teachers (15.4%) said that



learners should be introduced to novels at a beginner level and only one teacher (3.8%) considers that the students should start using them at an advanced level.

Table 20. *Examining the teachers' beliefs on the level at which learners should be introduced into the use of novels for ELT purposes*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Beginner	4	15,4	15,4	15,4
Elementary	14	53,8	53,8	69,2
Intermediate	7	26,9	26,9	96,2
Advanced	1	3,8	3,8	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

b) Chart for Item 13:

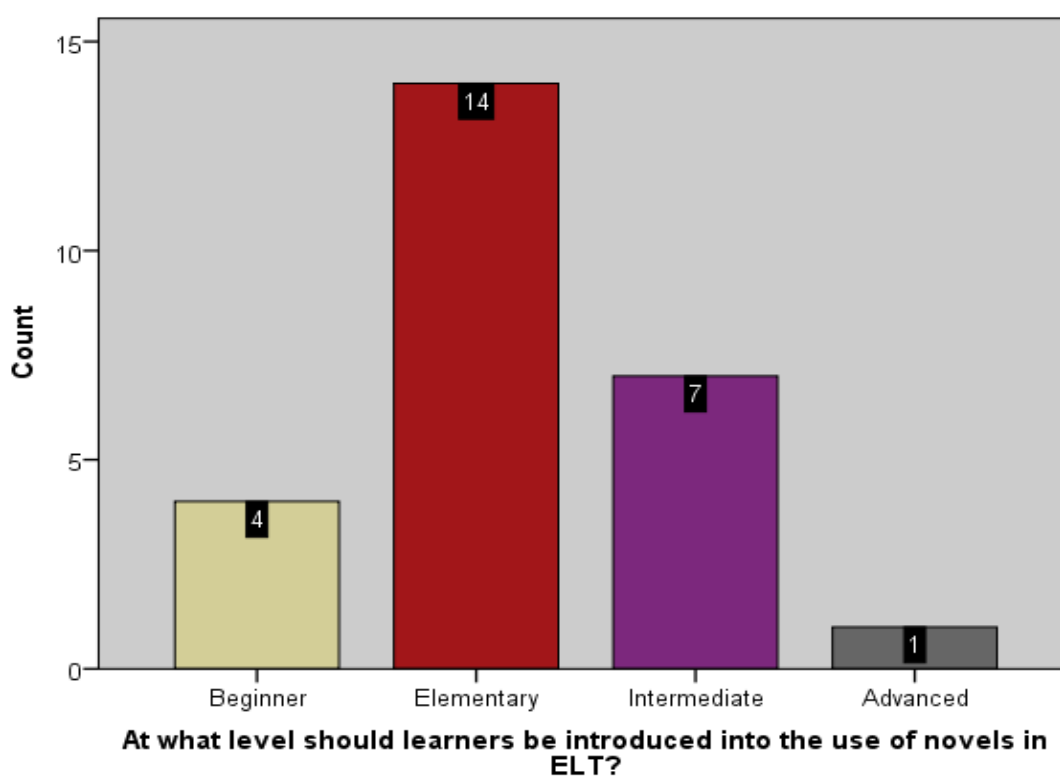


Figure 6. This figure illustrates the level at which the learners should be introduced into the use of the novels.

#### 4.5.3 Interviews:

In addressing RQ4 regarding the students and teachers' perceptions regarding the most appropriate form of literature in the process of ELT in private schools in Cyprus, the teachers' interviews should also be examined in order to scrutinise results that may provide further insight regarding the most appropriate genre and the criteria based on which the selection is made. The codes *Text selection* and *Selection of genres* (see pages 118 and 127 respectively, for a more detailed presentation of the data) deal with the aforementioned criteria of selection and they include the introduction of various periods, both male and female writers, and native and non-native speakers. The teachers identify the length of the literary works, the language difficulty in them and the most appropriate choice of writer as the most important criteria for selecting a certain genre to be used with language learners. The results which are also relevant to addressing RQ4 are related to the teachers' beliefs in relation to the *Selection of genres* are presented below:

- *Selection of genres*
  - Classics
    - Careful text selection
    - Great representations of cultural notions
    - Ideal for language teaching but also the dullest
    - Universal themes
    - Victorian
      - Limitation
        - Inability to form a representation of contemporary lives and lifestyles

- Inappropriate for beginners
- Inappropriate for introductory novels
- Language use between then and now is incompatible
- Prerequisites
  - Links between now and then
  - Symbolisms
  - Taboo issues/topics
  - Understanding of the world and cultures of that age
  - Understanding of what was allowed and prohibited to say
- Contemporary novels
  - Closer to what students know
  - Good for introduction
  - Students' familiarity with context
  - Writer selection

Teachers perceive classics as ideal for language teaching because they include great representations of cultural notions and universal themes but at the same, they recognise that they may bore the students and that they come with certain limitations for using them with students. This is observed to be more prevalent for Victorian novels where the setting of the novel may appear incompatible for a contemporary representation of lifestyle and may also be inappropriate for using them with beginners. On the contrary, contemporary novels are regarded as more suitable for introducing students to literary texts, mainly because of the students' familiarity with context and because they are closer to what students already know.

4.6 Results of Research question five: How do the ELT teachers in private schools in Cyprus view the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in ELT courses?

In order to answer research question five, the frequency and percentages of teachers' responses to items 5, 8-13 and 15-18 of the teachers' questionnaires, the teachers' perceptions on the use of novels for ELT resulting from the interviews and the data from classroom observations were considered.

#### 4.6.1 Teachers' questionnaires

##### Item 5: Academic Qualifications

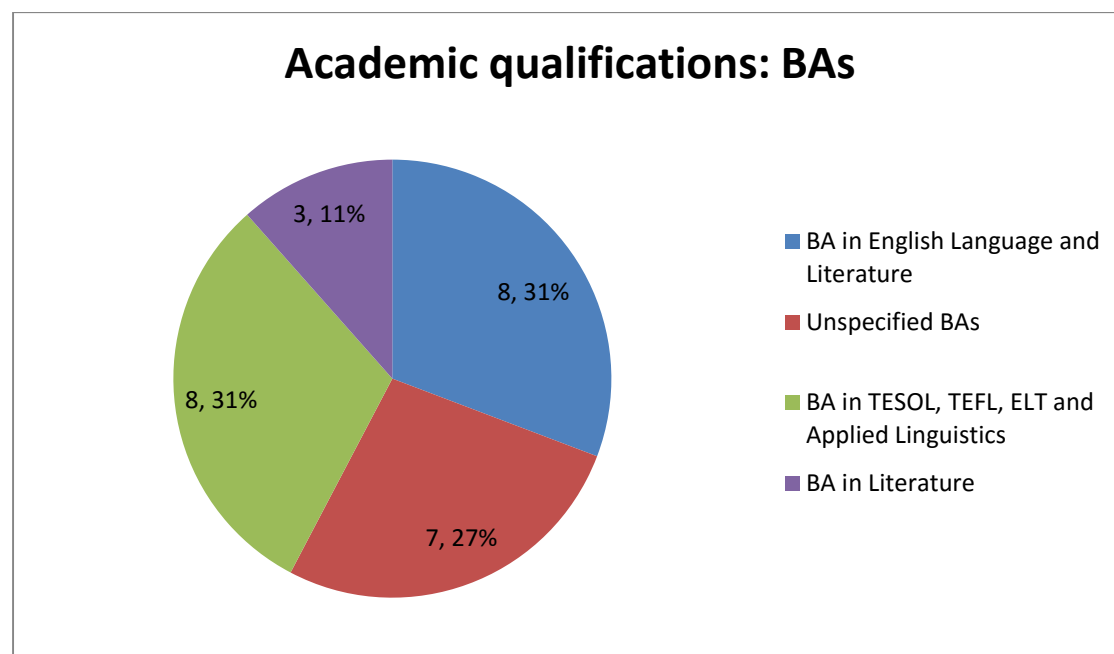
Even though the teachers academic qualification do not appear to provide an explicit answer in relation to how the teachers view the involvement of literature and novels in ELT, yet a presentation of their educational background may reveal information which is relevant to their perceptions. For example, it would be interesting to examine the percentage of people who have BAs in English Language and Literature since this might mean that they are predisposed to appreciate its contribution in ELT more. The teachers academic qualifications are presented below:

Table 21. *The teachers' academic qualifications*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid BA	1	3,8	3,8	3,8
BA E&L	1	3,8	3,8	7,7
BA E&L, MA English Syntax	1	3,8	3,8	11,5
BA E&L, MA TEFL	1	3,8	3,8	15,4
BA E&L, MA TESOL	1	3,8	3,8	19,2
BA E&Lx <sup>42</sup>	1	3,8	3,8	23,1
BA E&Lx, MA TE as a 2nd Language	1	3,8	3,8	26,9
BA ELT, MSc CALL	1	3,8	3,8	30,8
BA Eng Lit, MA Comparative Lit, PGCE	1	3,8	3,8	34,6
BA Eng Lit, MA E Lit and Comp cultural stu.	1	3,8	3,8	38,5
BA English studies, MA ELT, CELTA	1	3,8	3,8	42,3
BA English Studies, PGCSE English	1	3,8	3,8	46,2
BA English, MA in ELT	1	3,8	3,8	50,0
BA in E&L	1	3,8	3,8	53,8
BA in E&L, MA Applied L.	2	7,7	7,7	61,5
BA in E&L, MA in English Language Studies	1	3,8	3,8	65,4
BA in English Literature, MA in Education	1	3,8	3,8	69,2
BA TEFL, MA TEFL	1	3,8	3,8	73,1
BA, MA	2	7,7	7,7	80,8
BA, MA TESOL	1	3,8	3,8	84,6
BA, MSc.	1	3,8	3,8	88,5
BA, MA	1	3,8	3,8	92,3
MA in TEFL	1	3,8	3,8	96,2
MA TESOL	1	3,8	3,8	100,0

Total	26	100,0	100,0
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Pie Charts for Question 5:



*Figure 21. This figure illustrates the academic qualifications (BAs) that the teachers have.*

<sup>42</sup> *Note.* Lx. is an abbreviation of Linguistics, lit. is an abbreviation of literature, E&L is an abbreviation of English language and literature. For further information on academic qualifications and how these are abbreviated for this table, see the 'Findings' of the table.

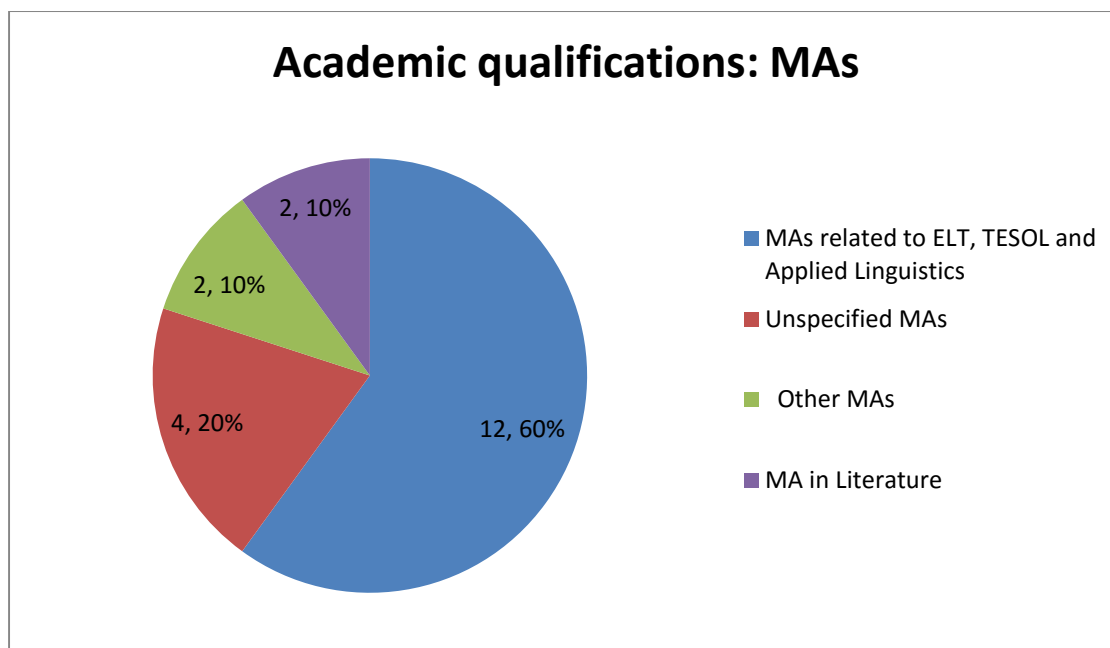


Figure 22. This figure illustrates the academic qualifications (MAs) that the teachers have.

Item 5 focuses on the teachers' academic qualifications – the table and pie charts for this question presents the data analytically. What has emerged from the data is that the many of the teachers' academic qualifications are related in some degree since many respondents share similar characteristics either at the Bachelor's or the Master's level. Additionally, it is also interesting to identify what percentage of teachers have BAs in Language and Literature (31%), since this may imply that teachers are predisposed to regard literature as a useful tool in promoting language acquisition. Moreover, a high percentage of teachers appear to have MAs related to TESOL, ELT, TEFL and Applied Linguistics (60%). This suggests a well trained workforce, and the implications of this can be examined, in the Discussion chapter, in relation to other contexts. In order to present the data in a more accessible way, the academic qualifications will be presented in a bullet form list. Additionally I have avoided making a detailed list of the total number of responses (frequency) for each qualification, similar to what I have done so

far in the presentation of the findings since most of the respondents have unique and dissimilar qualifications.

Item 8: Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning?

Yes                      No

Item 8 (Table 22) examines the teachers' beliefs on whether literature should only be used in isolation without relating it to language learning. The majority and a total number of 23 teachers (88.5%) indicated that literature should not be studied in isolation and only three teachers (11.5%) said that literature should not be related to language learning.

Table 22. *Examining teachers' beliefs on whether literature should be studied in isolation*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	11,5	11,5	11,5
	No	23	88,5	88,5	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 8:



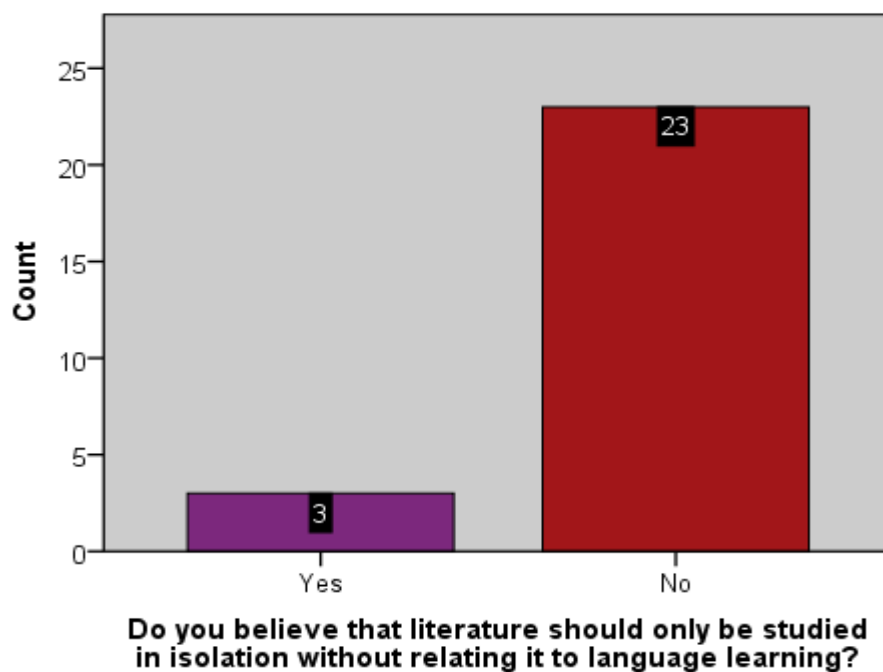


Figure 23. This figure examines whether teachers believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning.

Item 9: Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1    2    3    4    5  
           

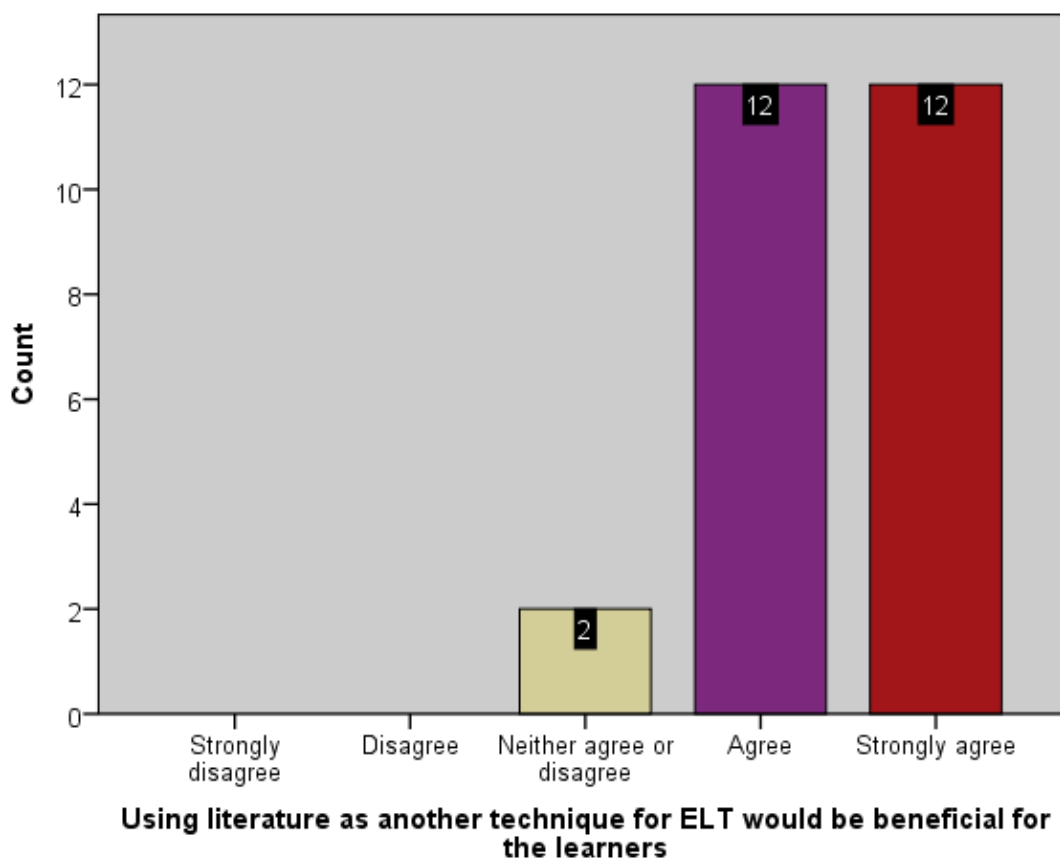
The results from Item 9 examine the teachers' beliefs on whether using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners (Table 23). Since this is a Likert scale question which measures multiple items, five predefined categories were

offered to the respondents of the questionnaire. The data concentrated from the categories interestingly indicate that none of the teachers disvalues the beneficial properties of using literature for ELT purposes. Analytically, 12 teachers (46.2%) stated that they strongly agree and 12 more teachers (46.2%) said that they 'agree' that using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners. Lastly, two teachers (7.7%) stated that they neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Table 23. *Examining whether using literature would be beneficial for English language learners*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree or disagree	2	7,7	7,7	7,7
Agree	12	46,2	46,2	53,8
Strongly agree	12	46,2	46,2	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 9:



*Figure 24.* This figure illustrates whether teachers believe that English language learners can be benefited by using literature in the classroom.

Item 10: What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

The responses I received to this question have generated similar results to the results from item 10 found in the students' questionnaire. This is potentially important for validating the results adding to the validity and weight of the study itself. The results of the open-ended question can be summarised as follows:

- Language development
  - Vocabulary
  - Grammar
  - Expressive language skills
  - Contextualisation
  - Writing skills
  - Reading skills
  - Implementation of all 4 language skills
  - Figurative language
  - Speaking skills
  - Syntax
- Personal engagement
  - Critical thinking
  - Argument skills
  - Emotional engagement
  - Intellectual development
- Motivating teaching material
- Literature to supplement language learning
  - Authentic material
- Cultural knowledge
- Other
- Literature for pedagogic activities
- Develop interpretive expertise for making meaning

A total number of eight parent codes were formed and they are comprised by three hierarchical and five non-hierarchical codes. The three parent codes were aggregated further to develop detailed codes and descriptions explaining the teachers' responses. It is to note that teachers perceive that the involvement of literature in the ELT curriculum has provided benefits in the students' *Language development* with the involvement of the four language skills, their *Personal engagement* with the literary texts and they consider literature to be a great *Supplement for language learning* since it is a *Motivational material* which can also add to the students' *Cultural knowledge*. Additionally, it is proposed that literature can also be used for *Pedagogic activities* and for the development of the students' *Interpretive expertise for making meaning*.

Item 11: How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all            [ ]

2= a little            [ ]

3= quite a lot        [ ]

4= a very great deal [ ]

Item 11 is another Likert scale question with four response categories, and examines the teachers' perceptions on how interested their learners are in English literature. The data from Table 24 show that the majority and a total number of 15 teachers (57.7%) believe that students only show 'a little' interest towards English literature, while eight teachers (30.8%) consider students to be interested 'quite a lot'. Finally, three teachers (11.5%) stated that students are a 'very great deal' interested in English literature. Overall, the negative responses (a number of 15 teachers and a percentage of 57.7%)

are more than the positive responses (11 teachers and a percentage of 42.3%) to this question.

Table 24. *Examining the teachers' beliefs on the students' interest in English literature*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid A little	15	57,7	57,7	57,7
Quite a lot	8	30,8	30,8	88,5
A very great deal	3	11,5	11,5	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 11:

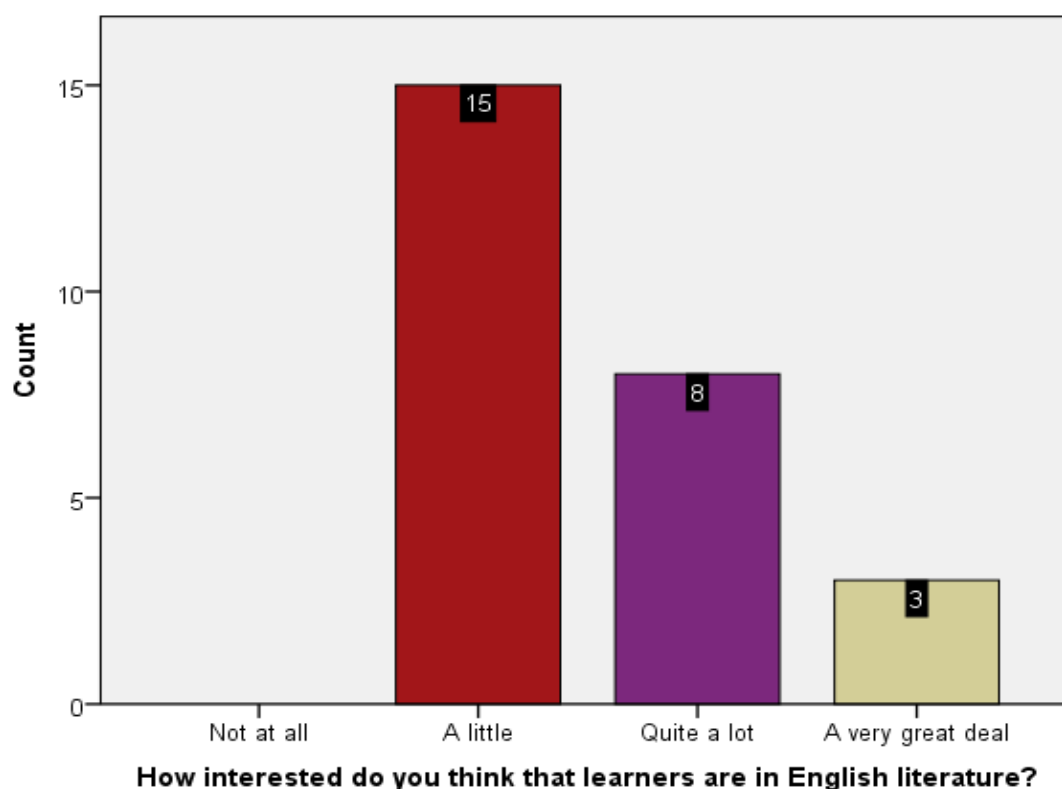


Figure 25. This figure examines the students' interest in English literature based on teachers' perceptions.

Items 12 and 13:

12. What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why?

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

a. Beginner                      b. Elementary                      c. Intermediate                      d. Advanced

Even though items 12 and 13 were both used in response to RQ4 examining the teachers' perceptions on the most appropriate form of literature to be used in ELT in private schools in Cyprus, yet at the same time they can both provide more insight regarding the teachers' views on the most effective genre to be used with language learners and the most suitable level in which learners should be introduced into the use of novels. For the purpose of not repeating the same results, the findings to items 12 and 13 can be found on page 93-97. A brief summary of the results shows that the teachers' most preferred genre is novels, followed by short stories with the justification that novels are a more language related genre which can motivate students to read it by engaging them personally. However, the teachers suggest that both the use of novels as well as the use of the other mentioned genres depends on the age and level of the students. On the other hand, teachers' responses to item 13 has demonstrated that learners should be introduced to the use of novels in ELT learners should be introduced to the use of novels in ELT at an elementary level (53.8%) whereas 26.9% of the teachers believe that students should begin using novels at an intermediate level, an opinion which seems to go against the prevailing orthodoxy that novels can only be used with students at advanced levels.

Item 15: Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes

No

Item 15 is sought to find out whether the teachers believe that the learners could have possible gains from the use of novels in language classrooms and the results from this question could help answer RQ5 in more detail. The data gathered from Table 25 indicate a unanimous decision, with all 26 teachers (100%) agreeing on the beneficial aspects of using novels for language teaching.

Table 25. *Examining whether learners could benefit from the use of novels*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	26	100,0	100,0	100,0

Chart for Item 15.

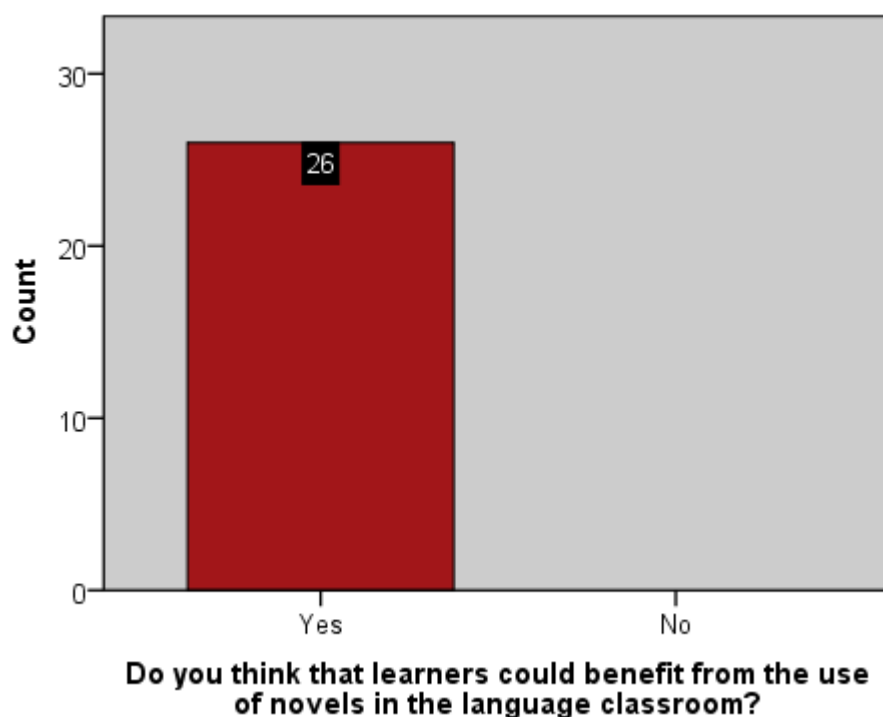


Figure 26. This figure illustrates the teachers' beliefs on whether learners could benefit from using novels.



Item 16: If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?

It is necessary to state that the prerequisite for the teachers to provide an answer to item 16 was to answer 'yes' to item 15 in the questionnaire. The findings of item 16 are particularly important since they provide further insight to the teachers' beliefs as to why students can be benefited from the use of novels in the language classroom, an occurrence which can also help in answering RQ5 since the findings of the open-ended question respond to how teachers view the involvement of novels in ELT courses:

- Language development
  - Vocabulary enrichment
  - Writing skills
  - Grammar
  - Contextualisation
  - Promote discussion
  - Reading skills
  - Literary analysis skill
  - Use of all four language skills
  - Speaking skills
  - Argument skills
- Other
- Educational opportunities
  - Exposure to diverse ideas
- Intercultural learning

- Personal engagement
  - Critical thinking
  - Intellectual engagement
  - Relate to the characters
- Using novels to supplement the use of course books
- Motivation
- Exposure to a complete book pattern

The results provided both hierarchical and non-hierarchical codes and what is principally arresting is the fact that the code *Language development* figures prominently at the top of the list, with most of the teachers stressing the impact that novels have on the students' linguistic engagement. The rest of the results suggest that the learners can benefit from the further *Educational opportunities* that the novels offer and the *Personal engagement* they offer the students. Additionally, novels are perceived as beneficial because they can be used to *Supplement the use of coursebooks*, they increase the students' *Motivation* and they expose students to a *complete book pattern*.

Item 17: What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom?

Please circle. (Note that you can circle more than one answer)

- a. Reading      b. Listening      c. Writing      d. Speaking

In order to answer RQ5, the frequency and percentages of teachers' responses to item 17 were calculated. This is a multiple response question with four categories, but the option given to teachers to circle more than one options requires the formation of four tables and a conversion to dichotomy questions for each skill where the teachers' beliefs about the improvement of each skill with the use of novels is examined separately.

Table 26 shows that teachers unanimously believe that reading skills are the skills learners improve, collecting 26 responses (100%). Additionally, Table 27 shows that most teachers (14 respondents, making 53.8%), believe that the students' listening skills are not improved, while 12 teachers (46.2%) think that listening skills can be enhanced with the use of novels while Table 28 indicates that the majority (24 teachers, making 92.3%) believe that the students' writing skills can also be improved with the use of novels whereas only two teachers (7.7%) disagree with this suggestion. Finally, the data from table 29 demonstrate that most teachers, with a total number of 18 responses (69.2%), believe that students can also improve their speaking skills with novels while eight teachers (30.8%) do not believe that speaking skills can be enhanced. In conclusion, the data show that the most improved skill is reading closely followed by writing. Additionally, speaking is also improved whereas listening is considered to be the least improved skill.

Table 26. *Examining whether using novels can improve the students' reading skills based on teachers' beliefs*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	26	100,0	100,0	100,0

Chart for Item 17: Reading

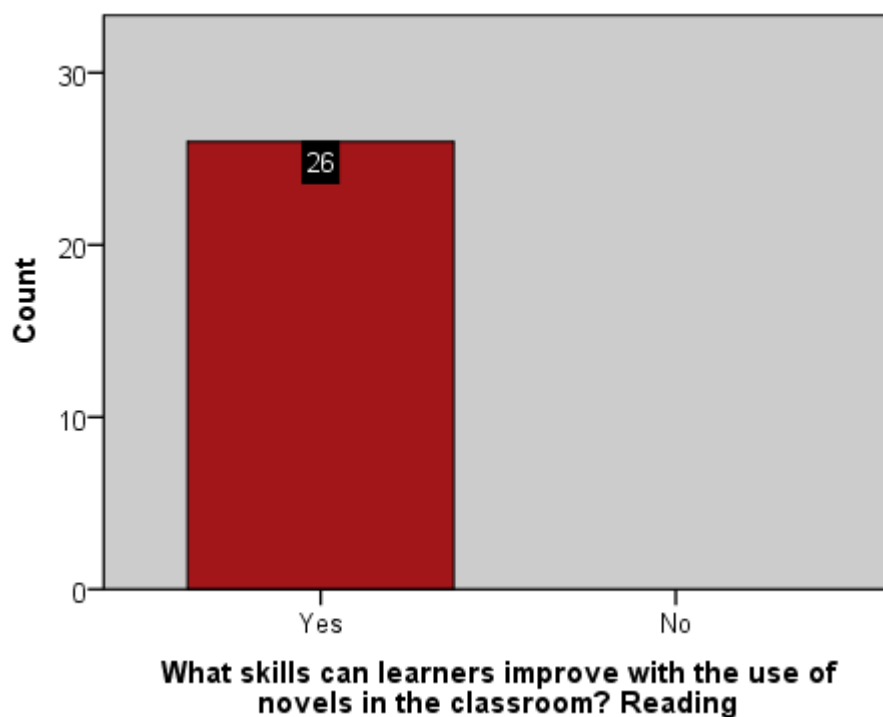


Figure 27. This figure shows whether novels can improve the students' reading skills.

Table 27. Examining whether using novels can improve the students' listening skills.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	12	46,2	46,2	46,2
No	14	53,8	53,8	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for item 17: Listening.

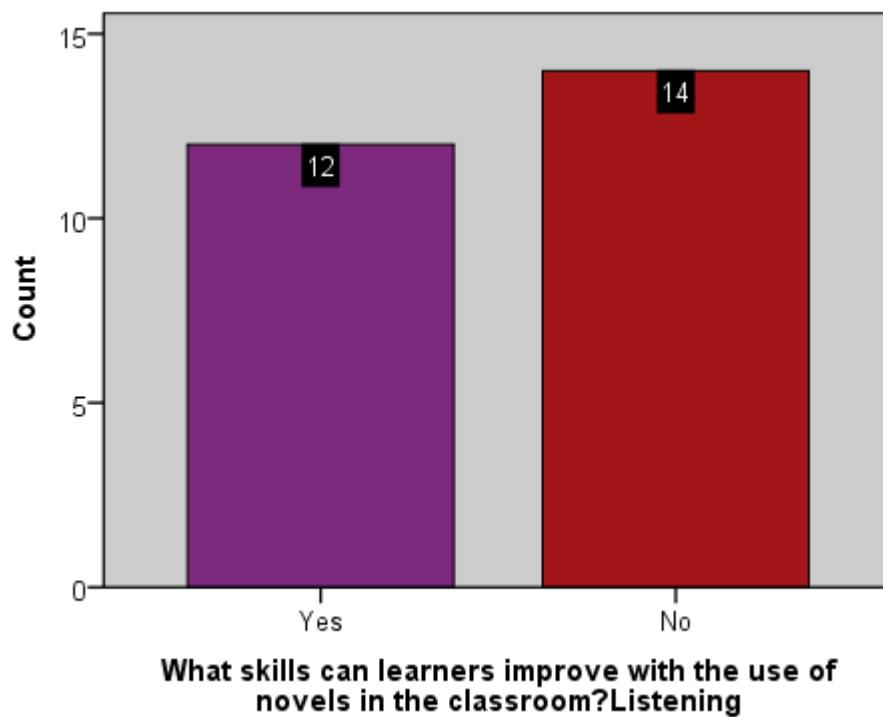


Figure 28. This figure shows whether novels can improve the students' listening skills.

Table 28. Examining whether using novels can improve the students' writing skills

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	24	92,3	92,3	92,3
No	2	7,7	7,7	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 17: Writing.



Figure 29. This figure shows whether novels can improve the students' writing skills.

Table 29. Examining whether using novels can improve the students' speaking skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	69,2	69,2	69,2
	No	8	30,8	30,8	100,0
Total		26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 17: Speaking

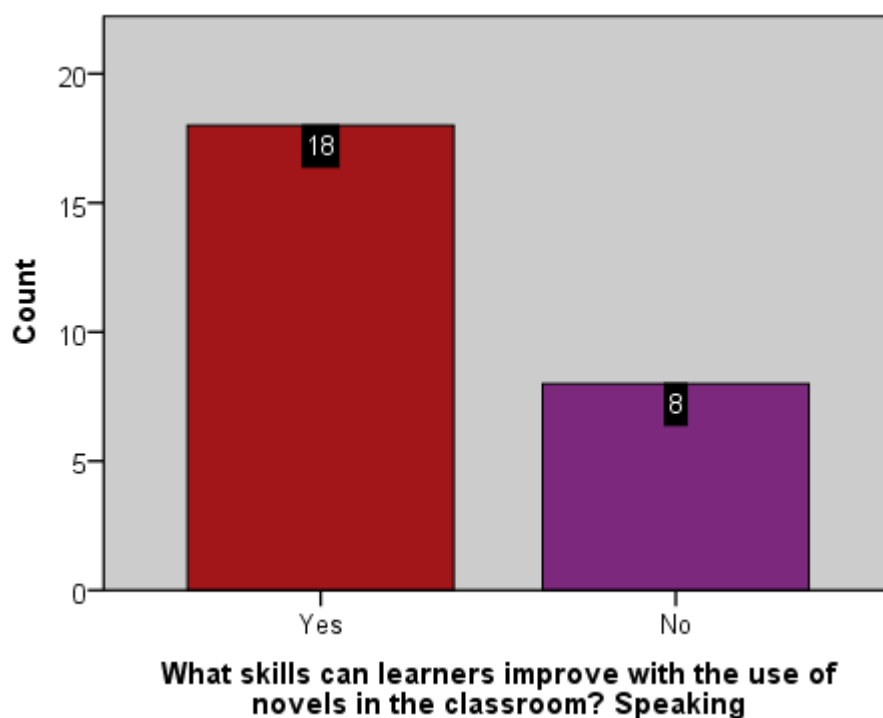


Figure 30. This figure shows whether novels can improve the students' speaking skills.

Item 18: How interested are the learners in learning the language through

literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all      [ ]

2= a little      [ ]

3= quite a lot      [ ]

4= a very great deal [ ]

Item 18 also relates to RQ5 as it examines the teachers' beliefs concerning the learners' interest in learning the language through literature and the results from this question can provide an answer to the teachers' overall perceptions on the use of literature for ELT in relation to their students' interest in it. The data from Table 30 demonstrate that

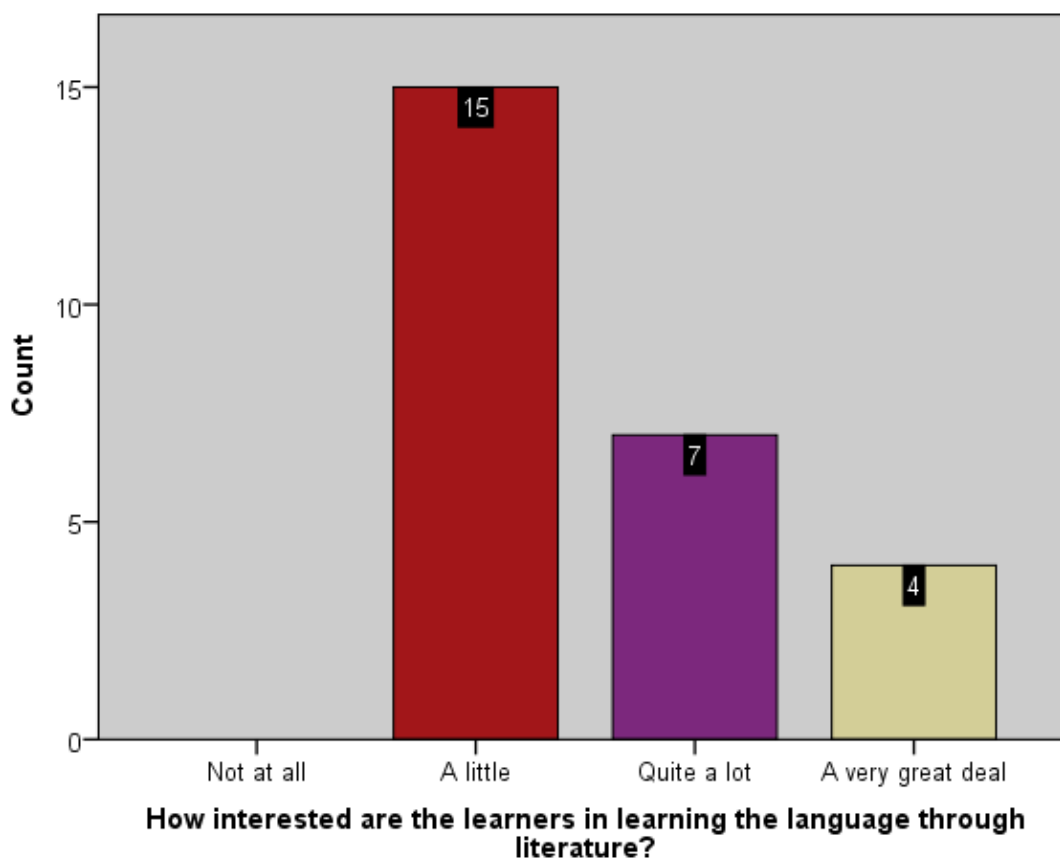
the majority of the teachers and a high number of 15 respondents (57.7%) believe that students only have ‘a little’ interest whereas seven teachers (26.9%) believe that students are ‘quite a lot’ interested about learning through literature. Lastly, four teachers (15.4%) indicated that students are interested ‘a very great deal’ towards learning the language through literature. The negative responses outnumber the positive responses with regard to the students’ interest in learning the language through literature, since the overall concentrated percentage for negative answers was 57.7% as opposed to the 42.3% for positive answers.

Table 30. *Examining the students’ interest in learning the language through literature*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid A little	15	57,7	57,7	57,7
Quite a lot	7	26,9	26,9	84,6
A very great deal	4	15,4	15,4	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 18.





*Figure 31.* This figure shows the students' interest in learning through literature.

#### 4.6.2 Teachers' Interviews:

The teachers' responses to the semi-structured interviews are imperative for answering RQ5 since they provide information concerning how literature and specifically novels are perceived in ELT courses (i.e. the perceived benefits of using literature in ELT, how frequently it should be used with language learners and at which age/level, the most suitable genre to be used with learners, teachers' beliefs on how students perceive the use of literature and the benefits of the use of novels in ELT, etc.). The teachers were first asked question which were about literature in general, such as:

- a) Do you think that English literature can be used as a means to promote language learning and why?

- b) What skills do you believe that the students could develop by reading literature?
- c) Do you believe that learners are interested in learning English through literature?
- d) What kind of follow-up activities can you have when teaching literature?
- e) Do you think that students could find some reflections of their own self, personality and attitudes in literature? If yes, would that help them in learning the language through it?
- f) What is in your opinion the most important and efficient genre that a teacher can use to teach English and why?

As the interview progressed, my questions attempted to be more focused on the use of novels in ELT asking questions, such as:

- a) What are the benefits of including novels in the language learning curriculum?
- b) Talking about novels, which novels would you use if you were to introduce them in your classroom and why?
- c) What kind of follow-up activities would you use with novels?
- d) Do you think that novels could add to the students' awareness regarding the culture of the language?
- e) Can you think of any novels that can be used for cross-cultural representation?

The results of the interviews presented below have concentrated information which answers to how the involvement of literature is perceived by teachers in ELT courses.

The results can be summarized as follows:

- a) Benefits of literature use in the language classroom:
  - Develop students' critical abilities

- Develop students' interpretative abilities
- Expression of ideas and emotions in English
- Increase students' interest in language learning through literature
- Interest towards works of the same author
- Language enrichment
- Linguistic imagination
- Literature promotes language learning
  - Attracts students' interest
  - Entertaining
  - Incidental language learning
- Provide further speaking practice
  - Use with shy students
  - Provides more topics to talk about
  - Raise discussions
  - Deals with topics with deeper meanings
- Provides the background for contextual communication
- Replace traditional questions

The code *Benefits of literature use in the language classroom* considers the teachers' perceptions on the advantages of the use of literature in ELT and is of great importance, not only because it provides the positive aspects related to language learning through literature, but also because it has amassed a great number of similar responses given by the participants. The results show that teachers believe that their students can benefit from the use of literature in various ways which go beyond the development of their language skills.

b) English literature part of post-colonial history

This non-hierarchical code refers to the link the teachers see between Cyprus and England as a post-colonial state, a fact which explains its importance in ELT.

c) Error correction and feedback

A non-hierarchical code which refers to the methods the teachers use to correct learners' errors arising from the use of literature as well as the appropriate feedback that should be provided.

d) Frequency

- 2-3 times a week
- Daily
- At the end of the year
- Factors affecting frequency
  - Phrontisterion<sup>43</sup>
  - Public schools
  - Productivity
  - School limitations
  - Students' competence

In answering RQ5, the teachers' beliefs on how frequently literature should be used in ELT, is also important. To that aim, the code *Frequency* refers to how frequently the participants would use literature if they were to decide on its use rate. The most common replies were 2-3 times a week and daily followed by once, at the end of the year. Additionally, the participants have also referred to factors that affect the frequency of

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<sup>43</sup> Phrontisteria (singular phrontisterion), are private educational institutions for group teaching as well as private tutoring in Cyprus and Greece.

literature use, with the most prominent answer being that the frequency should be a subject to students' competence, adding that a limited exposure to literature (i.e. once a week) would be unproductive. Finally, there also seems to be a distinction between the use of literature in Phrontisteria and public schools, mainly because of limitations in their use implied by external sources.

e) Induction to literature

- Level
  - Primary school
  - Secondary school
  - High school
- Children literature/readers

*Induction to literature* refers to the appropriate age at which the students should be introduced to literary works in English as well as the most suitable types of narrative for this introduction based on the teachers' opinions. The most common replies were firstly in Primary school, followed by Secondary school and ending with High school. Additionally, participants acknowledged children's literature and readers as the most prominent narrative to be used for an induction to language teaching through literature.

f) Reading aloud Vs. Reading silently

- Reading aloud
  - Adds to the students' excitement
  - Allows corrections
  - Boosts students' confidence

- Competitive context that stimulates fluency and pronunciation
- Promotes speaking practice
- Allows for correct use of stress, pitch and intonation
- Silent reading

This code examines the teachers' views on the differences between reading literary works either aloud or silently in the language classroom examining positive or negative outcomes for their use. As it can be seen from the results, reading aloud dominates the teachers' preference, resulting in six further codes justifying their view. It is to note that particular emphasis is given to the fact that reading aloud enables students to use stress, pitch and intonation correctly, since this observation is shared by almost all the participants of the interview. Silent reading did not produce any further results since there was minimum reference to the choice of silent reading.

#### g) Reference to literary works

This is a non-hierarchical code that refers to specific literary works mentioned by the participants that can be associated with learners' needs, interests and expectations.

#### h) Selection of genres

- Fables
- Fiction narrative
- Poetry and drama
  - Increased difficulty and boring
- Short stories
  - Easier vocabulary and grammar

- Expression of ideas and emotions in English
- Read within time restraints
- Resemblance to internet search
- Systematic analysis
- Use for specific purposes

*Selection of genres* examines the various genres the participants have referred to during the interview, mentioning at the same time advantages and disadvantages deriving from their use and explaining the importance of their involvement in ELT, thus providing more information for answering RQ5. It can be seen that short stories have dominated the participants' reference in genre selection concentrating six further reasons explaining their assessment, with the majority considering that the vocabulary and grammar are fairly easier than of other genres. It should be mentioned, however, that I have included references to all the genres mentioned apart from novels (which overall concentrated the most responses as the most preferred genre), for which I have created a distinct code that will be explained further in the process. Being aware that *Fiction narrative* may also refer to novels, I would like to exclude it from this context, in this instance since the participants who mentioned fiction narrative have done so in its generic sense without making specific reference to novels (which came afterwards).

i) Students' perception of literature

- Factors affecting students' perception
  - Criticism on parents
  - Criticism on schools and teachers
    - Improper introduction of literature

- Inflexible language learning curriculum
- Insufficient guidelines for teachers
- Minimal personal involvement
  - Interpretive limitations
  - Teachers edge students to particular responses
- Schools do not cultivate critical thinking and creative writing
- Learners are exposed to a superficial type of learning
- Teachers need to alter their methodology
- Tendency to underestimate the students' interest towards literature
- Conventional limitations regarding the use of literature
- Criticism on society
  - Acting being stupid is fashionable
  - Comparing Greek with Cypriot students
  - Knowledge is not considered 'cool'
- Exposure to literature in L1 affects perception in L2
- Limited interest
- Overcoming negative disposition
  - Deal with external influence
    - Not uncool to read literature
    - Reject the idea that literature is inappropriate
- Preference in learning through literature in L2 rather than in L1
- Teachers' role in creating positive disposition towards literature.



- Use stimulating methods to increase the students' interest towards literature

*Students' perception of literature* is an extremely important code which examines the teachers' beliefs regarding the involvement of literature in ELT in relation to the students' awareness and acuity in dealing with literature for language learning purposes. The non-hierarchical codes *Limited interest*, and *Preference in learning through literature in L2 rather than in L1* directly relate to the way students' perceive literature. The code *Factors affecting students' perception* refers to the causes that negatively affect the way students feel about literature in L2. Here, the respondents have criticised parents, schools and teachers and society, with the criticism on schools and teachers being the most frequently mentioned, thus resulting in the most responses.

The second hierarchical code, *Overcoming negative disposition*, examines ways through which the students can overcome their negative attitude regarding their exposure to literature in their L2 with specific reference to the external influences and pressure students have to deal with.

Lastly, the code *Teachers' role in creating positive disposition towards literature* raises the teachers' responsibilities for making the students view literature with a more positive 'eye'.

#### j) Text selection

- Introduce different periods
- Introduce male and female writers
- Introduce many types of thought
- Introduce native and non-native speaker writers
- Language difficulty

- Length
- Selection based on writers

The code *Text selection* includes the criteria based on which the teachers would choose the literary works in order to be used in the language classroom. The majority of participants focused on the selection of texts based on the level of language difficulty as well as the potential benefits of introducing both native as well as non-native writers.

k) Types of difficulties

- a. Conceptual difficulties
- b. Lexical difficulties

This code refers to the types of difficulties the teachers have identified that their students may encounter when using literature for language learning purposes, resulting in two distinct categories: *Conceptual difficulties* which often relate to complex ideas described in literary works and *Lexical difficulties*, which have to do with the difficulties learners may encounter on lexical level (e.g. lexical density).

l) Using literature in public schools, private schools and phrontisteria

- a) Using literature in private schools
  - i. Literature is exam-based
  - ii. Literature is taught separately from other subjects
  - iii. More effective
  - iv. Smaller classrooms
  - v. Students have continuous exposure to English language

- b) Using literature in public schools
  - i. Students' lack of competence
  - ii. Students are uninterested and unwilling
  - iii. Time limitations
- c) Using literature in phrontisteria
  - i. Teachers are aware of the students' interests/abilities

These results present the teachers' views on the involvement of literature in three distinct educational settings. Firstly, we have the use of literature in private schools, a code that concentrates most of the teachers' responses and categorisations. Secondly, the use of literature in public schools is also mentioned and specifically refers to the students' performance and interests associated with the use of literature. Lastly, there was also an interesting reference to the use of literature in phrontisteria, stressing why it may be particularly appropriate for the teachers to use it in that context.

A distinction between the presentation of results in relation to the teachers' views of the involvement of literature in general, and their perceptions of the involvement of novels in particular, in ELT was made in order to answer to both parts of RQ5 separately. In what follows, the results of the teachers' beliefs in relation to the involvement of novels in ELT as they came out from the interviews will be presented:

Benefits of using novels in ELT classrooms based on teachers' perceptions and attitudes:

- a) *Cultural knowledge*
  - Culture enhances the understanding of the text
  - Culture nowadays swifts away from literature
  - Culture projects itself through novels

- Exposure to culturally defined language restrictions
  - Feminism
  - Freedom of speech
  - Oppression
  - Racism
- Language and culture are interrelated
- Novels bridge the cultural gap
- Novels are vivid cultural representations
- Novels increase cross-cultural awareness
- Novels reflect their culture
- Novels seen as peoples' televisions
- Novels show how language and culture evolve
- Raise awareness on diverse ways of thought and lifestyles
- Timeless literature: culture of the people and culture of language
- Use novels for cultural comparisons
- Areas for cultural representation
  - Caribbean literature
  - Charles Dickens
  - Chinua Achebe
  - David Copperfield
  - George Eliot
  - *Gulliver's Travels*
  - *Hard Times*
  - Jane Eyre
  - John Steinbeck

- *Pride and Prejudice*
- *The Great Gatsby*
- *The Notebook*
- ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’

The code *Cultural knowledge* addresses all the aspects around the use of novels for language teaching purposes with reference to the cultural elements that accompany them and the teachers’ perceptions of how students could develop their cultural engagement with the novels. Even though at first glance the impression someone may have is that some of the results are repetitive, yet regardless of the familiarity the codes may appear to have with each other on the surface, their actual reference by the participants was quite distinct and very difficult to merge.

Another observation is that the code *Areas for cultural representation* refers to the literary works and genres that the participants have mentioned to be used in the language classroom for *Cultural knowledge* purposes, followed by the writers’ names as well as some of their works. I willingly decided to keep both since this might be a more detailed evaluation of the writers who are considered to be key figures in dealing with cultural elements, and some of their works which might be considered more appropriate or culturally-driven than other of their works. For example, Charles Dickens has been referenced by all the participants as the writer who could have a cultural influence on the learners, but I have also kept the specific reference to his works *David Copperfield* and *Hard Times*. By doing so, I wish to present a more detailed account for both the writers as well as their specific literary works that can relate to the students’ cultural enrichment and knowledge.

b) *Develop students' interpretative abilities*

- Develop students' abilities to infer meaning
- Open to multiple interpretations

This code refers to the students' development of interpretative techniques and it relates to the creation and deduction of meaning, as well as the unlimited possibilities of diverse and unpredictable interpretations that students can have with novels.

c) *Educational opportunities*

- Exposure to the writers' world
- Expression of ideas and emotions in the target language
- Linguistic imagination
- Relevant to life experiences
- Representation of timeless values
- Unconventional uses of language
- Words transcend their fixed dictionary definition

The hierarchical code *Educational opportunities* refers to the general opportunities provided to the learners by using literature for language purposes. The results do not only involve language learning prospects, but also go beyond linguistic clues and language involvement per se (e.g. *Exposure to the writers' world*, *Relevant to life experiences*, *Representation of timeless values*).

The teachers have given great emphasis on the codes *Expression of ideas and emotions in the target language*, *Words transcend their fixed dictionary definition* and *Expression of ideas and emotions in the target language* since these have been most frequently referred to by the majority of the interview participants.

d) *Follow-up activities*

- Ask directed questions
- Audio books for listening
- Critical thinking
- Grammar and syntax
  - Formation and function of sentences
  - Use novels for exemplification of grammar rules
- Reading comprehension
- Speaking practice
  - Initiate discussions
  - Role play
- Vocabulary
  - Fill-in the gaps
  - Vocabulary games
  - Use words in unfamiliar ways/contexts
  - Find synonyms
- Writing
  - Creative writing exercises
  - Descriptions using adjectives
  - Summaries
  - Write poems or short stories
  - Writing tasks using figurative language

The hierarchical code *Follow-up activities* concentrates on the activities the teachers proposed that can be designed or applied after reading a literary work. The results are presented by taking into account the participants' responses in all four language skills as well as some other language aspects (e.g. grammar, syntax) and processes of thought (critical thinking) while emphasis was given by the participants on activities providing vocabulary practice as well as writing exercises

e) *Language enrichment*

- Contextualisation
- Familiarity with various linguistic clues
- Grammar
- Listening skills
- Reading skills
- Receptive vocabulary
- Speaking skills
- Subskill
  - Pronunciation
- Writing skills

*Language enrichment* has emerged from the participants' responses in relation to the linguistic advantages of the use of novels in language classrooms. Based on this fact, eight further non-hierarchical codes and one hierarchical code have arisen from the data. The results are presented by taking into account the impact of novels on all four language skills as it has been pointed out by the interviewees and this justifies the creation of a distinct code for each one of them. However, there was also extensive



reference to other language points and aspects that can also result, be improved, or practised through the use of novels, namely *Contextualisation*, *Grammar*, *Receptive vocabulary* and *Various linguistic clues*.

Lastly, there was an indication by two of the participants that pronunciation should be considered as a subskill that may become habitual and on which students can receive further practice through novels. A notable observation related to the data collected for *Language Enrichment* is that it has received a great number of responses by the interviewees since certain codes have been referenced by all of them (e.g. *Writing skills*, *Speaking skills*, *Reading skills*) and the rest concentrated a reference by the majority (e.g. *Receptive vocabulary*, *Grammar*, etc.)

f) *Personal engagement*

- Develop students' critical awareness
- Educate the person as a whole
- Identify with the characters
- Increase students' emotional awareness

*Personal engagement* aims to present the interviewees' beliefs on how students can be engaged by the use of novels for language purposes on a personal level. Consequently, the results focus on ways through which this engagement is possible with the majority of the participants calling attention to the fact that students can *Identify with the characters*, since almost all of them have considered this a major pathway through which students may personally engage with novels.

g) *Promote pedagogic activities*

There needs to be some sort of justification regarding this code since it might be argued that it could be merged with *Follow-up activities*. However, the difference is found in the participants' classification of pedagogic activities as being more general rather than specific – that is, there seems to be an agreement between the teachers on the pedagogical aims of using novels in that they are educational in various aspects and more wide-ranging and do not only endorse a limited purpose (e.g. language teaching). Consequently, this distinction was made to respond to their dissection between *Follow-up activities* and *Pedagogic activities*.

h) *Use novels as tests*

This code is created to signify the importance of novels in testing features of language as it was pointed out from one of the interviewees. She considers novels as a very good way of teaching the language but most importantly testing it because novels can be the actual representation and most appropriate material to justify what learners have learned in the language lesson.

i) *Using novels in private schools*

One of the participants referred to the difference between the use of novels in private schools and the use of novels in public schools. That is, students of English speaking private schools would be highly benefited by the use of literature in the language classroom and they could work by using literature in isolation, occasionally alternating it with other complimentary materials. On the other hand, students of public schools will not be benefited by the use of novels in the classroom because in only very rare occasions the novels had been used systematically and explicitly for language purposes.

Therefore, this code encapsulates the differences between these two uses of novels for language teaching.

j) *Authentic samples of language*

- Diversify the repertoire of classroom materials
- Inauthenticity attracts the students' interest

This hierarchical code examines the teachers' perception of novels as authentic material. Additionally, the two child codes examine the dimensions and benefits of using such authentic materials in the classroom.

k) *Novels as teaching materials*

- Use as complimentary materials
- Use as the main instruction material
- Use to replace traditional teaching methodologies

The interviewees have widely acknowledged novels as useful teaching materials and from their responses three further child codes have been created to reflect on their various and diverse uses in language lessons.

Apart from the benefits of using novels in ELT classrooms, teachers have also examined other aspects which are related to the way they view the involvement of novels in ELT, thus providing an answer to RQ5. These aspects are presented below:

a) *Selection of genres*

- Classics
  - Careful text selection
  - Great representations of cultural notions

- Ideal for language teaching but also the dullest
- Universal themes
- Victorian
  - Limitation
    - Inability to form a representation of contemporary lives and lifestyles
    - Inappropriate for beginners
    - Inappropriate for introductory novels
    - Language use between then and now is incompatible
  - Prerequisites
    - Links between now and then
    - Symbolisms
    - Taboo issues/topics
    - Understanding of the world and cultures of that age
    - Understanding of what was allowed and prohibited to say
- Contemporary novels
  - Closer to what students know
  - Good for introduction
  - Students' familiarity with context
  - Writer selection
- Criteria
  - Age/level
  - Experimentation
  - Gender
  - Interest in the subject matter

- Type of students
- Understanding of themes and underlying messages

*Selection of genres* deals with the genres which the interviewees have considered to be the most appropriate for ELT. From this selection, three hierarchical codes have been created, namely *Classics*, *Contemporary* and *Criteria*. *Classics* refer to the classic novels the participants have either used or would use for language teaching purposes and the child codes created refer to the justification of the selection.

It can also be seen that *Victorian' novels* appear as an additional option but have not been assigned a separate code and that can be attributed to the interviewees' decision of only selecting Victorian novels which have been recognised and acclaimed as classics. Furthermore, *Limitations* and *Prerequisites* address the aspects of limitations regarding the use of Victorian novels in the classroom and the prerequisites and requirements that precede their use. Similarly, the code *Contemporary novels* refers to generally more modern settings and the child codes created for it explain the rationale behind its selection. Lastly, the code *Criteria* refers to the principles, conditions and requirements based on which the teachers have finalised their selection(s) and preference on certain novels. This might be based on the students' age and level, gender, interest in the subject matter, type and understanding of themes and underlying messages. The code *Experimentation* refers to the experimentation with multiple genres until the most suitable is found based on the learners' needs and responses.

#### b) *Age/level for introducing novels*

This code refers to the participants' beliefs regarding the appropriate and most suitable age or level during which the learners should start learning English through literature

with most of them supporting the view that students should begin using novels at an elementary or intermediate level.

c) *Error correction and feedback*

- Emphasis on fluency
- Emphasis on praise
- Limit error correction

The participants have noted the importance of error correction and provision of feedback, focusing on the emphasis that the teachers should give on fluency, praise and the limitation of error correction in order to avoid hindering the language learning process through literature.

d) *Limitations for their use*

The above non-hierarchical code is intended to be self-explanatory since it refers to some restrictions about the use of novels for ELT purposes that the teachers have mentioned. Some of the most common are: pressure applied by employers because of exam-based classes, length of the novel, time limitations because of exam preparation, the type of language of the novel (its difficulty), the vocabulary of the novel and the level of the students.

e) *Prerequisites for language teaching novels*

In the data collected from the interviews, there was a frequent mention of fundamental principles and requirements that needed to be fulfilled so that novels could be used by language teachers, resulting in the above code. Some of these principles/requirements are that the students need to be learning the basic uses of language and understand a

few language learning strategies before moving to the more difficult and unusual (for them) language learning techniques based on the novel. Another prerequisite involves the use of simplified versions of novels or abridged texts before using an unabridged novel so that students are exposed to the fundamentals of literary texts and develop certain techniques (e.g., the literary language of novels, exposure to the stylistic and rhetorical devices, develop interpretative abilities, etc.)

f) *Using Simplified versions*

- Benefits
  - Easier narrative
  - Great for introducing new type of narrative
  - Language is i+1
  - Students are able to identify with the theme
  - Understand unknown words from context
  - Use with students with limited attention span
  - Use to introduce novels
  - Use with lower level students
- Drawbacks
  - Hidden message eradicated
  - Language is simplified

The code *Using Simplified versions* refers to the graded readers the interviewees have suggested using in the classroom to support the language teaching process. From that, two further hierarchical codes have been created that concentrate on the *Benefits* and

*Drawbacks* that accompany their use. As can be seen through the results, the number of benefits by far outweighs the number of drawbacks. In the case of benefits of using simplified versions, the majority of the participants have stated that we should use them to introduce novels and that it should be used only with lower level students, whereas all of the interviewees have said that the simplification of language is one of the most important drawbacks for using them in the classroom.

#### 4.6.3 Classroom observations:

In order to provide a complete answer to RQ5 concerning the way ELT teachers in Cyprus view the involvement of literature and novels in particular in ELT courses, the findings resulting from classroom observations should be considered. The results from classroom observations will be considered in relation to the teachers' responses in the questionnaires and interviews, since some of their attitudes and beliefs are also observed and applied in the classroom environment (i.e. the use of novels for cultural knowledge, the development of students' interpretative abilities, etc.). In what follows, the results from the classroom observations that should be considered in relation to RQ5 are presented:

##### a) *Cultural enrichment*

- Cultural representations
- Dialects
  - Access to the culture of people whose language is studied
  - Education, social class divisions, financial background



The parent code *Cultural enrichment* raises the cultural elements that were introduced to the students by using novels in the language classroom. The two child codes created refer to the use of novels for intercultural representations and dialects as means of cultural exposure. Additionally, the code *Dialects* also contains two child codes that were generated to show the influence of dialects on cultural enrichment as it came out from the classroom observations. What has emerged from the observations was that there was particular emphasis by the teachers on the use of different dialects as a vehicle of firstly, *Accessing the culture of people whose language is studied* and secondly, in revealing information about the *Education, social class divisions and financial background* based on the spoken dialect. These results could be seen in relation to the teachers' view of using novels for *Cultural knowledge* found in the interviews, where the students will benefit from a development of their cultural understanding (page...100).

b) *Develop students' interpretative abilities*

- Develop students' abilities to make inferences from linguistic clues
- Discover implications and assumptions
- Forming hypotheses and making predictions

The development of students' interpretative abilities is a hierarchical parent code which deals with students' improvement in interpreting and creating meaning by using novels in class and this is exemplified by creating three further child codes. The first code deals with the development of students' abilities to make inferences from linguistic clues by using metaphors, similes repetitions and other rhetorical and stylistic devices in class, a suggestion which was also made in the teachers' interviews under the code *Develop students' interpretative abilities*. The second child code refers to the implications and assumptions the students discovered while reading the novel for language purposes

(e.g. reading between the lines and discover hidden meanings). Lastly, the third and final code deals with the formation of hypotheses and predictions that students made during the process of reading the novel (e.g. students predicted the development of the story or how the story might end without this being necessarily correct). The first two codes may seem to overlap since they both refer to the process of developing the students' interpretative abilities in an identical way. However, the decision for including both was taken on the grounds of presenting a more explicit picture of the multiple levels of meaning that necessitate the active involvement of the learner. That is to say, the learner is required to "tease out" the implicit insinuations and assumptions of the text either by deducing meaning from context in order to interpret the text or by examining the text by looking at certain words which have figurative meaning (Lazar, 1993). Both examples could certainly be seen to reflect on the quality of literary language which produces a lot of density of meaning as well as the implications and assumptions that the learners need to discover while reading. Therefore, both codes are included to exemplify the learners' development of the interpretative process.

c) *Educational opportunities*

- Develop students' critical abilities
- Expression of ideas and emotions in the target language
- Increase students' emotional awareness
- Relevant to life experiences
- Stimulate the students' imagination

The hierarchical code *Educational opportunities* includes the general prospects that students may have in relation to their educational engagement and improvement, a reflection that was mentioned by the teachers in the interviews. This code is further developed by creating five additional child codes. The first refers to the students' development of critical abilities and how students can learn how to think critically by reading novels. The second code deals with the students' *expression of ideas and emotions in the target language* in class which were triggered by the use of novels and aims to explain how this goes beyond the conventional language learning process to offer more educational opportunities to the students. The code *Increase students' emotional awareness* describes the students' development of emotional engagement and interaction that was achieved by reading novels in class. The fourth code aims to make a connection between life experiences and the experiences described in the novels relating the one to the other. Lastly, the fifth and final code is created to explain how novels were used in such a way in order to stimulate the students' imagination, a remark that was also made by the teachers in the interviews regarding the benefits of using novels for *Increasing the students' emotional engagement*.

#### d) Linguistic development

- Exposure to standard and non-standard uses of language
- Extremely limited use of L1
- Grammar
  - Comparatives and superlatives
  - Use of adjectives for descriptions
    - Appearance

- Character
- Feelings and emotions
- Objects
- Use of past simple tense
- Increase students' awareness of language range
- Introduce abbreviations
- Questioning techniques
  - Comprehension questions
  - Display questions
  - Referential questions
  - Wh- questions
- Speaking skills
  - Ample opportunities for speaking practice
- Stylistic and rhetorical devices
  - Metaphors
  - Repetition
  - Similes
- Summarise
- Teach students to maintain the right tone, stress, pitch and intonation
- Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary
  - Conceptualising a word visually
  - Definitions
  - Demonstration
  - Gap-fill
  - Guess the meaning out of context

- Hangman game
- Hot spot
- Mimicry
- Synonyms
- Translate the words visually
- Words take figurative meanings beyond their fixed definition
- Write the definition of a word on the board in the students' L2
- Writing skills

The importance of the parent code *Linguistic development* should be considered in relation to the teachers' beliefs in the teachers' questionnaire (item 16) and the interviews under the codes *Language development* and *Language Enrichment* respectively. In that, teachers' explained that one of the major benefits of using novels in ELT is that students can develop their language skills, enrich their vocabulary and practice grammar. Their perception regarding the linguistic benefits of novels can be examined in relation to the code *Linguistic development* which was developed based on the classroom observations.

A total number of 12 child codes were created, out of which five were hierarchical and seven were non-hierarchical codes. The non-hierarchical codes were namely:

- a) *Exposure to standard and non-standard uses of language* which focused on the different levels language was presented in.
- b) *Extremely limited use of L1* which concentrates on the dominant language used in the classroom.

- c) *Increase students' awareness of language range* which offers the 'endless' possibilities of how language can be used to achieve different purposes.
- d) *Introduce abbreviations* which refers to the introduction and explanation of abbreviations found in literature.
- e) *Summarise* which concentrates on the techniques and effects of providing summaries.
- f) *Teach students to maintain the right tone, stress, pitch and intonation* which is directly related to pronunciation.
- g) *Writing skills* which codes everything that relates to the students enhancement and practice of their writing skills.

On the other hand, the five hierarchical codes were *Grammar*, *Questioning techniques*, *Speaking skills*, *Stylistic and rhetorical devices* and *Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary*.

The first hierarchical code *Grammar* comprised of two further non-hierarchical codes and one hierarchical code. The two non-hierarchical codes were *Comparatives and superlatives* and the *Use of past simple*, and exclusively dealt with these two grammatical features which were observed during the lesson. The hierarchical code was *Use of adjectives for descriptions* and included the child codes *Appearance*, *Character*, *Feelings and emotions* and *Objects*. Understandably then, this hierarchical code examines the four different types of adjectives which were introduced with the use of the novel during the observations.

The second hierarchical code was *Questioning techniques* and included four further child codes: *Comprehension questions*, *Display questions*, *Referential questions* and

*Wh- questions*. All these codes refer to the types of questions and techniques that were introduced with the use of the novel in the classroom.

The third hierarchical code is *Speaking skills* and one child code is attributed to it named *Ample opportunities for speaking practice* and refers to the opportunities students had for further speaking practice.

The fourth hierarchical code is *Stylistic and rhetorical devices* and includes information about how these devices were used with novels for the students' linguistic development. This code consists of three child codes, *Metaphors*, *Repetitions* and *Similes* and it investigates how their use and implementation complemented the language development process.

The final hierarchical code is *Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary*, and it has admittedly earned a lot of attention, resulting in 12 child codes. This can be attributed to the emphasis on receptive vocabulary through novels and the variety of techniques applied to achieve this. The child codes are *Conceptualising a word visually*, *Definitions*, *Demonstration*, *Gap-fill*, *Guess the meaning out of context*, *Hangman*, *Hot spot*, *Mimicry*, *Synonyms*, *Translate the words visually*, *Words take figurative meanings beyond their fixed definition* and *Write the definition of a word on the board in the students' L2*. As it can be seen, many of these child codes have also appeared in the teachers interviews and the teachers' questionnaire (p...) and can be used to translate the teachers' beliefs about the involvement and use of novels in ELT in classroom practices that can validate their arguments regarding the linguistic benefits of using a novel in the classroom (i.e. teachers' answers to items 10, 15 and 16 and the codes Language enrichment and language development in both the teachers' questionnaires and teachers' interviews).

The teachers' views on the involvement of literature and novels in ELT courses can also be examined by examining their attitudes during the lessons when novels were used. The classroom observations revealed the following information on how the teachers dealt with the novel concerning their attitude, as well as the way they approached the students:

e) *The teachers*

- Clear instructions
- Consistent
- Energetic
- Enthusiastic
- Error correction and feedback
- Organised
- Teachers stimulate personal involvement and discussions
- The approach to students' questions

The final parent code *The teachers* includes the details attributed to the teachers I have observed and their overall behaviour, methodology, and characteristics in the language classroom during the use of the novel. Based on this eight, further child codes were created.

The first code, *Clear instructions* refers to the instructions given to students during tasks that had to be completed during the lesson and the second code raises the matter of consistency among all four teachers I have observed in relation to the content, approaches and methodology. The third and fourth codes, namely *Energetic* and *Enthusiastic*, indicate the teachers' attitude towards their lessons and add to their treatment of literature and their positive attitude towards it. The fifth code codes the



aspects of error correction and feedback provided to the students during the lessons and includes the teachers' approach to these topics. The sixth code attempts to demonstrate how organised the teachers had been throughout the lesson and this code insinuates the teachers' response to themes that include but are not limited to time-management and organisation of classroom activities. The final two child codes aim to raise the teachers' role in stimulating the students' personal involvement and discussions during the lesson as well as highlight the teachers' approach to questions that students asked based on the lesson and specific language aspects taught, an observation which matches to the teachers' perceptions in the questionnaire and interviews in relation to the students' *Personal engagement* with literary texts.

In answering RQ5 regarding how the ELT teachers in private schools in Cyprus view the involvement of novels in ELT courses, the results from the teachers' questionnaires and interviews were examined. The results of these instruments have indicated the teachers' beliefs regarding the benefits of including literature, and novels in particular, in the language classroom in relation to the students' *Language development* and specifically in terms of *Vocabulary (Fill-in the gaps, Vocabulary games, Find synonyms, Use words in unfamiliar contexts)* *Grammar and Contextualisation* of grammar rules (*Formation and function of sentences, Use of novels for exemplification of grammar rules*). These perceived benefits which result from the use of novels were also observed in the lessons during the classroom observations and are presented below:

f) Games

- Drawing faces
- Hangman

- Hotspot
  - Active participation of all students
  - Answer questions by using past simple
  - Ask wh- questions and also use past simple tense
  - Recycle old vocabulary and use new lexical items
  - Thinking on the spot, responding under pressure

The parent code *Games* refers to the games introduced with novels in the language classroom to teach specific language features and aspects and deals with specific linguistic aspects (e.g. techniques to increase receptive vocabulary). Three child codes were created that refer to three different games played in the classroom.

The first is *drawing faces* and refers to drawing faces on the board to express particular emotions found to be expressed in the novel. The second is *hangman* and it was commonly used in three out of the four classrooms I have observed to introduce as well as test vocabulary items. Lastly, the final child code *hotspot* is the one that has earned a lot of attention and further coding. This by no means aims to undervalue the importance of the other two games as opposed to *hotspot*. However, *hotspot* had a high duration (19 mins in total as opposed to the other two games which lasted for five and seven minutes respectively), actively involved all the students in the classroom (since all the students had to produce a response) and it was a relatively novel and engaging game that initiated further five child codes (further information of what this game involves doing can be found in appendix H).

The first is the active participation of all students, since it enabled everyone to contribute to the game and provide either questions or answers. The second is that

students were required to ask wh- questions and also use the past simple tense and this explains why the third code refers to answering the questions by using past simple tense. The fourth code states some other aims of the game which were to *recycle old vocabulary and use new lexical items*. The final child code indicates students' ability to think on the spot and respond under pressure.

#### 4.7 Results of Research question six: How do EFL students in private schools in Cyprus view the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in ELT courses?

In order to answer research question six, the frequency and percentages of students' responses to items 6-19 of the students' questionnaire Form 1 and item 11 of the students' questionnaire Form 4, as well as the data from classroom observations were considered.

##### 4.7.1 Students' questionnaires:

As aforementioned, items 6-19 of the students' questionnaire Form 1 were considered as well as item 11 from students' questionnaire Form 4. However, it needs to be mentioned that only the results from items 8, 11, 16, 18 and 19 from students questionnaire Form 1 will be presented here in order to avoid repeating the results from items 6 and 7 (which were presented for also addressing RQ1, see tables 1 and 2), 9, 10, 15 and 17 (which were presented for also addressing RQ3, see tables 6, 10, 11) from students' questionnaire Form 1 and item 11 from students' questionnaire Form 4 (which were presented for also addressing RQ4 see Tables 12-19). However, all these items,

including the ones presented for answering RQs1, 3 and 4 were considered in the discussion of RQ6 in the *Discussion* chapter (Chapter 6).

Item 8: How interesting/enjoyable is learning English through literature? Please put a tick in the box:

1= not at all [ ]

2= a little [ ]

3= quite a lot [ ]

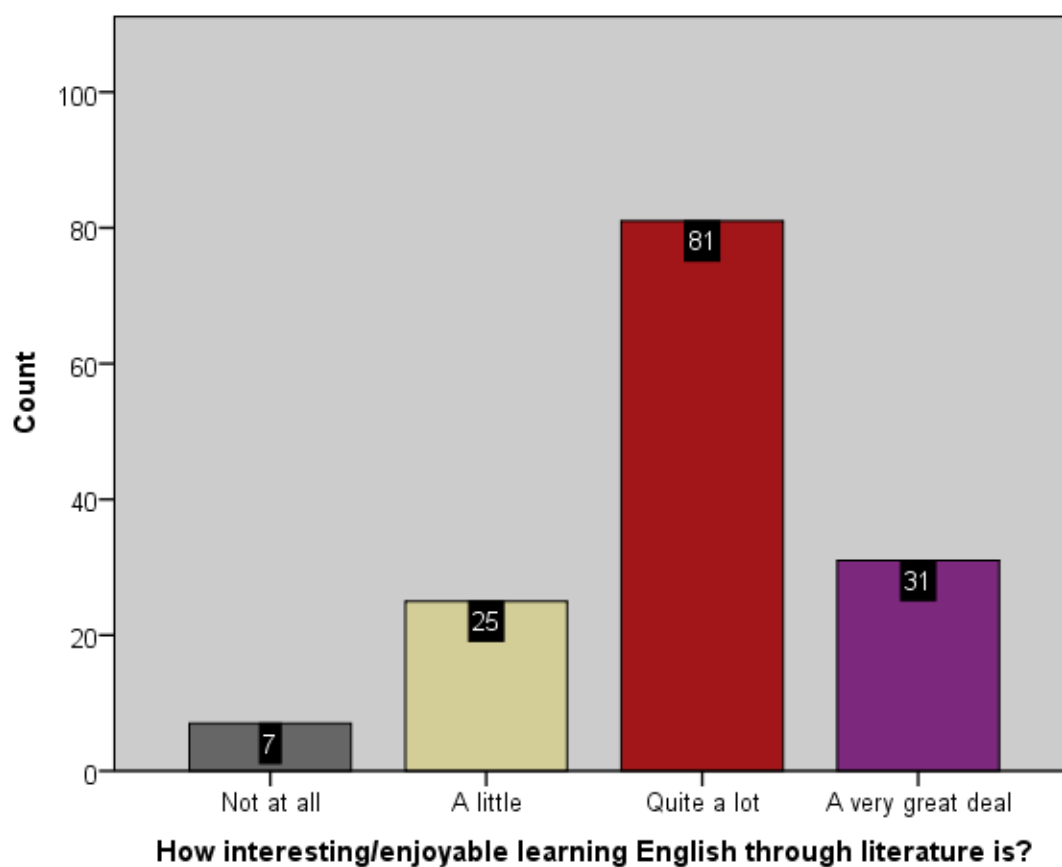
4= a very great deal [ ]

In order to answer RQ6, the frequency and percentages of students' responses to item 8 were calculated. Table 31 examines the level of students' interest and enjoyment in learning English through literature. Four categories have been created in advance, with the response 'quite a lot' taking the majority of responses with a total of 81 students (56.3%). The response category 'a very great deal' receives the second larger number of student responses, with 31 students (21.5%), closely followed by the category 'a little' with 25 students (17.4%). Finally, seven students (4.9%) believe that learning English through literature is 'not at all' interesting. No missing values were noted.

Table 31. *Examining how interesting/enjoyable learning English through literature is*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not at all	7	4,9	4,9	4,9
A little	25	17,4	17,4	22,2
Quite a lot	81	56,3	56,3	78,5
A very great deal	31	21,5	21,5	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 8.



*Figure 32.* The figure illustrates the students' views on how interesting/enjoyable learning English through literature is.

Item 11: What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. The language                      b. The characters                      c. The plot

Please explain why:

Item 11 aims to investigate what the learners enjoy the most when reading a novel.

Students were asked to select more than one option if it was applicable to them and this

explains why three different tables and three different charts have been created since each table and its chart account for only one of the categories offered to the students in item 11. Table 32 examines whether the students enjoy the language of the novel. A very high number of 113 students (78.5%) have stated that it was not the language of the novel that they enjoyed when they read a novel, while 30 students (20.8%) have stated that the language of the novels was what they found enjoyable while reading. One missing response (0.7%) was noted.

Table 33 examines whether students enjoy the characters of the novel while they are reading it. Again, the majority and a total number of 92 (63.9%) students have said that it was not the characters that they enjoyed the most, while 51 (35.4%) students said it was the characters that they enjoyed the most when reading a novel. There was also one missing response (0.7%).

Finally, Table 34 examines whether the students enjoyed the plot of the novel the most, and this time the majority of the students (111 students, making up 77.1%) replied that the plot was the most enjoyable aspect when reading a novel. 32 students (22.2%) stated that the plot was not the most enjoyable feature when reading a novel. One missing response was noted.

Table 32. *Examining whether students enjoy the language of novels the most*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	20,8	21,0	21,0
	No	113	78,5	79,0	100,0
	Total	143	99,3	100,0	
Missing	99,00	1	,7		
Total		144	100,0		

Chart for Item 11: The language

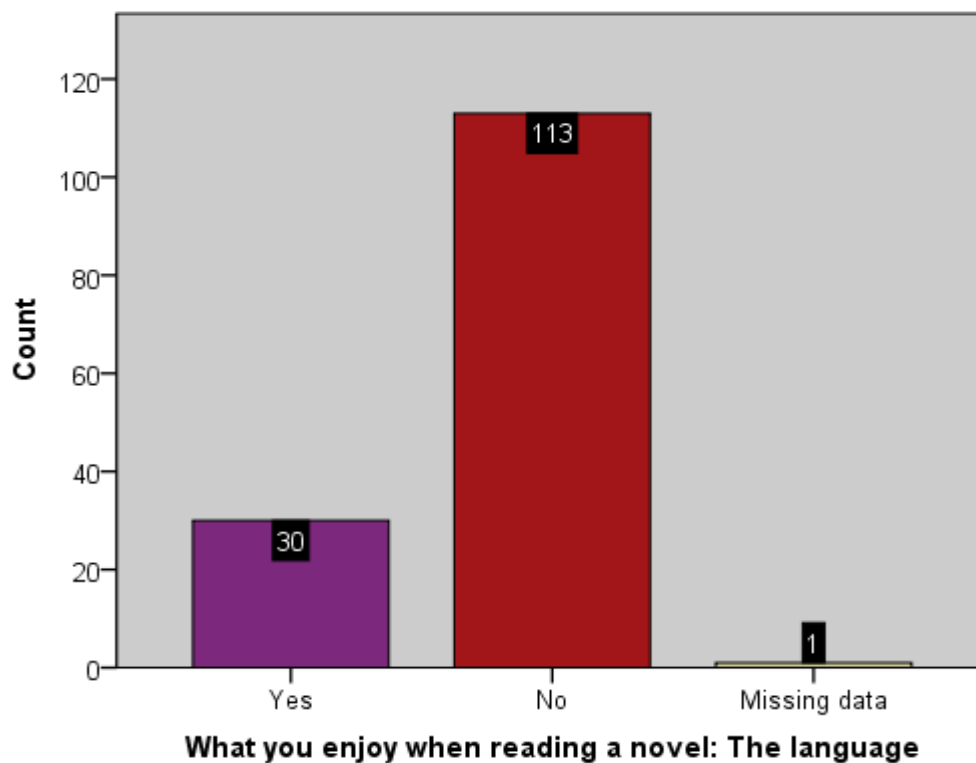


Figure 33. This figure illustrates whether students enjoy the language of the novel the most.

Table 32. Examining whether students enjoy the characters of novels the most

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	51	35,4	35,7	35,7
	No	92	63,9	64,3	100,0
	Total	143	99,3	100,0	
Missing	99,00	1	,7		
Total		144	100,0		

Chart for Item 11: The characters.

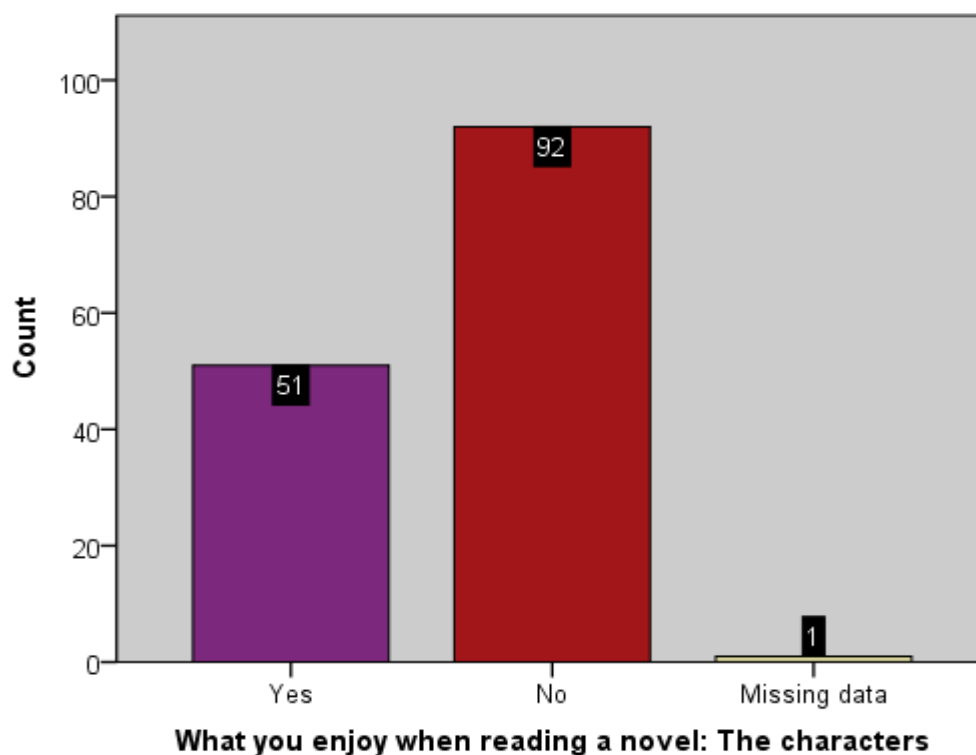


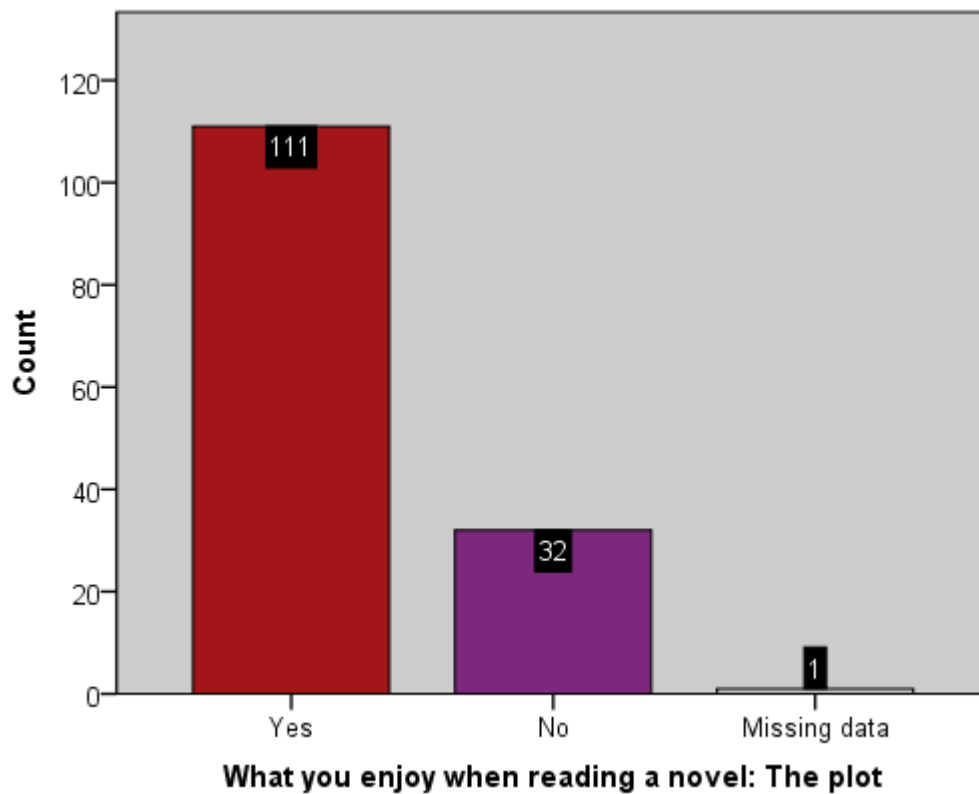
Figure 34. This figure illustrates whether students enjoy the characters of the novel the most.

Table 34. Examining whether students enjoy the novels' plot the most

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	111	77,1	77,6	77,6
	No	32	22,2	22,4	100,0
	Total	143	99,3	100,0	
Missing	99,00	1	,7		
Total		144	100,0		

Chart for Item 11: The plot.





*Figure 35.* This figure illustrates whether students like the plot of the novel the most.

In the open-ended part of item 11, students were asked to explain the reason for the choice, thus providing more details in relation to their view of the involvement of novels in the ELT and the aspects of the novels they enjoy more when reading it. Consequently, three hierarchical codes were outlined, as follows:

#### *Characters*

- Interesting
- Personal engagement
  - Relate to the characters
- See things from different perspectives
- Funny
- Realistic

- Adventurous
- Nice
- Other

*Language*

- Linguistic engagement
  - Vocabulary enrichment
- Variety
  - Dialect
- Figurative language
- Other

*Plot*

- Interesting
- Suspense of unravelling the plot
- Other
- Motivating
- Engage imaginatively
- Missing data
- Comprehensible
- Underlying messages

Item 12: What skills have you improved with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Reading    b. Listening    c. Writing    d. Speaking    e. Spelling

Item 12 is important in answering RQ6 since it examined the students' views on the skills they believed they improved with the use of novels. A table and a chart have been created to examine each skill individually and since students had five options from which they could select, five different tables and five charts were created representing one for each of the skills offered to the students.

Table 35 examines whether the students believe that their reading skills have been improved with the use of novels in the classroom, with 86 students (59.7%) indicating that they have improved it and 58 students (40.3%) not selecting it as a skill they have improved.

Table 36 measures whether students have improved their listening skills and 85 students (59%) stated that they have not whereas 59 students (41%) believe that their listening skills have been improved.

Table 37 examines whether students have improved their writing skills, with 86 students (59.7%) stating that they have and 58 students (40.3%) not indicating that their writing skills have been improved.

Table 38 examines whether the students have improved their speaking skills, and interestingly, this language skill has received the most positive responses with 89 students (61.8) responding that their speaking skills have been improved with the use of novels, while 55 students (38.2%) believe that they have not improved them.

The final skill examined in Table 39 is spelling, gaining the most negative responses since 100 students (69.4%) believe that their spelling skills have not been improved, with only 44 students (30.6) considering their spelling skills to have met with some kind of improvement.

Table 35. Examining whether students have improved their reading skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	86	59,7	59,7	59,7
	No	58	40,3	40,3	100,0
Total		144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 12: Reading

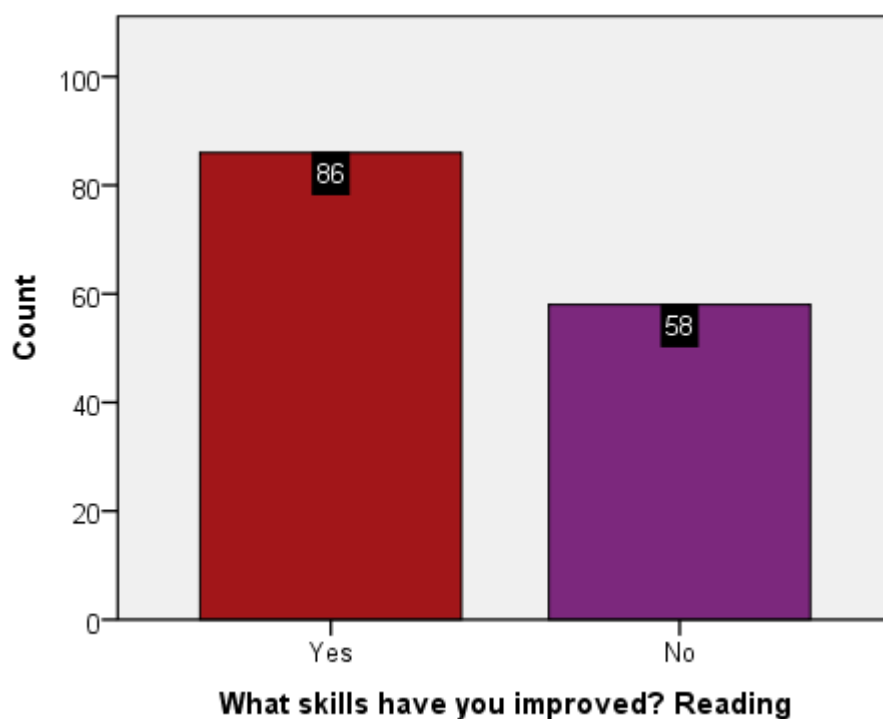


Figure 36. This figure illustrates whether the students have improved their reading skills

Table 36. Examining whether students have improved their listening skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	59	41,0	41,0	41,0
	No	85	59,0	59,0	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 12: Listening

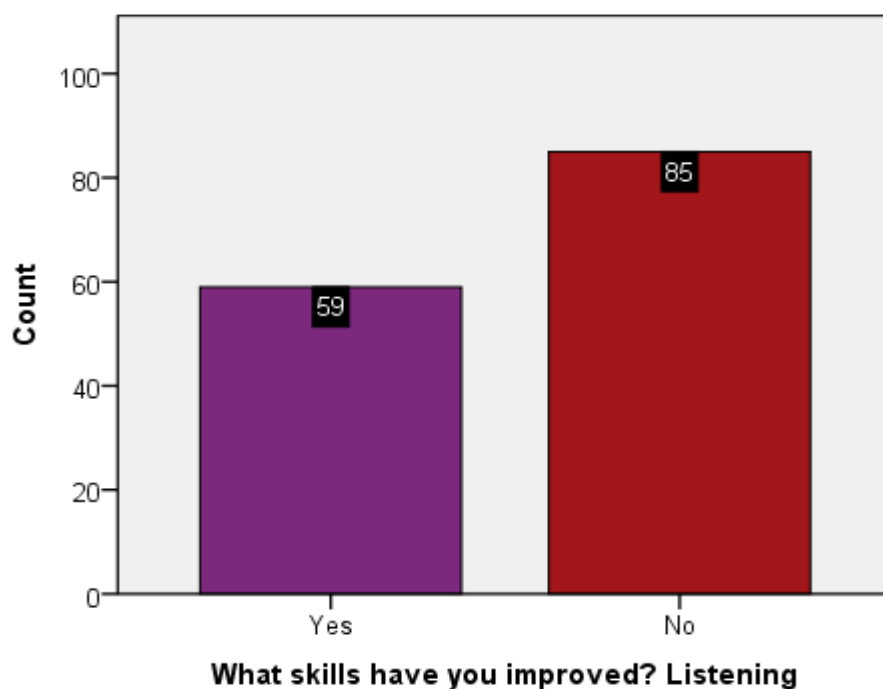


Figure 37. This figure illustrates students' beliefs on improvement of their listening skills.

Table 37. Examining whether students have improved their writing skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	86	59,7	59,7	59,7
	No	58	40,3	40,3	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 12: Writing.

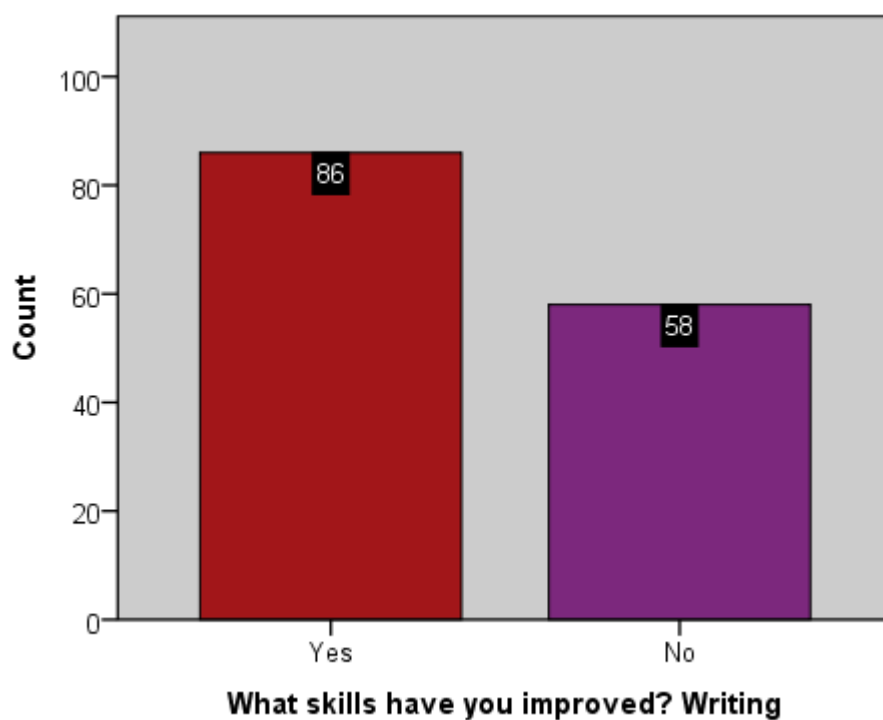


Figure 38. This figure illustrates students' beliefs on improvement of their writing skills.

Table 38. Examining whether students have improved their speaking skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	89	61,8	61,8	61,8
	No	55	38,2	38,2	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 12: Speaking

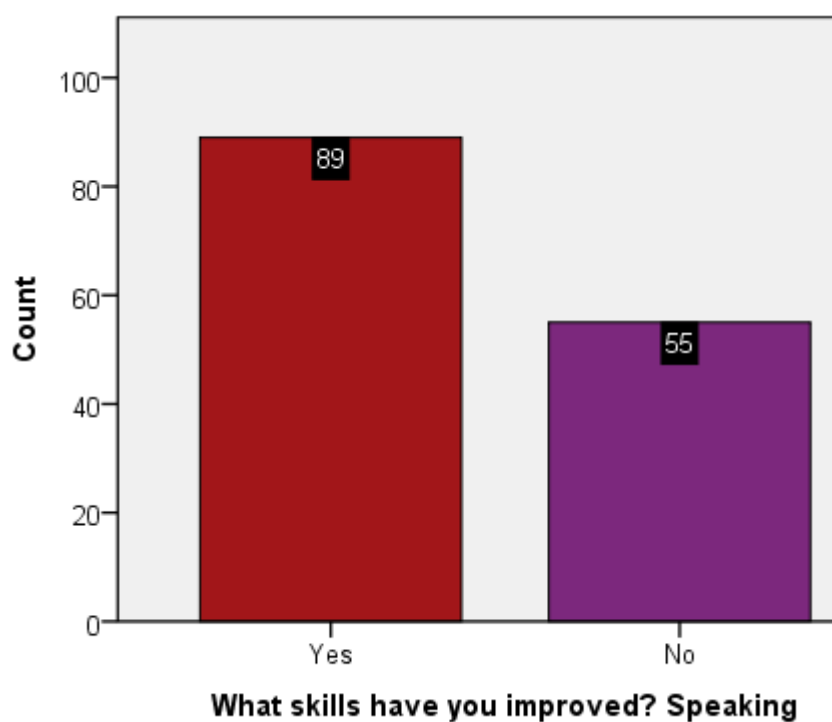


Figure 39. This figure illustrates students' beliefs on improvement of their speaking skills.

Table 39. Examining whether students have improved their spelling skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	44	30,6	30,6	30,6
	No	100	69,4	69,4	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 12: Spelling.

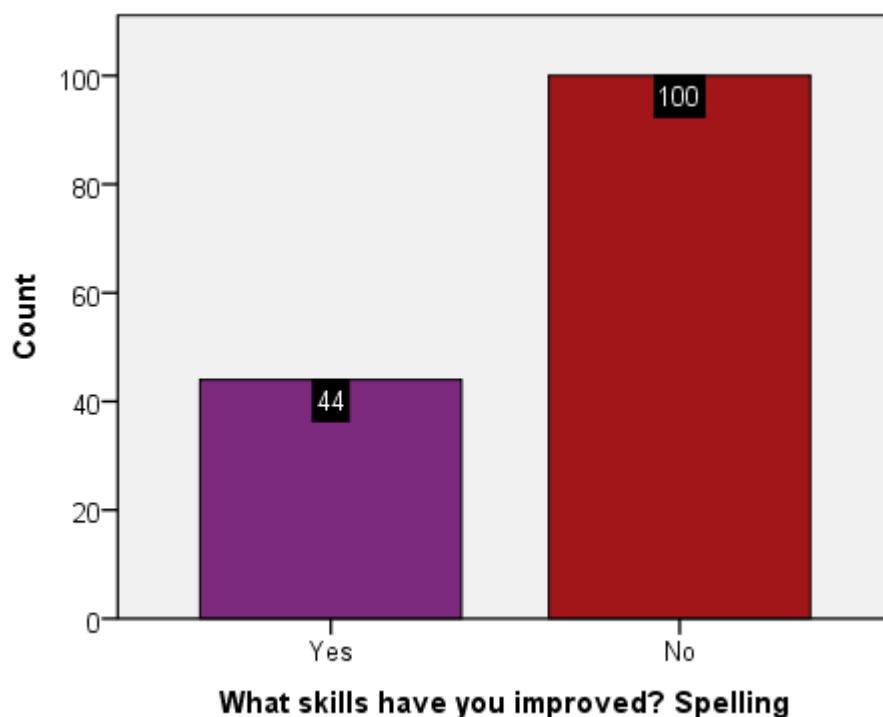


Figure 40. This figure illustrates students' beliefs on improvement of their spelling skills.

Item 13: Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

- a. Yes                      b. No

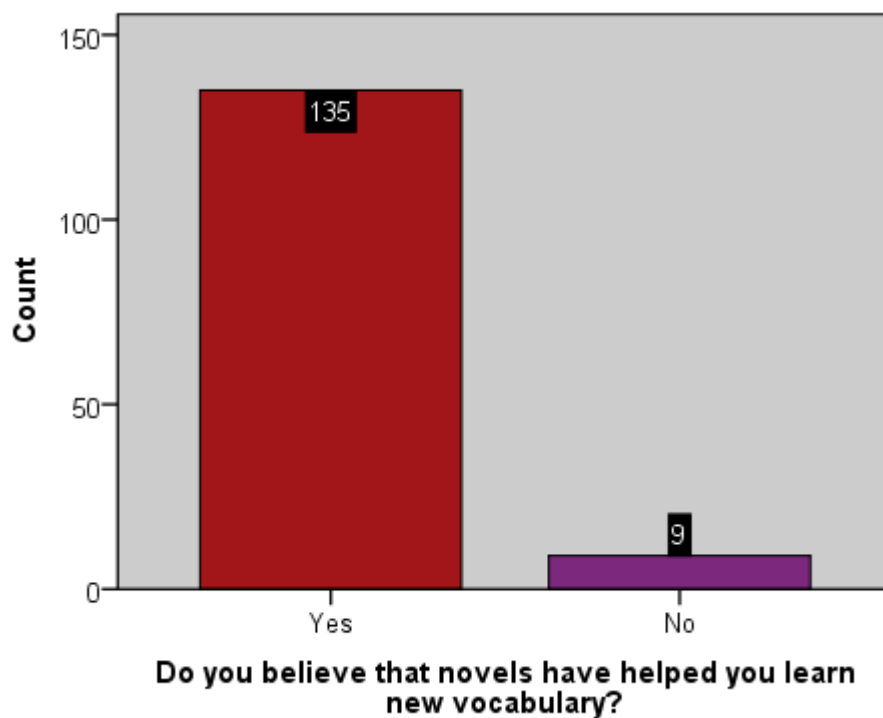
Table 40 investigates the students' beliefs about the use of novels for learning new vocabulary and the majority of the students, with a very high number of 135 responses (93.8%) indicating that novels have helped them learn new lexical items, and only 9 students (6.3%) stating that they have not yet learned any new vocabulary.

Table 40. *Examining whether novels have helped students learn new vocabulary*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	135	93,8	93,8	93,8
No	9	6,3	6,3	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	



Chart for Item 13.



*Figure 41. This figure illustrates the students' beliefs regarding the role of novels in learning new vocabulary.*

Item 14: What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Guess the meaning      b. Use a dictionary    c. Ignore the word    d. Ask someone

Item 14 examines how students deal with an unknown word when reading a novel is involved and it is a multiple response question, enabling the students to select one or more possible answers. Since the students had been given a selection of four possible answers, four tables and four charts were designed, with each one of them representing a given option.

Table 41 examined whether students guess the meaning of an unknown word. 84 students (58.3%) stated that they did, and 60 students (41.7%) said that they did not guess the meaning of unknown vocabulary.

Table 42 considered whether students use a dictionary for unknown words: 88 students (61.1%) stated not using dictionaries in such instances, and only 56 (38.9%) students stated that they regularly used them for unknown words.

Table 43 presents the highest number of negative student responses, with 99 students (68.8%) stating that they did not ignore an unknown word. Only 45 students (31.2%) ignored them.

Table 44 received the highest number of positive responses, with 89 students (61.8%) stating that when they have an unknown word they asked someone for its meaning, and 55 students (38.2%) said that they did not ask someone for the meaning of unknown words.

Table 41. *Examining whether students guess the meaning of unknown words they find in novels*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	84	58,3	58,3	58,3
No	60	41,7	41,7	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 14: Guess the meaning

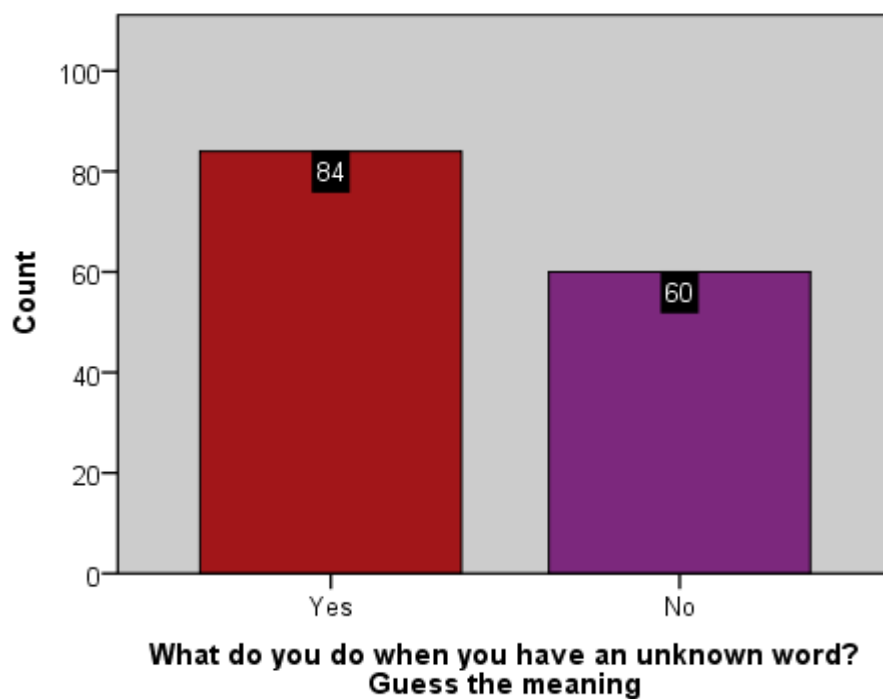


Figure 42. This figure illustrates whether students guess the meaning of unknown words they find in novels.

Table 42. Examining whether students use a dictionary for unknown words they find in novels

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	56	38,9	38,9	38,9
	No	88	61,1	61,1	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 14: Use a dictionary.

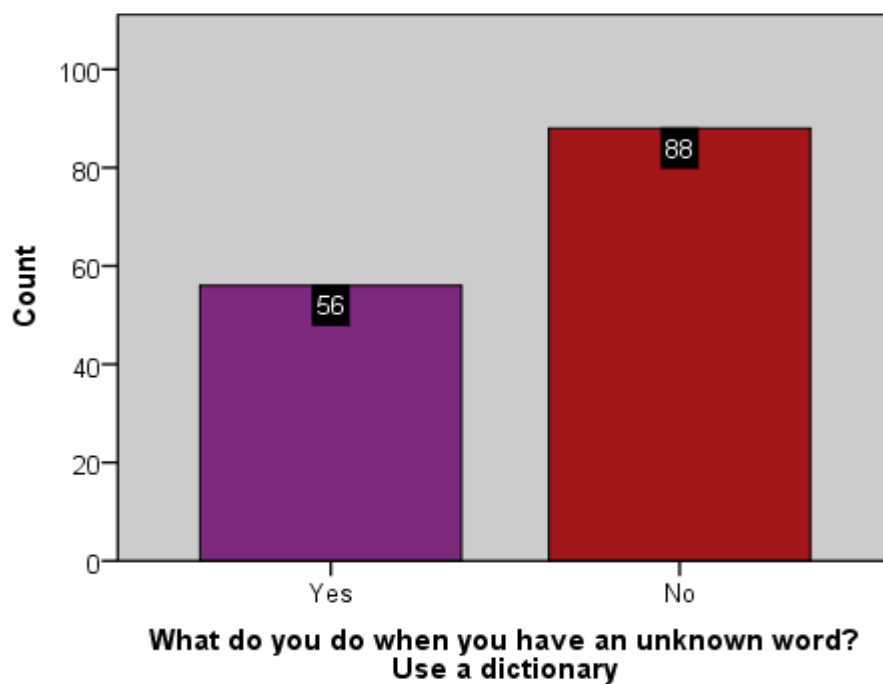


Figure 43. This figure illustrates whether students use a dictionary for an unknown word they find in a novel.

Table 43. Examining whether students ignore an unknown word when reading a novel.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	45	31,3	31,3	31,3
No	99	68,8	68,8	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 14: Ignore the word

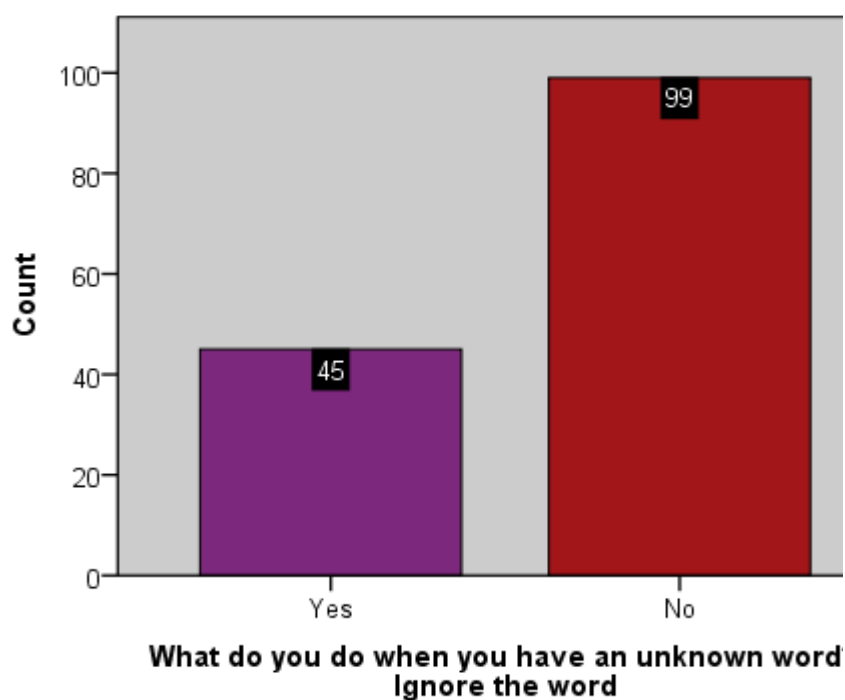


Figure 44. This figure illustrates whether students ignore an unknown word they find in a novel.

Table 44. Examining whether students ask someone for the meaning of unknown words they find in a novel.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	89	61,8	61,8	61,8
	No	55	38,2	38,2	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 14: Ask someone.

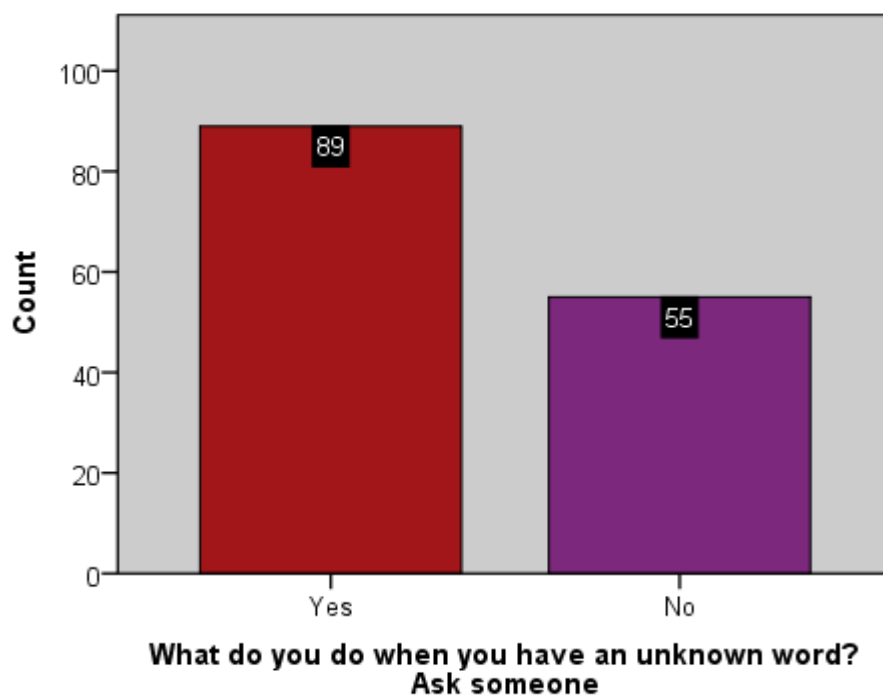


Figure 45. This figure illustrates whether students ask someone for the meaning of an unknown word they find in a novel.

Item 16: What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Vocabulary      b. Length      c. Plot

Item 16 is a question with multiple response sets, asking students to select one or more possible options. It investigates the most common problems students encounter when the reading of a novel is involved, thus providing data which are relevant to answering RQ6 which examines the student' views on the involvement of novels in ELT in private schools in Cyprus. Therefore, a table and a chart with dichotomy questions are created for each of the three available options (vocabulary, length and plot) asking students to delineate the most common problems when reading a novel.

The data from Table 45 show that the most common problem students have to deal with is vocabulary with 96 students (66.7%) stating that it is the feature that causes the most problems, making novels more difficult to read. Only 48 students (33.3%) state that they do not consider vocabulary as problematic.

On the other hand, Table 46 indicates that the least common problem appears to be the plot of the novels, with a very high number of 134 students (93.1%) stating that it cannot be regarded as a problem when reading a novel whatsoever, as opposed to only 10 students (6.9%) who believe that plot is the most common problem they face when reading a novel.

Finally, Table 47 shows that length does not appear to be a problem for the majority of the students since 88 students (61.1%) do not consider it as the most common problem, as opposed to 56 students (38.9%) who consider it a problem when reading a novel

Table 45. *Examining whether vocabulary is the most common problem students face when reading a novel*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	96	66,7	66,7	66,7
No	48	33,3	33,3	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 16: Vocabulary.

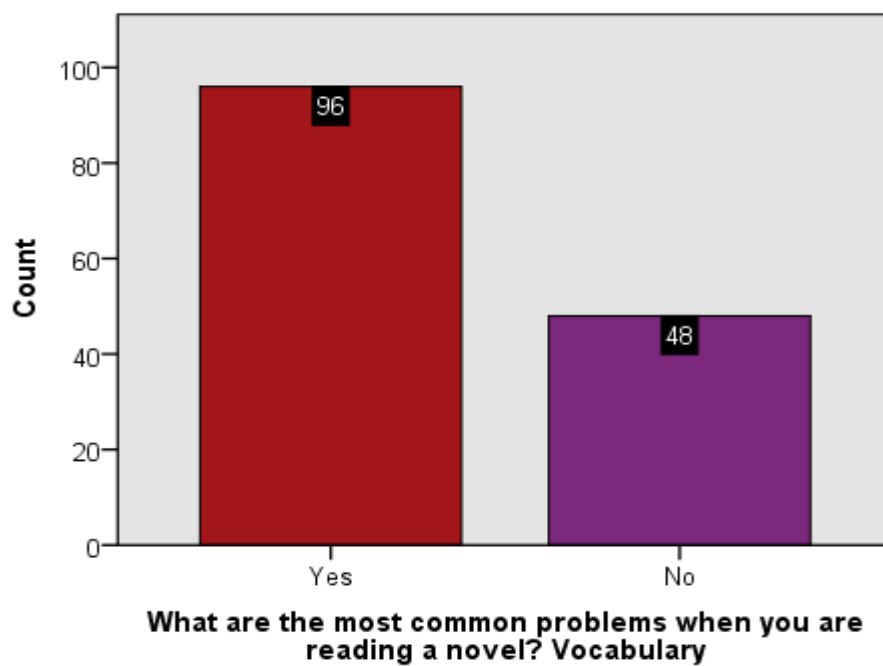


Figure 46. This figure illustrates whether vocabulary is the most common problem students face when reading a novel.

Table 46. Examining whether the length of the novel is the most common problem students face when reading a novel

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	56	38,9	38,9	38,9
	No	88	61,1	61,1	100,0
Total		144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 16: Length



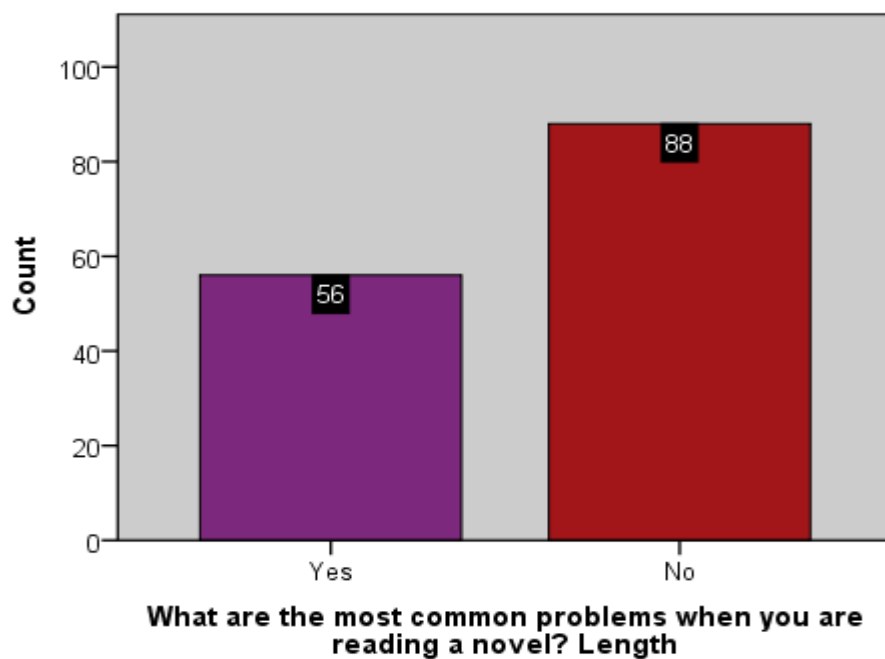


Figure 47. This figure illustrates whether the length of the novel is the most common problem students face when reading a novel.

Table 47. Examining whether the difficulty of the plot of the novel is the most common problem students face when reading a novel

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	6,9	6,9	6,9
	No	134	93,1	93,1	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 16: Plot.

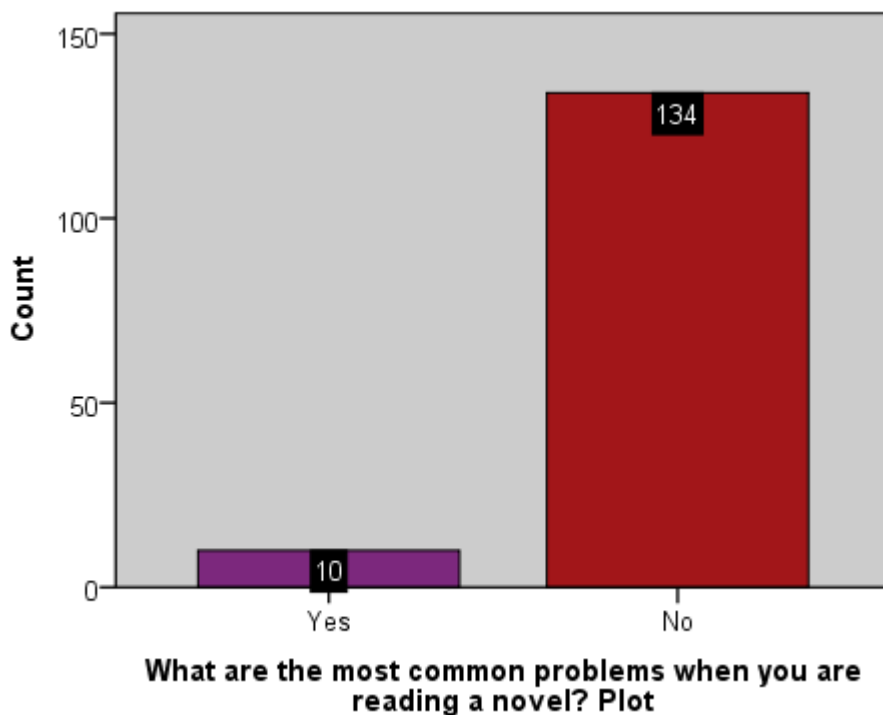


Figure 48. This figure illustrates whether the difficulty of the plot of the novel is the most common problem students face.

Item 18: What do you prefer, reading a novel aloud or silently in the classroom? Please circle.

a. Aloud

b. Silently

Why?

Table 48 for item 18 considers the students' preference in reading a novel aloud or silently. The data show that the majority of the students with a number of 87 responses (60.4%) prefer reading the novel aloud, as opposed to 57 students (39.6%) who prefer reading a novel silently.

Table 48. *Examining whether students prefer to read a novel aloud or silently*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Aloud	87	60,4	60,4	60,4
Silently	57	39,6	39,6	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 18.

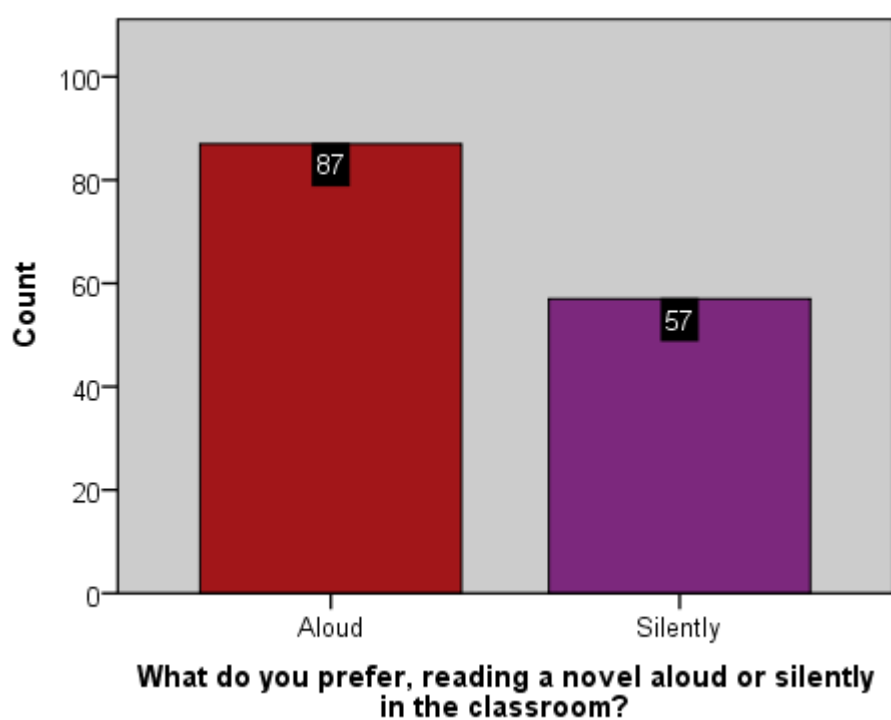


Figure 49. *This figure indicates whether students prefer reading a novel aloud or silently in their classroom.*

In the open-ended part of the question, the students have identified the reasons for their preference in either reading a novel aloud or silently. The results are presented below:

- *Aloud*
  - Better comprehension
    - Comprehension of the plot
    - Comprehension of meaning
  - Reading practice
    - Develop speaking skills
      - Accent
      - Pronunciation
    - Develop reading skills
      - Expressive reading
  - Other
  - Concentration
    - Increased attention span
  - Develop listening skills
    - Listen to myself
  - Enjoyable
  - Missing
  - Ask teacher's assistance/corrections
  - Engage imaginatively
- *Silently*
  - Better comprehension
  - Concentration
  - Missing
  - Emotional involvement
    - Shy

- Nervous
- Embarrassed
- Comfortable
- Develop reading skills
  - Reading pace
    - Read faster
  - Expressive reading
- Preference
- Other
- Engage imaginatively

It is particularly important to mention that identical results occur in both parent codes. For example, *Better comprehension* and *Concentration* appear in both *Aloud* and *Silently* but what differentiates the one from the other is the highly increased number of reference that the first has accepted from the students as opposed to the latter. *Engage imaginatively* also appears in both parent codes but it has accepted equal reference rate in both instances.

Item 19: Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain how:

Item 19 (Table 49) examines the students' views on the involvement of novels in helping them learn new features of grammar, thus providing more data to address RQ6. The data show that the majority and a total number of 92 students (63.9%) believe that novels have helped them learn new features of grammar, as opposed to 52 students (36.1%) who do not find novels as helpful in learning new grammatical features.

Table 49. *Examining whether novels have helped students learn new features or characteristics of grammar.*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	92	63,9	63,9	63,9
No	52	36,1	36,1	100,0
Total	144	100,0	100,0	

Chart for Item 19.

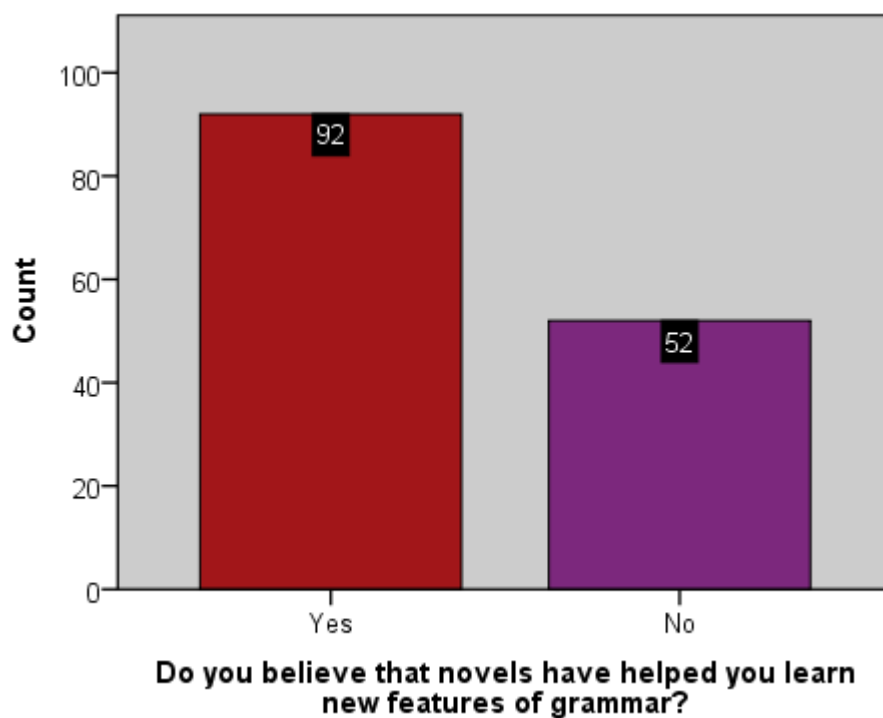


Figure 50. This figure illustrates the novels' role in learning new features or characteristics of grammar.

In the open-ended part of the question, students have identified how they perceive novels have contributed in learning new features and characteristics of grammar in the in case they answered *yes* to the question and their responses are presented below:

*Yes*

- Improve grammar knowledge
  - Learn new adjectives
  - Improve tenses
  - Prepositions
  - Incidental grammar learning
  - Adverbs
  - Phrasal verbs
- Vocabulary enrichment
  - Incidental vocabulary learning
  - Note-taking
- Other
- Missing
- Exposure
- Language/grammar in use
- Writing skills
  - Descriptive writing
  - Creative writing
- Increase language awareness
- Reading comprehension

- Read and retrieve
  - Exemplification
  - Memorisation
- Register
  - Colloquial language
- Figurative language
  - Idioms
- Expression
- Critical thinking

*No*

- Missing data
- Disregard grammar

The striking feature of this question is undoubtedly in the number of Missing data I have gathered mainly from the students who gave a 'No' answer. This has led to the creation of only two aggregated codes from that parent code where one of them was dedicated to the missing responses I collected from the students. This fact becomes even more noticeable when a comparison is made between the aggregations that occurred under the 'Yes' code as opposed to the 'No' code.



#### 4.7.2 Classroom Observations:

After presenting the results from the students' questionnaires that address RQ6, the presentation of the data resulting from the classroom observations aims to provide a more complete "picture" of the students' views regarding the use of literature and more specifically novels in ELT in relation to the responses they have given in the interviews. For example, the data resulting from the classroom observations (see pp...) may explain the students' positive attitude towards learning new vocabulary through novels (item 13, 93.8% of the students considered they have learnt new vocabulary) since many techniques to increase new vocabulary were observed during the lessons (e.g., games, guessing the meaning out of context, mimicry, synonyms, etc.). Additionally, the data from classroom observations also reveal presentation and practice of grammatical items by using novels and this may explain the students' positive attitude towards learning new characteristics and features of grammar (item 18, 63,9% perceive novels as helpful in learning new characteristics of grammar). Importantly, the results from classroom observations also reveal information which might explain the students' positive view of novels noted in items 7, 8, 10, 11. The following results from classroom observations should be considered:

- *Attitudes and engagement of class: Student responses*
  - Competitive
  - High interest/participation
  - Motivated
  - Responsive/Active
  - Minimal distractions

- Moderate student-student interaction
- Mostly individual
- Students are focused on tasks
- Whole class discussions
- Low interest

The hierarchical code *Attitudes and engagement of class: Student responses*, refers to the students' involvement during the lesson where I aimed to delineate the students' engagement in using novels in the classroom for ELT and record their overall interaction during the lesson. This was noted by observing the students' behaviour, the tasks assigned by the teacher and classroom interaction. As far as the amount of the observation data is concerned, approximately 1,400 words were written down per class.

The observed ten non-hierarchical child codes were created to refer to the students' responses during the lesson and their overall contribution to it. The students' reactions, either positive or negative, were taken into account to result to an identification of their overall involvement, interest and reaction to the lesson. This classification of their attitudes and responses was indicative of their interest, participation, motivation and response at the time of the lessons. These aspects were not measured quantitatively but they were gathered observationally and reflectively always based on the students' classroom behaviour. The codes *competitive* and *high interest/participation* were judged by the number of students expressing an interest in answering the teachers' questions, or their interest and participation rate in taking part in the language games played in the classroom; this was arbitrated by measuring the number of students who raised hands to participate in these activities.

The code *Minimal distractions/students are focused on tasks* signifies the students' concentration levels and attention span during the lesson and how focused they were from the beginning until the end based on the observational behavioural of the students. This was measured by either observing their reactions during the tasks assigned by the teachers or their willingness to participate and get involved in the lesson. I mainly focused on possible distractions or a particular type of behaviour that might have deviated from the desired involvement on the set tasks. The code *Moderate student-student interaction* concentrates on classroom interaction and codes the type of interaction in the classroom (19 minutes of student-student interaction were recorded and this might suggest that the dominant interaction type was teacher-student). The code *Mostly individual* denotes the students' involvement in the lesson, and this demonstrates that there were very limited groupwork or pairwork exercises. The code *whole class discussion* concentrated on the types of discussion that took place in class and include the way they were organised, initiated and controlled by the teacher. The final code *Low interest* refers to the occasions in the lesson when the interest of the students remained relatively low in contrast to the occasions where their interest was relatively high (e.g., the students were more reluctant in providing an answer a grammar-based question).

The results from the classroom observations presented here attempt to provide an answer to RQ6 by examining them in relation to the students' perceptions and attitudes in the students' questionnaires. Therefore, the observed data aim to corroborate the students' beliefs by looking at the students' responses in the questionnaires with regard to their attitudes and responses in the classroom.

In this chapter, an emphasis was given on how the RQs were addressed by looking at the findings resulting from the teachers and students' questionnaires, the teachers' interviews and the classroom observations. In doing so, each RQ was addressed separately, presenting the results which were proportionate for each of the six questions. In what follows, a discussion of the findings arising from the quantitative and qualitative data in relation to the six research questions will be made, where the implications of the findings of this study will be discussed in regards to the use on literature and specifically novels in ELT based on the teachers and students' perceptions and attitudes.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the findings arising from the qualitative and quantitative data amassed from the use of questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. I will also consider the implications of the results of this study for the use of novels for ELT purposes.

At this point, I would like to emphasise that the discussion in this chapter and the claims hereafter presented are based on the findings of the study and the generalised responses from the teachers and students who participated in this study by responding to the questionnaires, participating in the interviews and being observed in their classrooms while using literature.

The discussion will look at each research question separately, providing an answer based on the findings and where applicable, relating it to the literature review presented in Chapter Two.

### 5.2 Discussion of research question one

Is literature being used as a means of English language teaching in private ELT schools in Cyprus?

Research question one aims to examine two things. First, whether or not private schools in Cyprus use literature for ELT by including it in their curriculum. Second, and more important, examine whether in the occasions where literature is used in private ELT

schools in Cyprus – or it is included in the curriculum - it is used as a resource and not as a discipline.

Based on the results, literature is explicitly being used for English language teaching in private ELT schools in Cyprus. During the writing-up of the literature review in Chapter Two, I noted the depolarisation of the fields of literature and language teaching during the recent years. The integration of literature for language teaching purposes as observed by Carter (2007), Lazar (1993) and Paran (2008) is very evident in the language teaching context in Cyprus. This applies either in terms of the *Foreign Language Curricula* (see appendix D) for secondary education in public schools in Cyprus or, more importantly, in terms of the implementation of literature for language teaching purposes at the private school where I did the classroom observations, and the students and teachers' responses in the questionnaires.

In the context of integrating language and literature in Cyprus, a key change that has been observed in the approach of using literature for language teaching is the distinction between the study of literature and the use of literature, as has been previously noted by Carter and Long (1991) and Carter et al. (1989). That is, teachers in Cyprus do not use literature in its 'academic' and 'institutionalised' sense where students have to respond to literature critically by writing about literature as they should be doing in literary studies. Rather, teachers have been using literature as a resource, an acknowledgment that promotes language learning as it increases the students' linguistic awareness and language development by employing EFL techniques and producing student-centred approaches (Carter, Walker, and Brumfit, 1989; Carter and Long, 1991; Carter and McRae, 1996; Lazar, 1993). This can be demonstrated by the general approach to literature as it has been delineated in the interviews with the code 'Language enrichment' (p.176) and noticed in the observations with the code

'Linguistic development' (pp.177-178). The data collected and analysed from these two codes in particular (without excluding other codes such as 'follow-up activities' or 'develop students' interpretative abilities', etc.) indicate that all four language skills were involved with an additional emphasis on receptive vocabulary and pronunciation. The students were asked to participate in language games (e.g. hotspot) and through which they practised their grammar and used newly acquired vocabulary when asking and answering questions. Additionally, the observations revealed that the classes were primarily student-centred, with extremely limited use of the L1 (when the teachers had to explain difficult, unknown vocabulary) and a focus on increasing student talking time through whole-class discussions. However, the observations helped to notice that there was moderate student-student interaction (19 minutes), an occurrence that could be resolved in order to increase participation, maximise practice time and promote collaboration.

The use of literature as a means of language teaching in Cyprus can also be explicitly seen by the teachers and students' responses in the questionnaires where the majority of the teachers, a percentage of 84.6% (Table 2), said that they had previously used literature in their English language learning classrooms. On the other hand, the majority of the students, a percentage of 98.6% (Table 1), stated that they had been taught literature in their classrooms for language learning purposes.

The assimilation of language and literature can additionally be noted by the teachers' responses in the interviews, where five teachers said that they currently use or have previously used various genres of literature – not to teach literature as a discipline, but to teach the language. Most of the teachers stressed the importance and the necessity of incorporating novels for language teaching purposes, noting the benefits this would have on the students' language enrichment, interpretative skills cultural knowledge, etc.

The use of literature in the context of language teaching can also be confirmed by the classroom observations made. The classrooms observed used literature as a resource, aiming to increase the students' language awareness and the proliferation of the students' linguistic competence and performance.

Finally, the results from the data gathered from questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations suggest the use of literature for language teaching.

### 5.3 Discussion of research question two

What is the role of literature in English language learning and implementation in private schools in Cyprus?

At this point, it has to be stressed that the discussion regarding the role of literature in English language learning and implementation in Cyprus is based on the data collected from classroom observations made at the private school I visited, as well as from the students' and teachers' responses to the questionnaires and interviews.

This research question comes as an extension of research question one, since it follows the recognition of the use of literature for language teaching purposes in Cyprus. Since I have already made a distinction between the study of literature and the use of literature (Carter et al., 1989), it is therefore important to recognise that the role of literature in the private school observed is centred around its 'exploitation' for language learning purposes. In setting a distinction of the role of literature in this context, it would be very beneficial to look at Carter and Long's (1991) distinction between looking at the two roles of literature – as a product and as a process.



As they suggest, the approaches related to the study of literature are essentially product-centred and concentrated on the text as something that is ‘holistic’, ‘intact’ and ‘sacrosanct’. The problem with this is that the related pedagogies focus on the text as an object of study, where students are requested to learn techniques which are “learned by practice rather than in the manner of an apprentice in the company of the expert practitioner” (Carter and Long, 1991, p. xxi). Consequently, the result of using literature in the lines of a product-centred instrument is to have a product-oriented and teacher-centred lesson which focuses more on the development of knowledge about literature, instead of recognising literature as means for language learning.

As Carter and Long suggest (1991, p. xxii), the role of literature in this process is to provide a resource for language development where the teacher is asked to step down from the pedestal and stop treating literature as an object of product-centred study. Rather, literature should be treated in a process-centred manner, where the focus of attention shifts towards the direction of treating literary texts as linguistic resource. Similarly, the results from the teachers’ questionnaires (Item 8) indicate that nearly 89% of the teachers believe that literature should not be studied in isolation without relating to language teaching (Table 4). Additionally, in response to Item 9 of the teachers’ questionnaire, the teachers emphasised that literature is perceived to be beneficial for English language learning and implementation and is described as a technique which can be favourable and constructive for the learners, valuing in that way its potential contribution to the students’ language development. The data concentrated from the categories in response to Item 9 indicate that none of the teachers disvalues the beneficial properties of using literature for ELT purposes, and 92.4% of the teachers consider literature as a positive addition to the ELT materials arsenal (Table 5).

Moreover, literary texts are treated as materials to initiate student discussions, in order to increase the student talking time by promoting student participation. This has been particularly evident in classroom observations as it can be seen from the code 'Attitudes in class' where students were kept highly motivated and very responsive to the teachers' questions. They also demonstrated an increased interest for the lesson and participated in the activities and games organised by the teacher retaining their interest throughout the whole process.

The findings of this study show that methodologically, the teaching of literature with language learners in Cyprus agrees to the process-based pedagogy that Carter and Long have been referring to and that a more 'traditional' approach to the teaching of literature has been avoided.

Many of the activities and language learning techniques and strategies used with the learners are directly transferred from the language learning classrooms and modified to the use of literary texts. This can be explicitly demonstrated by considering the codes 'Follow-up activities' from the interviews and 'Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary' from the classroom observations. The data from these two codes signify an increased reference to EFL activities, strategies and games adapted for the use of literary texts such as, guessing the meaning of words out of context, role-play (e.g., 'hotspot' game), vocabulary games (e.g., hangman), gap-filling exercises, vocabulary elicitation techniques (e.g., finding/providing synonyms or antonyms) and questioning techniques (e.g., comprehension questions, display questions, referential questions and wh- questions).

Since many of the qualities and principles of the EFL classroom as indicated above are applied with the use of literary texts, then the student-centred orientation should be

mentioned as another variable which adds to the role of literature for language learning in Cyprus. In the teachers' questionnaires (Q10) as well as in the interview codes 'Benefits of literature use in language classrooms', 'Using novels in ELT classrooms' and the classroom observation code 'linguistic development', teachers have described their methodology of including student-centred and language-based activities that have as a purpose the improvement and practice of all four language skills. Additionally, there has been observed an effort to improve student interaction and engagement with the literary texts (see code 'Attitudes of class' in classroom observations), a fact which has led to an active involvement of the learners in the language learning process.

In the literature review, I have mentioned Widdowson's (1978) argument regarding the difference found between the two distinct levels of linguistic competence, namely, *usage* and *use*, where the former denotes knowing the linguistic rules, and the latter signifies the knowledge of how the rules can be used to maintain an effective communication. It was also noted that despite the fact that the role of literature as a subject of study was traditionally to teach language usage, learners can benefit from the redefinition of the function of literature and use it to develop language use. As it comes out from the findings, the use of literature for language learning in Cyprus has also embraced the role of the latter, since the integration of language and literature encompasses the teaching of language and the teaching of literature as connected educational aims which intend to achieve a linguistic development and competence of the learner in using the English language appropriately and effectively.

On the other hand, however, there also seems to be an agreement which results from the findings examining both students as well teachers' beliefs which identifies the involvement of literature – and the use of novels in particular – as central in providing imperative literary experiences. These experiences are perceived to provide an

educational, cultural and emotional engagement with the students. Moreover, students are personally engaged and actively involved in the reception and construction of meaning, relating to the experiences. This very fact can be substantiated by looking at the findings and codes from all three data collection methods since teachers believe that literary texts can help students ‘Develop interpretive expertise for making meaning’ and in the interviews, teachers have suggested the use of novels to ‘Develop the students’ interpretive abilities’. Similarly observations have demonstrated how novels can be used to ‘Develop the students’ interpretive abilities’, resulting in the codes ‘Develop students’ abilities to make inferences from linguistic clues’, ‘Discover implications and assumptions’ and ‘Forming hypotheses and making predictions’. These interpretive abilities have allowed students to relate to the literary experiences by identifying with the characters of the novel and engrossing their imaginative involvement which intensifies their motivation in using novels for language and further educational purposes. This can be shown in the students’ questionnaire (Q10 and Q11, Table 10) where 114 students (79.2%) have indicated that they like reading novels attributing their decision to, mainly, the motivating features of novels (i.e. the plot and the characters of the novel). These characteristics keep them motivated in using novels for language learning purposes.

Consequently, these considerations might suggest that “the teaching of literature and the teaching of literature as language [should not be seen] as disconnected pedagogic practices” (Carter and McRae, 1996, p. xxiv).

### 5.3.1 Linking the Foreign Languages Curriculum with the level of the classes in the study

The Foreign Languages Curriculum (FLC) was developed largely based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which aims to contribute towards the ‘individual, cognitive, social and emotional development of students’ (see Appendix D). Forms 1 and 4 relate to the levels in this curriculum since based on the thematic units of the curriculum, form 1 students should start becoming acquainted with the literature and poetry of the target language with some suggested activities proposed in the curriculum matching the activities used in the classrooms in which the observations took place (e.g. role playing, miming/pantomime, comparison and illustration of tales from different classrooms, theatrical games and games of communication and intercultural understanding, etc.). As far as form 4 students are concerned, the introduction to the literature and poetry of the target language continues to be a prevalent element in the curriculum, an aspect that matches with the actual use and implementation of literature in the researched setting. Therefore, teachers of both form 1 and form 4 are thought to be teaching to the curriculum, which stresses the need for the inclusion of literature. Additionally, the implications of this are far reaching for settings without this kind of curriculum since considering the students’ and teachers’ perceptions that concur to the belief that novels are a valuable source when learning a language, then the inclusion of literature could benefit the learning of a foreign language and may also have benefits for motivation. Therefore, instead of relying on sporadic and infrequent uses of literature that will depend on the willingness of a few teachers to incorporate it in their lessons, literature could be considered central to the EFL curriculum and a useful supplementary material to be used with students at various proficiency levels.

#### 5.4 Discussion of research question three

Are novels being used as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language in private EFL classrooms in Cyprus?

Yes, in the students' questionnaire (Item17), a number of students (116 students, 80.6%) have noted the importance of novels in helping them learn more about other cultures and lifestyles (Table 6). Most importantly, these results indicate that students seem to realise the imperative role that novels have to play in developing an awareness of the culture of the English language in EFL classrooms in Cyprus. Additionally, the findings from the teachers' questionnaires demonstrate that the EFL teachers in Cyprus recognise and praise the role of culture in general, and consider it as an indispensable part of language learning. This can be specifically validated by looking at the teachers' responses in Items 19 and 20 (Tables 7 and 8) in the teachers' questionnaire investigating firstly, the extent to which novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language, and secondly, whether teachers would ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language. The results show that the majority of the teachers (23 teachers, 88.4%) believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language, to a large extent. The teachers' unanimous positive answer (26 teachers, 100%) as to whether they would use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language might suggest that novels can be used to increase the students' awareness of the culture of the English language.

A major problem of teaching English as a second or foreign language has always been the formation of an authentic situation for language, especially in relation to its culture, and this problem has been specifically observed from personal experience and observation as a language teacher in Cyprus. In practical terms, this means that very frequently, language classrooms in Cyprus are very isolated from what Littlewood refers to as “the context of events and situations which produce natural language” (1986, p. 179). Harding (1937) suggests that in many instances, the context of events and settings which produce natural language are omnipresent in novels and require from the students to take on the ‘role of the onlooker’ and look on the events created by language, culture being one of them.

Teachers have expressed the opinion that novels not only provide students with a sense of linguistic imagination where words transcend their original definition, but they also empower students to immerse themselves into the whole contextual space where language resides. Furthermore, the language used in novels could provide a vehicle for communication and inter-cultural learning.

From the analysis of the teachers’ open-ended questions in the questionnaire (Items 10 and 16), a repeated reference to the codes ‘Intercultural learning’ and ‘Cultural knowledge’ has been noticed where teachers expressed the opinion that they have been using novels to ‘raise [their] students’ awareness on the use of the target language and culture as well as expose students to cultural diversity’, thus creating opportunities for both raising discussion and working on writing tasks based on this topic.

On the other hand, the qualitative analysis of the teachers’ interviews shows that teachers perceive novels as a representational vehicle of the culture of the English language as well as of other cultures in EFL classrooms in private schools in Cyprus.

For example, the code ‘Cultural knowledge’ concentrates many responses (and codes) related to how novels function as a catalyst in developing a cultural and intercultural awareness, where ‘Language and culture are interrelated’ and novels are perceived as ‘vivid cultural representations’ that can ‘increase cross-cultural awareness’ and ‘raise awareness on diverse ways of thought and lifestyles’ (see code ‘Cultural knowledge’, p.196) .

A common feature in all five interviews was the recognition and appreciation of culture as being a large part of language teaching, which in many occasions is seen to project itself through novels and bridges the cultural gap. Teachers have also stressed the importance of novels in introducing students to an array of mainly social and historical events like feminism and oppression, racism, freedom of speech and cultural diversity – phenomena which might scrutinise what Lazar describes as the contextualisation of how a “member of a particular society might behave or react in a specific situation” (1993, p. 17). These phenomena also attest Duff and Maley’s (2007, p. 6) notion that the “settings, characterizations, situations and assumptions which literary texts embody offer manifold opportunities for raising awareness of ‘difference’ and for developing tolerance and understanding” and it is in this sense that literature can be the vehicle for culture. However, Lazar (1993) calls teachers to be very attentive and selective to the way we want literary texts to reflect on the aspect of culture, since we need to be careful with what we want our students to do with the cultural elements found in novels and which cultural definition we should give to them.

The teachers’ reference to the importance of culture and its place in the language classroom with the use of novels is also validated by the classroom observations. The observations have shown how cultural enrichment and an introduction into different cultural aspects can be achieved with specific reference to the different dialects, as well



as cultural representations found in the novel that was used in the classroom at the time (*Bridge to Terabithia*). More specifically, the focus of attention in relation to the cultural elements found in the novel was set to the importance of dialects as a key to accessing the culture of people whose language was studied. Consequently, the students were in a position to discuss and work on tasks, and provide more information on themes such as education, social class and financial background of the characters in the novel based on the different dialects they used. Romaine (2000) suggests that dialects are a great example of how language may be examined in order to reveal a lot of information about boundaries of a social group that usually represents the differences in social distinctions where language can be representative of a given social class. As such, dialects are an important aspect of cultural identification since they can demonstrate the potential of social and cultural influences on language behaviour which are usually associated with dialects.

Some other findings from the teachers' interviews which are also worth mentioning refer to the evolution of culture and, as a result, the evolution of language to represent that cultural evolution through the use of novels (see code 'Cultural knowledge', p.196). Teachers have focused on the way culture is seen to provide the contextual background of a literary text, in this case novels, and as culture evolves so does the language used in the novels, aiming to present the nuances of the time around which a novel was written. This reference, is also supported by another perception which looks at novels as once being the peoples' television and nowadays showing how language and culture evolve (ibid.).

Finally, a very important reference in the teachers' interviews (see code 'Use novels for cultural comparisons', p.197,) suggests the use of novels for cultural comparisons, a task that may promote language practice focusing on diverse language skills. This is,

by itself, very important but it is very interesting that the range of texts that teachers have suggested to be used for cross-cultural learning and cultural comparisons are predominantly “classics” (e.g. *Jane Eyre*, *Hard Times* and *David Copperfield*). This suggests that specific genres might be more appropriate for accessing cultural information and intercultural learning (e.g. classics vs. science fiction). Even though the novel is the “supreme arbitrator, in the sphere of cultural representations” (Eagleton, 2005, p. 20) yet, the above findings suggest that not all types of novels contribute to cultural knowledge. Based on this argument, the novels to be selected in order to be used with language learners should be culturally accessible and must transcend cultural boundaries that may prevent students from developing their cultural awareness, or responding to it personally based on their cultural exposure. It is exactly for this reason that we should aim to increase the teachers’ awareness on cultural aspects and cultural difficulties of novels, or other literary texts, that may prove to be problematic for the learners, or even culturally inaccessible (Lazar, 1993; Brumfit and Carter, 1986).

In discussing the role of literature in English language learning in section 2.1, I noted Edmondson’s opposition in using literature in the L2 classroom. His general attitude is that literature has nothing to contribute in language learning and that other types of texts can be used to promote L2 language learning, thus diminishing the role of literature as opposed to other materials. In his article, Paran (2008) discusses some of Edmondson’s views in relation to the role of literature in language teaching. He maintains that Edmondson’s opinion was that cultural teaching could be achieved with the introduction of other curriculum subjects other than literature and that “literary elements and references in the language are not more important than other cultural references” (Paran, 2008, p. 468). Edmondson’s view on language learning limits its reference and importance in focusing exclusively on language and this results in what

Paran calls “the isolationist position”, where language is only concerned with L2 competence but nothing more is achieved in other levels (ibid.). In examining the role of novels in relation to culture in EFL classrooms in Cyprus, I concluded based on the aforementioned findings that the role of literature should not be examined only in relation to its unquestionable contribution to language learning. Rather, it should also embrace the other educational goals (Bredella, 2000, p. 380) that are associated with it – culture being one of them. Since the discussion in this section exclusively deals with the role of novels in relation to culture of the target language, the other educational roles will be later discussed in sections 6.6 and 6.7.

#### 5.5 Discussion of research question four

What are the students and teachers’ perceptions regarding the most appropriate form of literature in the process of ELT in private schools in Cyprus?

I will first attempt to provide an answer to this question by reference to the data from the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the teachers’ questionnaires and interviews, followed by a similar type of discussion based on the analysis of the students’ questionnaires. The majority of the teachers have indicated in Item 12 of the teachers’ questionnaire that novels are considered to be the most appropriate form of literature in the process of using literature for language teaching purposes. Some of them have even designated specific genres that they consider as the most appropriate, with classics and contemporary novels distinguished by far as the most suitable followed by science fiction, mystery, adventure and romance. The teachers’ decision is largely based on a

variety of reasons (as explained in Item 12 of teachers questionnaire and in the interviews); firstly, novels are considered to be effective because of their readability and students' familiarity with the genre since they are easier to read and students are more familiar with this kind of genre than poetry, short stories or plays because of more extensive exposure to novels in their L1.

Following the teachers' selection of preferred literary genre in using literature for ELT, the students were also asked to select the genre of novels they liked the most (Item 11 in Form 4's questionnaire). The genres which concentrated the highest ratings were Adventure (Table 16, rated by 76% of students), Romance (Table 12, 63%) and Fantasy (Table 19, 59%). These results might have significant implications for the choice of specific types of novels that could be used in the language classroom, an occurrence which links to the discussion regarding the selection of texts in Chapter 2. More specifically, the students' preference in certain genres could be linked to Collie and Slater's (1987) suggestion where they consider the ability of the novel to stimulate the personal involvement of the students as the primary factor based on which a selection of a text should be made. Thus, the students' preferences in certain literary genres could be negotiated, choosing the types which appeal to the students the most so that it results in making the lesson a memorable and stimulating experience (Carter, 1991) in which students will contribute and will have a positive inclination towards it.

On the other hand, students' preferences in certain types of novels could be seen in comparison and contrast to the types of novels mentioned by teachers, a fact that could have further implications for teaching and curriculum design. For example, we have seen that students show preference in certain genres, answering that Adventure and Romance are their most preferred types of novels, concentrating 76% and 63% respectively. The selection of novels addressing the students' preferences in certain

genres could be seen in comparison to the types of novels noted by the teachers to develop the students' cultural knowledge. For instance, teachers unanimously considered Charles Dickens to be a writer whose novels could be used for cultural enrichment. Taking this into account, the teachers could use novels such as *Oliver Twist*, a book which has strong elements of adventure, exciting plot, clever satire, meaningful symbolism and a novel that I have personally used with my students and have discovered that it enables them to identify with the characters and causes an emotional engagement with them (especially the protagonist). Similarly, other types of novels could be considered to cater for the students who demonstrate preference in Romance novels, such as *Jane Eyre*, a novel by Charlotte Bronte which is also considered by a number of teachers to deepen the students' understanding of cultural themes and offers a vivid context in which characters from many social backgrounds can be depicted. Therefore, the teachers' selection of particular novels that can be used for cultural representation should not exclude the possibility of selection based on students' preferences. Rather, this should be done on the basis of the ability of the text to stimulate the personal involvement of the students, a fact which will subsequently result in a positive disposition towards the text (Collie and Slater, 1987). However, the teachers' belief that Dickens and Bronte would fit the learners' predilection for adventure and romance may not be initially seen by learners as such, simply because they associate their preferred genres with more contemporary texts (e.g., novels by Dan Brown or Susan Elisabeth Philips). Nevertheless, this should not discourage the teachers from using them with their learners but they may need to point out to learners the adventure and romance elements in these authors, to motivate them to read Dickens and Bronte.

There seems to be a general consensus among the teachers regarding the appropriacy of novels as opposed to other genres – which refers to their appropriacy because the selection of topics and themes of the books often correspond to the students’ interests. The findings also show that the students’ personal engagement by reading novels for language purposes is seriously taken into account when selecting novels as the most appropriate genre since authors have always fascinated readers by relating to what they read, sharing their experiences and general attitudes. The following description provided by a teacher in response to Item 12 in the teachers’ questionnaire portrays this notion very successfully:

“All senses are possibly focusing on prose through teen literature landing topics and issues from all around the world for lower school students and young adult literature for upper school including classics, making the world a smaller place as well as giving students the opportunity to express concerns and discuss ideas they, themselves, might be facing.”

Additionally, the teachers have also said that introducing novel extracts which include dialogues can comprise tools for playing, generate ideas for writing and help critical thinking always depending on the level of the students. The fact that novels are the most generic form or, genre better, of literature allows students to grasp literature in many of its practices and techniques. Finally, a preference in the use of novels is also associated with an abundance of stimulating words that can enrich the students’ vocabulary, an extended practice of tenses and content and learning of expressions and figurative language.

The teachers’ view of novels as the most appropriate form of literature to be used with English language learners in Item 12 can also be supported by the overall frequency of use of novels with 18 teachers (70%) stating that they had previously used or have still

been using novels for language development and for introducing linguistic features that can be found in them (Table 3).

The fact that 77.1% of the students enjoyed the plot of the novels the most (Table 34), in contradistinction to the language and the characters, may have further implications for the design of classroom materials. Unquestionably, novels may not come with grammar charts or writing guidelines and they lack organized and systematical presentation of curricular items, requiring the teacher for extra effort and planning (Gareis et al., Tsai). However, even though novels do not present curricular items in a particular sequence as textbooks do, they can nonetheless be used to support a set curriculum (Gareis et al., 2009, p.145). Additionally, the students' enjoyment in reading novels because of their plot may motivate the learners to read further, by stimulating them to read for meaning and pay less attention to form. Lazar (1990, 1993) emphasizes that a good novel "addresses itself to complex situations and adult dilemmas" and it is particularly fascinating because students are involved in the "suspense of unravelling the plot". More importantly, the learners may relate to the universal themes that the novels offer and may find the complication of the plot particularly gripping especially when they see their lives take "narrative meaning and shape" (Showalter, 2003, p.89). Based on the students' results concerning their preference to plot as opposed to other genres, the design of classroom materials should consider a range of activities by selecting a novel which includes ever-topical universal themes such as social control, human nature, violence and survival in conditions of adversity (Collie and Slater, 1987). Moreover, classroom materials could focus on the plot for designing a range of activities, exploiting the students' preference in that aspect of the novel, where it is required from students to engage imaginatively to a novel (e.g., relate to a novel's plot by asking them to imagine themselves in an identical situation as the one presented in

the novel, or through a warm-up activity prior to reading which aims to build familiarity with the setting and plot of the novel and may require them to “build” pictures).

Further, the selection of a novel should be done by choosing a literary work which is neither “insider-oriented” nor culturally inaccessible so that it does not require a lot of cultural or literary background knowledge (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.7) . The students’ clear inclination to the novels’ plot may also link back to the key defining characteristics of novels as opposed to other literary genres. For example, if the students’ lives resemble the stories they read in the novels, then this means that they may also re-live and experience the same complications, adventure, suspense and sense of purpose. For these reasons, novels may be more accessible and favored than other literary genres since the students may find the narrative of the novels more closely related to their own experiences and expectations. The second most popular answer which refers to the teachers’ beliefs of the most appropriate form of literature in ELT is short stories. In most cases, the distinction between short stories and novels was based on the age and level of the learners. That is, teachers consider that short stories may be more appropriate for younger learners (age 10-13) whereas novels will be more beneficial for older learners (age 14-18) who already have the linguistic competence and proficiency to deal with them. Teachers have also expressed their belief that short stories are an introductory genre for novels that can be introduced to progressively familiarise the students with literature, but mostly, with the amount and difficulty of new vocabulary. This could be done to avoid frightening the students with a literary text of increased difficulty and immense unknown vocabulary. Additionally, short stories are more manageable, and can be used to introduce a greater variety of teaching materials which do not require as extensive a preparation as novels, and can be read systematically. The latter occurs because they are shorter in length and they require less



time to read and be used in the language classroom for the students' language development. Time restraints may sometimes prevent learners from reading a novel in full and on time, and it will be practically impossible to give to the students to read in the span of, say, a week. On the other hand, short stories might be ideal to use for time management purposes, especially since the teachers are continuously under pressure from the schools' curriculum or management of the schools to prepare students for the exams, and this does not leave much time for the teachers to work with literary texts, let alone read novels, which are much longer.

The other genres were barely mentioned or even sometimes disregarded with the teachers rejecting their use, mainly because of their difficulty in terms of language, structure and the students' unfamiliarity with the genre – a fact that might be attributed to the students' exposure to mainly novels, but also short stories in the students' L1.

In the very few occasions in which teachers have mentioned poetry as potentially beneficial (Item 12 in teachers' questionnaire), poems were considered as literary texts which allow for free interpretation and might be more suitable for adult learners. The concerns that the teachers have raised relate mostly to the difficulty of the language that is used in poems (e.g. vocabulary, sentence structure, and grammar in general) and not so much about the creativity of language or the length.

Lastly, there was a very minimal reference to plays where their use was not sufficiently substantiated with reasons for using them as a language teaching material and therefore, no safe conclusions can be drawn regarding their use in the English language classroom.

These findings can also be corroborated by reference to the data from the quantitative analysis of the students' questionnaires. In examining the genre of literature that students were more interested in for learning the English language, novels were the

students' predominant choice (Table 9), with 76 students (52.8%) showing their preference over this genre, followed by short stories with 50 students (34.7%) stating that they preferred short stories. The very low number of students demonstrating an interest towards poems and plays with a total number of 9 students (6.3%) for each of these two genres may explain the teachers' inclination for using novels and short stories in the language classroom. Taking this assumption one step further, the high numbers of students selecting novels as the best and most preferred genre may also link and reflect on the teachers' views about finding novels to be, beyond a doubt, the most appropriate form of literature in the process of English language learning in Cyprus. This suggestion can also be linked to the fact that 114 students (79.2) find reading novels an enjoyable task (Table 10), and this fact may have also added to the dominance of novels as the preferred genre by both the teachers as well as the students.

Furthermore, these findings may be evaluated by considering and comparing the available literature regarding attitudes and perceptions towards the use of literature and novels and mainly, the discussion regarding students' perceptions on the use of literary texts argued in chapter 2. For instance, the findings of Tseng's (2010) study yielded similar results to the findings of the present study regarding the students' positive attitude towards literary genres, with the students clearly showing preference in prose fiction (novels and short stories) as opposed to poetry and drama. Similar results were also demonstrated in Yilmaz's (2012) study in which the students' responses to four literary genres were examined. The results of the study also indicated that the overwhelming majority of the student respondents liked short stories and novels the most, adding to the appreciation towards prose fiction represented by these two genres.

In examining the various genres that are most commonly used in language classrooms in Cyprus, the most preferable are novels and short stories, which receive the most

responses. This might not be surprising if we look at the characteristics of these two genres, since they share many features in common. Lazar maintains that novels and short stories involve a “chronological sequence of events” and are “linked by relations of cause and effect” (Lazar, 1993, p. 89). Therefore the considerable overlap that exists between the characteristics of novels and short stories may have played a role in distinguishing these two genres as the most appropriate. Similarly, the distinctive features of novels may advocate for the inclination towards the selection of novels as the most appropriate genre. However, it would be extremely difficult, if not inappropriate, to account for the specific features of novels that make it a more suitable option as opposed to the short stories since it is neither the focus of this study nor a matter of comparison.

#### 5.6 Discussion of research question five

How do the ELT teachers in private schools in Cyprus view the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in ELT courses?

I have previously stressed in various parts of this study the marginal role that literature held in relation to language learning until relatively recent times. I have also pointed out that the relationship between literature and second or foreign language learning has now changed from what used to be very peripheral, where literature was “purged from the programme” (Widdowson, 1985, p. 180) to what it is now, where literature is extensively reconsidered for language teaching purposes. The data concentrated from

the quantitative analysis of the teachers' questionnaires verify this revival of interest since the majority of the teachers (88.5%) believe that literature should not be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning (Table 22). The findings interestingly indicate that none of the teachers disvalue the beneficial properties of using literature for ELT purposes since there seems to be a general consensus by the 92% of the teachers in that using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners (Table 23).

### 5.6.1 Benefits from including literature in the English language learning curriculum

#### 5.6.1.1 Using novels as authentic materials

A significant point which values the inclusion of literature in general, and novels in particular, in the English language learning curriculum is the appreciation and recognition of literature as authentic material<sup>44</sup>. The teachers seem to appreciate novels as a supplement for language learning and as a material that can complement the use of course books. Teachers have expressed the importance of including novels in the rotation of 'authentic samples of language' together with magazines, newspapers and other authentic materials in order to diversify the repertoire of classroom materials. The benefit of novels in this respect is that they can be used to expose the students to "genuine and undistorted language" that can be "managed in the classroom context" (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 3). Additionally, teachers seem to acknowledge the fact that since novels are not intended for non-native speakers, they can expose students to the

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<sup>44</sup> Authentic materials are materials which "have not been designed especially for language learners and which therefore do not have contrived or simplified language." (Hedge 2000, p.67).

nuances of the various linguistic styles and forms, gaining familiarity with what Collie and Slater call the “writing conventions” (ibid.). Similarly, Carter and McRae agree that this type of content which “gives voice to the subtleties and complexities” is not always present in other type of texts, and this is why novels can provide authentic and unsimplified contexts (1996, p. xxiv). Perhaps this view explains the teachers’ beliefs in using novels to replace traditional teaching methodologies which have even gone as far as to propose using novels as the main material for instruction. In the next part of my study, I will be focusing mainly on the ‘conventions’ that arise from the use of novels in the language classroom that cannot be easily represented by the traditional use of course books, as were noted by the teacher participants of this study. These include many features of the students’ linguistic development.

#### 5.6.1.2 Linguistic development

Novels are used to introduce students to language learning conventions, as well as linguistic nuances that add to the positive outlook of the use of novels for language learning purposes and are very difficult to introduce by using conventional language teaching materials (e.g. course books). Both teachers as well as students suggest the influence of novels on linguistic development and language enrichment. For example, the teachers have stressed that nowadays, students need proof for the benefits of anything they need to learn and for everything the teacher says. In the context of ELT, a possible way to do this is by looking at novels as a way to contextualise language learning and provide palpable evidence of how language is used in context. This refers to contextualising multiple language points ranging from vocabulary, adjectives and nouns, to figures of speech and tenses. Therefore, students are presented with the real

communicative importance of language when it is presented in its actual context where they can assess its effectiveness and efficiency.

A very significant benefit that the teachers have noted is that of exposing students to rhetorical and stylistic devices through which they can gain familiarity to various linguistic clues. For example, students can learn the function of idioms and gain familiarity with figurative language such as metaphors, similes, repetition, etc. This has been very evident in the classroom observations where the novel used at the time explicitly introduced students to many of these functions (e.g. “Ellie’s voice was sweeter than a melted- Mars bar” – metaphor, “Sweating like a knock-kneed mule” – simile, “He had to be the fastest-not one of the fastest or next to the fastest, but the fastest” – repetition; Paterson, 2011, pp. 2, 5, 7). Collie and Slater emphasise the importance of figurative language in that it “yokes levels of experience that were previously distinct, casting new light on familiar sensations and opening up new dimensions of perception” (1987, p. 5).

Another benefit in relation to the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in ELT courses as it comes out from questionnaires, observations and interviews, is that they can be used for the development and practice of all areas of receptive and productive language skills; that is speaking, writing, reading and listening. It is imperative that classroom materials should provide the opportunities for development of all four language skills and language classes should incorporate activities related to these skills. Based on the data gathered for this study, the teachers have indicated that reading is the skill that is developed and practised the most, since the students are required to do some extensive reading in order to unfold the development of the story and respond to practical language activities.

Additionally, writing skills are also involved in that students are exposed to the features of the written language by reading the text, but they are also required to reproduce these features in writing by writing summaries, argumentative essays, and so on. The most noted feature of writing skills as it comes out from the findings is creative writing, where students are required to respond to a novel critically and creatively. However, further information is needed to explain what this involves doing exactly, since there are numerous features of creative writing, and no conclusion(s) should be drawn regarding what is meant by responding to a novel creatively.

Moreover, teachers consider novels to be very beneficial in promoting extended practice on the students' writing skills since they help develop the students' desire to write something back in response, based on what they have just read, and reflect on their ideas in writing. Another language skill that has been observed to be involved when using novels is speaking. Teachers consider novels to be a very useful tool in that they provide ample opportunities for speaking practice. This opinion was particularly substantiated with the classroom observations where the students' talking time was significantly more as opposed to the teachers' talking time and students were given speaking opportunities through wh-questions, games, discussion, debates, expression of opinion and argumentation. Lastly, students can also develop and practice their listening skills. A surprising 46% of the teachers believed that reading a novel improved the students' listening skills, while unexpectedly (Table 28), 41% of the students believed the same (Table 36). These findings may interestingly correlate with the fact that 60% of the students valued reading the novel aloud positively, a development which may have resulted to having an increased number of teachers and students relating it to the development and practice of listening skills (Table 48). It has been generally argued that one of the prevailing orthodoxies in ELT is that reading

comprehension should be done silently, and this contention makes the findings related to the teachers and students' beliefs concerning the development of listening skills worthy of note.

Even though one suggestion would be to primarily develop and practice the students' listening skills by listening to the teacher who is the main 'tool' through which they will gain proper listening skills, one may still argue that the students can do this with any teaching material nonetheless. Consequently, another very useful option that has been mentioned in the findings is to help students develop and practice their listening skills by using audiobooks. Audiobooks have a lot to offer as a learning tool as they allow learners to have access to the text version of what they are listening and simultaneously practice their listening skills by placing particular emphasis on pronunciation, pitch, stress and intonation. Thus, learners can later practice these subskills through speaking and certain speaking activities (e.g. role play). Furthermore, audiobooks could also be used in light of the above findings and contrary to the dominant view in ELT which considers doing reading comprehension silently, an occurrence which can be linked to the relatively large percentage of teachers and students considering that reading aloud can develop the students' listening skills.

The reference to language development and practice does not only involve the four language skills since the teachers have demonstrated equal attention to vocabulary and grammar – two language features they argue to be particularly enhanced by the use of novels. First, it is recognised that the students' receptive vocabulary is unquestionably enriched by systematic exposure to novels, and the new vocabulary the students acquire could be helpful for the development of their reading and writing skills. The appreciation of the given importance of vocabulary in language learning in general and its role with the use of novels in particular can also be shown by the techniques that the



teachers apply in order to increase the students' receptive vocabulary. These techniques include helping the students conceptualise an unknown word visually when it is easier than giving a written or oral description, providing solid definitions with examples for new vocabulary items either in writing or orally, or even through demonstration by asking the students to show or act out what a new word means.

Additionally, providing synonyms for unknown vocabulary as well as prompting the students to guess the meaning out of context without the intervention of the teacher were very popular vocabulary techniques among the teachers. However, it is also noted that sometimes teacher intervention and explanation is necessary for unknown vocabulary where the students are having an increased difficulty in interpretation. This might be attributed to the idiosyncratic features of novels, where words take powerful figurative meanings which go beyond their fixed definitions. Lastly, a technique the teachers frequently applied and seemed to be very popular among the learners for acquiring new vocabulary was through games, such as mimicry, hot spot, hangman, etc. This technique makes the sometimes demanding aspect of vocabulary learning a bit more interesting and interactive and allows the students to have some fun while they are learning. The role of the teacher in helping students understand unfamiliar vocabulary becomes even more important considering the fact that 66.7% of students stated that the most common problem which they had to deal with when reading a novel is vocabulary (Table 45), with 61% claiming that they ask somebody to explain a word if it is unfamiliar (Table 44). These findings link to the above discussion concerning the importance of the teacher in helping students cope with unknown vocabulary. Furthermore, the teachers' application of a variety of techniques to deal with unfamiliar vocabulary aims to accommodate the problems that may hinder the understanding of the text, and the development of certain approaches (i.e. guessing the meaning out of

context) attempts to encourage autonomous, independent study limiting the dependence on others for providing explanations of unfamiliar vocabulary as much as possible. All of these techniques I have mentioned were particularly noted not only by the teachers' responses to questionnaires and interviews but, most importantly, through the classroom observations.

#### 5.6.1.3 Teaching new grammatical items

The second aspect of language learning that the teachers have remarked to be practised through novels is grammar. In the context of a novel, the language could be exploited by focusing on grammar and especially on complicated grammatical forms, such as the present perfect. Exposing the students to these types of grammatical functions helps them conceptualise the grammar by seeing it in context. Added to that is the fact that grammar learning has been observed by the teachers to be rather dull 'by nature' – novels are seen as an exciting, and at the same time, a constructive tool for applying and explaining grammar rules, helping in that way to keep the students interested and motivated in dealing with them. Grammar is an aspect of language learning that students often find difficult to comprehend and use, despite having good textbooks. By using novels, students are able to see how tenses are used interchangeably to show a sequence of events either innately or not and to see how different grammatical forms are used through examples in the book. This was particularly apparent in the classroom observations, where teachers focused on getting the students to recognise grammatical functions but without providing the rules: for example, the difference between comparatives and superlatives and the use of various adjectives for description of a person's appearance, character, feelings and emotions. These findings are in agreement

with the findings in Yang's (2001) study, who examined the effects of reading mystery novels with adult learners. The participants of the study explicitly noted the grammar learning benefits of using a novel in class, stating that they were happy to see some of the language structures taught in class used in the novels. Additionally, the students in Yang's (2001, p.459) study said that they paid special attention to the use of grammatical structures in the novel, they re-read sentences, and importantly, compared those sentences with the examples the teacher gave them in class.

Lastly, students were called to ask questions and provide answers by using specific grammar tenses (e.g. past simple) as in the example of a game they played in the classroom, namely hot spot (see Appendix I).

#### 5.6.1.4 Personal engagement and educational opportunities

In section 2.3 in the literature review, I stressed the importance of treating our students as 'educational consumers' where the whole learning experience should not be focusing solely in acquiring competence in the L2 – in that, the role of literary texts is to provide our students with certain "educational goals" (Bredella, 2000, p. 380). The teachers who participated in this study and in response to the 'wider educational functions' of literature and novels in particular believe that students acquire an intellectual engagement and critical thinking, and they learn how to develop their argument skills by using novels in the language classroom. The following example taken from classroom Observation 1 Yellow part A (see *appendix E*) is representative of this notion:

Teacher: Why is whisky compared to drawing?

Student 1: People forget their problems with whisky as Jess does with drawing.

Student 2: People are addicted to whisky as Jess to drawing.

Student 3: Jess cannot live without drawing as people who drink whisky.

As it can be seen from the above example, comparing whisky to drawing is not a topic that students will very frequently be introduced to with the use of the conventional course book. Even though course books are great core materials and what students often expect to have with second or foreign language learning courses, they sometimes include ‘sanitised’ language and dialogues that limit and restrict the students’ development of critical thinking and argumentative skills.

Some additional features that the teachers have noted are that the students are very often engaged imaginatively, and they are personally involved by identifying with the characters and increasing their emotional awareness at the same time. The students have an opportunity to be engaged in an intellectual development by exposure to the writers’ world, where sometimes the themes of the novels become a mere representation of timeless values and principles which are very similar to life experiences and they resemble our daily reality. Moreover, the active involvement of the students by reference to themes which are present in the novel may also give rise to their own reflections of happenings and occurrences in their lives as in the following example from Observation 1 Orange part A (see *appendix F*):

T: What happens in chapter six? How does he feel about his sisters teasing him?

S1: Angry.

S2: Sad and unhappy.

T: How would you feel if you had to buy a present for your friend at Christmas?

S1: I wouldn’t be stressed – I would feel happy to buy something.

S2: It wouldn’t be something expensive, just meaningful.

S3: Because I know my friends, I would know what they like.

This example clearly demonstrates how students can use their own experiences and reflections to participate in the discussion and get actively involved by referencing their real lives.

The teachers generally agree that the expression of ideas and emotions in the target language attracts the students' interest, especially when someone wishes to express ideas or emotions which go beyond their daily life and routine. Therefore, if this is the case, then the students do have the option to be introduced, or even start using the language which falls outside the spectrum of the language frequently seen in course books (which is sometimes inauthentic). The reference to a 'different' type of language used in novels is associated with the teachers' perception that the linguistic imagination of the writers gives birth to some unconventional uses of language from which students can highly benefit, since they will be introduced to the more unusual – but at the same time – genuine uses of language and stimulate their imagination. Thus, exposure to such language uses is likely to not only increase the students' critical skills and expression of ideas and emotions in the target language awareness, but to also educate the students as a whole.

#### 5.6.1.5 Development of interpretative skills

The development of the students' interpretative skills is a recurrent theme that many of the teachers who participated in this study have pointed out to be particularly affected by the use of novels for language teaching purposes. Lazar maintains that any learning of a new language involves the students in forming hypotheses and inferences (Lazar,

1993, p. 19). The teachers believe that novels are an exceptional source for developing an interpretative expertise for making meaning. This is mainly attributed to the fact that novels are open to multiple interpretations which do not necessarily embrace a right or wrong answer, provided that an interpretation is given which is followed by appropriate justification and explanation by the students. With the use of novels, the students can develop their abilities to make inferences from linguistic clues which are based on – but not limited to – grammatical points or even specific lexical items. The following is an example from the classroom observations (Observation 1 Orange part B, see *Appendix G*) where the first extract is taken from the novel and is followed by the teacher’s question and the students’ responses, as observed in the classroom:

“He had received a racing car set, which he tried to run to please his father. It wasn't one of those big sets that they advertised on TV, but it was electric, and he knew his dad had put more money into it than he should have. But the silly cars kept falling off at the curves until his father was cursing at them with impatience. Jess wanted it to be OK. He wanted so much for his dad to be proud of his present, the way he, Jess, had been proud of the puppy.”

(*Bridge to Terabithia*, Paterson, 2011, p. 69)

T: Is the word OK proper for an essay?

Ss: No.

T: Then why does the author use it in the novel?

S1: It is a simple word for a simple wish.

S2: He only wanted his dad’s love.

S3: He wanted his dad to be proud for the present like he was proud for the puppy.

The above example demonstrates how a simple word which may not be considered appropriate for some writing contexts can be used to initiate an interpretation. Apart from this example, the teachers have also suggested the use of novels for discovering implications and assumptions as well as forming hypotheses and making predictions.

This assumption matches with Lazar's view in that literary texts demand the students' active involvement by "teasing out the unstated implications and assumptions of a text" (Lazar, 1993, p. 19). Developing the students' abilities to infer meaning from reading a novel is considered by the teachers to be very valuable in deciphering hidden messages and help students develop techniques for reading critically and (re)discovering new meanings (e.g. by reading between the lines). This is particularly important for novels where the writers use words which very often transcend their fixed definitions and have more than one meaning that is often not the literal definition that is expected to be found in the dictionary.

Based on the data gathered from qualitative and quantitative enquiry, it is observed that the teachers' responses in relation to the application of novels for development of the students' interpretative abilities agree with Carter and McRae's (1996) notion for representational language learning and use of representational materials instead of exclusively depend on referential materials. As they argue, language itself demands a more representational approach to language learning since language expands its meanings, making demands on its users and questions of interpretation and shades of meaning are brought into play (Carter and McRae, 1996, p. 19). With representational language learning, the learners are 'allowed' to play around with the words, grammar and the different uses of language in order to result to a more spherical interface of what McRae calls "an ongoing process of language acquisition" (Carter and McRae, 1996, p. 17).

#### 5.6.1.6 Using activities and games extracted from EFL classrooms

One of the aims of the teachers who are using literature, and particularly, novels in the language classroom, is to establish a number of language learning approaches which will transform the literature class into a language learning experience. This is shown to be done by using language-based approaches and a range of EFL strategies that can be extracted from the language learning classrooms and be applied to the use of novels for language teaching. Some examples of the student-centred activities that teachers have noted and I have personally observed in the classroom observations include prediction, discussion, creative writing, role play, cloze, questioning techniques (e.g. directed questions), gap-fill, and so on. Apart from the use of a variety of student-centred activities, the teachers prepared and organised some games which were based on language features, bearing in mind that this would make the lesson more interesting, interactive and engaging. Such examples of games are hot-spot, mimicry, drawing and hangman.

The use of a range of language-based activities corroborates the existing literature in regards to the importance of EFL procedures in involving the students with the text, introducing the students to a wide range of styles and registers, as well as concentrating on particular students' weaknesses in specific problematic areas or language skills (Carter and Long, 1991, p. 8; Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 8; Lazar, 1993, p. 27). In other words, novels are treated in a way in the language learning classroom by using EFL strategies and approaches, which do not appear to be very different from the way that other texts are treated since they are manipulated to achieve the intended student-centeredness (Carter and McRae, 1996, p. xxii).



#### 5.6.1.7 Teachers' beliefs about L2 learners' perception of novels and literature

The beneficial aspects of using literature, and specifically novels, for language teaching purposes have already been discussed with particular emphasis to the positive evaluation and recognition of the implementation of novels in language courses by the majority of the teachers. A very important outcome of this study is the consideration of the students' perception of literature as it is evaluated by their teachers. The quantitative analysis of the data in the teachers' questionnaires has indicated that different results are exhibited, where 57.7% of the teachers feel that their students are only 'a little' interested in reading English literature and their interest in learning English as a second language is also relatively low, as opposed to 42.3% of teachers who believe that the students have a more positive disposition towards using literature to teach language (Table 30). This has been attributed to a number of reasons, with the most important and the most extensively debated being the L1 interference in reading literature.

The teachers have expansively deliberated that exposure to literature, and mostly novels, in the L1 affects the students' perception of literature in the L2. This is ascribed to the improper introduction of literature in the L1 which is associated with conventional limitations regarding its use and reader involvement. The teachers of Literature in the L1 have also received criticism from the participants of the study, holding them responsible for setting limitations as to what could and what could not be done with literature. The general notion behind literature and the way it is taught in Cyprus depends on the duality of a right or wrong answer, an attitude which prevents the students from providing their own interpretation and limits their involvement with the text. The participants have stressed the interpretative limitations that accompany the use of literature in the L1 and the teachers' tendency to impose an interpretation by

forcing things and pretending to know all the answers. This prevailing treatment of literature in the L1 is thought by the participants of this study to be inevitably transferred in the use of literature in the L2, where students associate the use of literature with teacher-centred lessons which presuppose limited student involvement and interaction. Thus, students expect to have a minimal personal involvement and a barrier of interpretative limitations.

A good way to understand the aforementioned situation is by referring to Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional theory, where reading literature is separated into two types of reading: Efferent reading, where the focus of attention is on being able to recall the plot and make character analysis and interpretations, and Aesthetic reading, where the reader experiences the text, is personally engaged with it, and participates in its context. Based on this distinction, Paran (2006) suggests that some texts are meant to be read efferently and some others aesthetically. He also maintains that in "their previous schoolings, second language learners ... experienced a narrow view of literature, which sees it as having fixed meanings that the teacher needs to help learners to access or as teaching fixed ways in reading. These learners are being socialised into viewing the reading of literature as an efferent exercise and make no connection between what happens in the literature classroom, be it L1 or L2 and their own reading" (Paran, 2006, p. 5).

Therefore, the main suggestion for teachers of literature in the L2 would be to encourage them to aim at helping the students to "unlearn" what they have been previously exposed to and "reengage" them in literary texts by relating literature to their own reflections by facilitating the 'sense of enjoyment' in reading literature (Paran, 2006, p. 6). Based on this view, the relationship between the reader and the text is not at all restricting and enforcing. Instead, the readers are exposed to an independence of

thought and reaction to the text, through which they acquire interpretive autonomy, taking numerous elements and factors into account to create meaning and diminish the gap between what they read as literature and its relevance with their lives.

Some of the teachers who participated in the study have also criticised the negative societal attitudes against the use of literature where reading or using literature is nowadays not considered 'cool'. The caustic comments against social perceptions concentrate mainly on the way knowledge is generally treated, especially by the young generations, and target the external influences that stimulate the recognition of lack of intelligence as 'fashionable'. As a result, some solutions which are offered in order to 'counterattack' these problems are firstly, to deal with these external difficulties by rejecting the perception that literature is inappropriate or not 'cool', and secondly, focus on the pivotal role that the teachers have to play in creating a positive disposition towards literature by using stimulating methods to increase the students' interest towards literature and novels.

A final factor which is seen to affect students' perception and has been critiqued by the participants is the schools' inflexible language learning curriculum, which provides a very fixed and insufficient schedule and time-frame for the use of novels, a fact which does not allow for proper involvement of literature and leads to a very superficial type of learning. Additionally, the teachers who participated in the study stressed that they receive inadequate guidelines with regard to the use of literature in language learning courses in Cyprus.

### 5.6.2. Teachers' beliefs by reference to the students' language proficiency and level.

The importance of following certain criteria of appropriateness concerning the selections of a literary text has been noted in different parts in this study. In that, it has been argued that the selection of novels should be done carefully so as to prevent demotivating the students by introducing a text which does not match to their proficiency level, is linguistically and culturally difficult, and inaccessible. In the fear of using a novel which might seem daunting to the students who use it, some scholars argue that it is better to use novels with upper-intermediate to advanced levels of English (Gareis et al.; Hismanoglu, 2005; Kim, 2000). Interestingly, and contrary to the prevailing orthodoxy that novels can only be used with students at advanced levels, 53.8% of teachers who participated in this study believed that novels should be introduced to Elementary levels, while 26.9% believed that novels should be introduced to Intermediate levels and only 3.8% believed that student should start using them at an Advanced level (Table 20). These findings seem to suggest that teachers consider and recommend the use of novels with students of lower proficiency levels, provided surely that the novel is selected by following the aforementioned criteria of text selection.

### 5.6.3 Challenging the prevailing orthodoxies of the value and methods for teaching novels.

In Chapter 2 of this study, I have considered the novel's manifestation of authentic uses and I have noted the possibilities it offers to students for vocabulary enrichment and contextualization of grammatical functions. Additionally, I also mentioned the "traditional" values attributed to the use of novels for language teaching which include the opportunity for development of the students' reading skills and writing skills.

However, contrary to the prevailing orthodoxies about the gains of the use and implementation of novels, the teachers perceive novels as a great tool for developing and practicing the students' listening and speaking skills. While the former has been discussed earlier in this chapter, the latter needs to be discussed further.

The data from the teachers' interviews reveal significant information concerning the value of novels in promoting speaking practice. For example, teachers believe that novels can be used with shy students and this could be linked to the teachers' suggestion that novels provide more topics to talk about and that they can raise discussions. These arguments could be associated with the suggestion that literature can be helpful in the learning process due to the personal involvement it fosters in students (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.5). Additionally, if based on the teachers' perceptions novels are seen as tools which help (shy) students acquire the confidence to develop and express their own response verbally, then this may have further implications on their personal involvement and identification with the novel, a fact which may encourage them produce their own responses and provide them with more speaking opportunities.

These claims can also be substantiated by the teachers' description of novels as being a material which deals with deeper meanings and provides the background for contextual communication. Therefore, if novels achieve to provide opportunities for further speaking practice, we might suggest that we have succeeded in one of the most important principles which fashions our approach to language learning, that of using the target language. Similarly, another important finding which comes out from the teachers' interviews is the belief that reading aloud is valued more than silent reading as it is considered to promote speaking practice, boost the students' confidence, add to the students' excitement and enjoyment of the novel, and initiate a competitive context that stimulates the students' fluency and pronunciation. The findings examining

teachers' beliefs may correlate to the unexpectedly high percentage of students who believed that reading a novel has increased both their speaking skills as well as their listening skills, concentrating 61.8% and 41% respectively (Tables 38 and 38). The importance which is ascribed in silent reading seems to challenge the predominant tenets in ELT which consider that reading comprehension should be done silently. These findings could also challenge the belief that novels are materials which focus on developing the students' reading and writing skills, since the findings from the examination of both teachers as well as students' perceptions suggest the increased involvement and development of both speaking as well as listening skills.

Furthermore, the results recommend the re-examination of the methods for teaching novels since traditional views about how novels should be used in the classroom (i.e. reading silently as opposed to reading aloud) seem to be challenged by both the teachers and students who assign high value on the use of novels for promoting speaking practice, and they highlight the gains of reading a novel aloud in the classroom.

## 5.7. Discussion of research question six

How do EFL students in private schools in Cyprus view the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in ELT courses?

### 5.7.1 Examining students' perception of literature in relation to language learning

In the previous section, I have indicated the scepticism that teachers have towards the students' interest in learning English as a second or foreign language through literature.

In this context, the teachers' negative attitude can be distinguished into two reasons. Firstly, they indicate the students' relatively limited interest towards reading literature. Secondly, students are not seen to have a high interest in learning the English language through literature. However, despite their doubtful stance as to how appealing literature appears to students, the teachers nevertheless stressed the beneficial outcomes of literature for language teaching purposes on multiple levels.

In investigating the students' responses to literature, it is interesting to note that 137 students (95%) believe that English literature has helped them in learning the English language (Table 1b). What is even more important is the fact that, contrary to the teachers' beliefs, 112 students (77.8%) have demonstrated a positive disposition towards learning English through literature, considering it a very enjoyable and interesting method for learning the language (Table 10). These findings are in agreement with Tseng's (2010) study who researched students' perceptions on the use of literature in an EFL classroom. The students in Tseng's (2010) study also held a positive attitude towards the literary texts used in the classroom. Similarly, Tsai (2012) examined students' perceptions of using novels as main material in an EFL classroom and the study yielded similar results to Tseng's study and the present study, as the students responded to the novel favorably, successfully catering the students' interest and developing their linguistic ability.

The findings suggest that students demonstrate a positive outlook of the constructive role of literature in language learning by recognising its affirmative importance in helping them learn English as a second language. The quantitative analysis of the students' questionnaires presents a contrast between the teachers' beliefs on how interesting literatures appears to the students and how enjoyable and stimulating it actually is to them. Thus, the results indicate a mismatch between the students'

perception of literature and the teachers' beliefs about students' perceptions. The opposition sees a higher percentage of students appreciating and identifying literature as an important component for language learning which contributes immensely to the students' language development.

### 5.7.2 The prevailing accessibility of novels

Student responses to the preferred genre have principally indicated novels as the most desired for language learning purposes. In this respect, 114 students (79.2%) have expressed their enjoyment in reading novels and these results are in line with the teachers' views who also consider novels as the best or most appropriate genre to use with students for language learning purposes (Table 10). The findings resulting by examining the students' preferred genre of literature to be used for language learning agree with the findings in Tseng (2010) and Yilmaz's (2012) studies where prose fiction, and particularly novels, are valued as the most favored option to be used in the language classroom. This certainly has some implication in regards to the selection of materials to be used with language learners as the selection should be done by considering the students' needs, expectations and preferences.

In what follows, I will discuss the reasons the students have given in order to justify their preference for novels.



### 5.7.3 Novels: a key determinant that enhances students' motivation

The dominant reason for reading novels appears to be their characteristic features which enhance students' motivation. These features include, but are not limited to, the language of the novel, the characters and the plot. The students who participated in this study have noted the enjoyment of deciphering the message of a complete book pattern in English. They consider the novels a "language journey" which not only can elevate the standards of one's usage of the English language, but also assist in broadening the horizons of their general knowledge. As the story of the novel unfolds, they get to read interesting facts taught only through literature, and this is by itself a considerable factor which adds to their motivation in reading novels for language learning purposes. The students have also stressed that reading novels in the language classroom is a way to escape from reality, and the conventional language teaching practices which restrict the use of imagination and critical thinking. They see novels as a vehicle to travel to new places where the escalating plot raises the suspense of the reader and helps them be introduced to a range of language uses which are not present in other materials (e.g. past papers).

In asking students what they enjoy most when reading a novel (Item 11 in students' Form 1 questionnaire), the majority (77,1%) responded saying that the plot was what attracted them into reading a whole book (Table 34). Some examples of their responses were that the plot was "what makes a book interesting" and the element which "keeps them going" when reading a novel "adding to the whole experience of reading a complete book in the second language". They also said that they were fully engaged with novels because of the "suspense of unravelling the plot", and they consider the

plot as the most important component in a novel because they can “engage imaginatively” with it and “resolve the underlying messages”.

However, even though the students have indicated the importance of the plot in reading a novel, they did not disvalue the importance of the characters as well as the language in what makes a novel interesting. That is, the students have noted that the characters of the novel frequently get them “personally involved while reading” since they can “relate with them, share the same feelings and identify with the setting and the circumstances”. The result of this fact is that the students seem to “inhabit” the text, to use Collie and Slater’s (1987) term, and they are being drawn into the book where they are eager to explore how the events unfold, feel close to the characters and share their emotional responses. By doing so, the “language becomes transparent, the fiction summons the whole person into its own world” and the students are motivated to engage with literature where learning takes place either consciously but also subconsciously (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.6).

The students’ views agree with Lazar’s notion of using literature as a motivating material, where literature can expose students to “complex themes and fresh, unexpected uses of language”. Lazar goes on to suggest that a good novel may be “particularly gripping in that it involves students in the suspense of unravelling the plot [and] this involvement may be more absorbing for students than the pseudo-narratives frequently found in coursebooks” (Lazar, 1993, p. 15). The overwhelming and distinct emotional responses that the novels seem to elicit from students are also seen by the students’ recognition of their value in serving a wider educational function. In this respect, the students have established that reading novels does not only offer extraordinary linguistic opportunities for language development but it also exposes them to other educational opportunities in learning more about the world, developing

their interpretative skills, allowing them to gain access to cultural elements and helping them engage with literature both imaginatively as well as linguistically.

The students' positive view of novels can also be seen through the classroom observations, where the attitudes and engagement of the class have indicated a highly motivated environment where students were actively involved in the learning process with excess participation, high responsiveness and interest for tasks related to using the novels for language learning purposes. Following the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, the results demonstrate that novels are renowned as a very beneficial and constructive language material which serves so much more than the purely conventional purpose of language teaching, which only restricts learners to merely learning the language, but not about the language and the more uncommon uses of language. This can be shown, for example, by the code "exposure to standard and non-standard uses of language" which emerged from classroom observations and focused on the different levels of language presented in a novel (e.g., the effect of dialects and their implications). Another example are the codes "increase students' awareness of language range" and "words take figurative meanings beyond their fixed definitions" which also emerged from the classroom observations and refer to the endless possibilities of language range in using it in peculiar ways as well as introducing students to the "unconventional uses of language" (code from the interviews) to construct meaning or achieve particular effects. Lastly, the code "Cultural knowledge and enrichment", which was recurrent in both qualitative and quantitative enquiry (questionnaires, interviews and observations), can also reveal more information about how novels can have language related effects which transcend the conventional purpose of language teaching. More specifically, the child code "Exposure to culturally defined language restrictions" (from the parent code "Cultural knowledge") demonstrates how

language practices can emerge from, construct, or dispute cultural beliefs, norms, or social habitus.

It needs to be stressed once more that this study does not provide empirical support for the claims of the theorists cited in the literature review regarding the possible benefits of the use of literature for language learning. It does, however, provide substantial evidence that teachers and students consider novels a valuable resource in the process of learning English as a second language. For example, the fact that teachers and students concur on this point may have further implications and benefits for motivation. The significance and impact of motivation on language learning has been extensively discussed both in this chapter as well as in the literature review, as it is often considered as an aspect that hugely influences success in second or foreign language learning, and it is widely recognised as a variable that distinguishes first language acquisition from second language acquisition (Ushioda, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to ‘empower foreign language students to make effective use of the potential language-learning materials that exist around them’ in order to introduce prospectively motivating resources to be used with EFL students (Ryan, 1997, p. 215). Apart from the characteristics of novels that students perceived as motivating in using them for language purposes in this study, there are also various other studies that have investigated the effect of using novels to increase the EFL students’ language proficiency and motivation (Bacha, 2010; Kim, 2004; Yang, 2001; Yilmaz, 2012). These studies have examined the students’ perceptions on the use of novels in their EFL classrooms, and they have resulted in interesting findings in relation to the benefits for motivation. For instance, Yang (2001) found that the students felt very positive regarding the learning opportunities that the novel offered them since they enjoyed the story and were happy about the discussions and speaking opportunities that the reading

of the novel provoked. Additionally, the students in Yang's (2001, p. 459) study believed that the discussions of the novel were more 'substantial' than simply answering grammar questions, and this could have further implications concerning how the students' beliefs translate into efficacious classroom practices by incorporating resources that are motivating to them. The students' perceptions that the speaking activities in class sounded like real conversations in daily life and that they were more motivating than answering boring grammar questions or making sentences clearly have implications on the value of using novels in the classroom for increasing the students' motivation. Lastly, the results from Yang's (2001, p. 460) study indicated that the students found the novel-reading experience highly rewarding and enjoyable (especially because it enabled them to express their own thoughts and feelings); thus, they were more motivated to spend more time on reading the novel and responding to related activities than they might have been by doing other types of activities.

Similar results were found by Kim (2004), who investigated literature discussions in L2 learning by using fictional literary texts. Kim (2004, pp. 162–163) noted the pleasure her students felt when reading literary texts, a fact that led to an enhanced motivation and desire to read the texts. As a result, the findings of her study suggest that the literature discussions helped the students emotionally and intellectually to engage with the literary texts and generated genuine opportunities for enjoyable L2 reading experiences. Additionally, and importantly, based on the students' responses to literary texts, Kim (2004, p. 145) suggested that the 'literature discussions contributed in promoting the students' L2 communicative competence by offering chances for them to produce extended output', and therefore, the reading of these types of texts could also be translated into efficacious classroom practices because they were considered motivating for the students and could have further implications for considering their

use for language learning purposes. Taking the above into consideration and relating the results of the aforementioned studies to the findings of this study, it seems that both teachers' as well as students' attitudes towards literature are encouraging because they suggest that literary texts may promote students' motivation to build upon the students' language and literary skills, and the fact that they provide interesting and motivating topics that require a greater personal involvement and response endows opportunities for classroom discussions, speaking opportunities and language practice.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the students who did not share the same interest towards using novels for language learning purposes have indicated that their main reason behind this is the length of the novels, which sometimes demotivates them or discourages them from reading the whole book. In this case, what can be considered is the selection of shorter novels which may eliminate the negative disposition that some of the students demonstrate against novels. Ideally, this can be negotiated between the teachers and the students themselves by asking for feedback regarding the length, stimulation or appropriacy of the novels used in the classroom. Of course, it might be impossible to satisfy all the students in the classroom but here the aim is to make novels appealing to the majority of the students and aim to gradually get as many students as possible involved in the language learning process.

#### 5.7.4 Developing a growing language awareness by practising all four language skills

This section aims to discuss the way in which novels are perceived by students to expose them to many functions of all four language skills. The results from the

quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data indicate that students consider all four language skills to have improved and practised, even though there seems to be an order of priority in which this applies. For example, and perhaps a bit surprisingly, speaking appears as the most improved skills. The surprising element behind this finding could be possibly found on the nature of novels which most commonly necessitates a focus on reading, since it is the skill most commonly applied when using literature in the classroom.

One of the major principles which fashions a language-based approach to literature is that of using the language with the tasks set by the teacher. The students have stressed in their responses to Items 10 and 11 in the students' Form 1 questionnaire how novels can facilitate their motivation in reading literature for language learning but this also increases their willingness to talk about literature; a fact which is also exemplified in the classroom observations through the codes "Attitudes of class" and "Engagement of class". These codes suggest that the students' personal engagement by identifying with the characters and unravelling the plot of the novel has dramatically increased their talking time, responsiveness and participation. This engagement has also led to discussions and expression of ideas which are product of the emotional responses from the students and are initiated because of the meaningfulness and relevance of novels to their own lives and the world around them. The aforementioned have been recurrent themes in both quantitative and qualitative enquiry through the codes "Educational opportunities" and "Personal engagement", where novels are seen as being relevant to life experiences and are used to increase the students' emotional awareness. The same codes imply that the novel can help students engage imaginatively with the text by identifying with the characters of the novel and increasing their emotional involvement, an observation which results to the expression of ideas and emotions in the target

language. These findings seem to be in agreement with the study by Kim (2004) who examined how literary discussions could facilitate L2 development.

Similar to the findings of the present study, Kim (2004) discovered that literature discussions have the potential of involving students in meaningful responses to the text when encouraged to respond to the text and that the students developed their communicative competence as a consequence. Students were engaged in interpreting the hidden meanings of literary texts and the “varied and topical themes” in the literature discussions indicated a dynamic emotional and intellectual interaction with the text that resulted in their active involvement and participation. Similar to the results of the present study, Kim (2004) found that the potential that literary texts have in developing the students speaking skills and communicative competence can be realized best when students are encouraged to develop personal responses to literature (i.e. by identifying and relating to the text) and share them with discussions either with the teachers, or with one another. The development of the students’ speaking skills when using literary texts for language purposes can also be found in Yang’s (2001) study, where students’ beliefs indicated satisfaction with the speaking activities that the reading provoked. The students in Yang’s (2001, p.459) study agreed that because the in-class discussion of the novel was more “substantial than answering grammar questions”, and because the conversations sounded like conversations in real life, these initiated more speaking opportunities with the students.

Reading and writing skills are also seen to be particularly improved with novels, and this might suggest that the one may complement the other. For example, Collie and Slater (1986, p. 5) suggest that reading a “substantial and contextualised body of text, students gain familiarity with many features of the written language” such as “the formation and function of sentences, the variety of possible structures, the different



ways of connecting ideas, which broaden and enrich the students' writing skills". Additionally, the fact that students are exposed to a complete book pattern in the second language also requires from them to extensively read the novel and decode meaning by deciphering the language used in order to make inferences, discover implications and assumptions as well as form hypotheses which are many times based on linguistic indications. Students have also recognised the importance of novels in helping them develop critical skills which in turn have helped them in writing creatively and extensively.

In mentioning the students' development of reading skills, I also consider necessary to mention their perception of vocabulary improvement, which comes as a result of extensive reading. The results have shown that an outstanding 93.8% of the students consider that novels have helped them learn new vocabulary. This becomes even more important if we reflect on the most common problem that the students face when reading a novel, since 66.7% consider vocabulary as the element that increases the difficulty of reading a novel (Table 45). These results are in agreement with Tsai's (2012) study which examined the students' perceptions of using a novel as a main material in an EFL reading course. Specifically, her study provided insight into the difficulties that the students have stated to encounter while reading a novel where, learning new vocabulary items was ranked as the most perceived gains from reading a novel, while grammar and vocabulary topped the other obstacles as the most encountered difficulties.

There is no doubt that based on the codes resulting from qualitative and quantitative enquiry (i.e., codes "Vocabulary" in students' questionnaires, "Receptive vocabulary" in interviews, and especially "Techniques to increase receptive vocabulary" in classroom observations), receptive vocabulary dramatically increases by reading novels

for language learning. In most of the cases, the type of vocabulary the students are introduced to cannot be found in the students' course books, is more authentic, and can supplement other teaching materials. Additionally, the students seem to deploy some vocabulary learning techniques which may also be transferred to other types of materials, such as guessing the meaning out of context, using a dictionary, asking someone, or even ignoring the word when it does not affect the process of making meaning.

However, I do understand that there might be arguments regarding the appropriateness of some words appearing in novels, especially of older literary works (e.g. Victorian novels), and their frequency of use. Of course, this objection should not be a superseding one but should definitely guide the teachers towards a proper novel selection, which will exclude the possibility of discouraging the students because of very complicated and obscure vocabulary which may not be suitable for the target age group and level.

#### 5.7.5 Enriching the cultural knowledge

A large percentage of students have indicated that the novels have helped them learn about new cultures and that they have enriched their cultural knowledge and understanding of both the people as well as the language found in novels. Therefore, this suggests that novels can help students contextualise the cultural background of the target language while also giving them access to cultural identities which are often juxtaposed in novels, and are often not present in other referential materials. However, attention needs to be drawn to the definition of culture and how valid the cultural

representations found in novels really are. Culture receives many categorisations and distinctions, so we need to be careful as to which of those we want our students to interact with. For example, Lazar (1993) maintains that if we are to consider the degree in which a literary work genuinely represents its culture, then we have to look at how culture is defined. If the definition is going to be an anthropological one, then culture is defined as “the values, traditions and social practices of a particular group – which are then revealed in the literary text” (Lazar, 1993, p. 16). Nevertheless, we can also define culture as the “discernment and knowledge traditionally possessed by the well-educated, enlightened and cultivated native speaker” (ibid.). Consequently, we should be very cautious when we suggest that novels can help our students “learn” the culture of the English language since this could be ambiguous and problematic (a more detailed account of the role of novels in cultural representation can be found in section 6.4).

#### 5.7.6 L1 interference in students’ perception of literature in the L2

I have previously discussed the teachers’ beliefs about L1 interference in the use and implementation of novels with language learners in their L2. The teachers considered that the way literature is treated in the students’ L1, and the interpretative limitations and personal engagement restrictions applied by the teachers of literature in the L1, results into a similar treatment of literature in the L2. For that reason, the students’ interest and motivation for reading literary texts is reduced. However, the findings from an investigation of how students in Cyprus view the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in English language learning courses do not suggest an analogous concern. Moreover, students respond to the contribution of literature in language

courses very favourably, considering it a valuable complement for their linguistic, educational and personal engagement and development.

This might suggest that the students' negative predisposition to literature in the L2 might be the result of exposure to literature in the L1, and the limitations that this exposure entails is an occurrence that could develop at a later stage if the students continued their studies in public schools, instead of an English speaking private school. This proposition is linked to the fact that the teachers who participated in this study and observed the L1 interference in the treatment of literature in the L2 and also demoted the students' interest in language learning were predominantly working at the public sector at the time of the research. A similar observation has not been recorded by the teachers who worked for the private sector. This suggestion might also imply a different treatment and response to literature both in L1 and L2 with students in public schools, where the underlying assumption runs counter to the interpretative freedom the students should have in order to enable them to engage with a literary text imaginatively and emotionally; a manifestation that is observed in private schools.

#### 5.7.7 Utilizing the students' preference in internet materials.

Exploring the materials that students considered as the most interesting and enjoyable (Item 15, Table 11), the data showed that most students prefer internet materials (39.6%) over other types of materials, with the novels being the third most favoured option (26.4%). These results may have further implications in the involvement of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) or computer-assisted literature teaching (CALT) in using literary texts in the language classroom by considering, instead of excluding the literature resources on the internet. This could be seen in comparison to Yilmaz's (2012) study, who concentrated on the use of use of literature sources online,

where the results showed a positive attitude on behalf of the students in using supplementary internet materials and other media performances of the literary works as aids in teaching literature for language purposes. For instance, movie tie-in novels could be introduced with the students in order to arouse their interest, recorded live performances could be shown to students to engage them both visually as well as auditory, and audiobooks (as discussed earlier in this chapter) could complement literature teaching. Similar results were found by Tsai (2012) where students in her study considered that the supplementary materials utilized in the classroom (e.g., PowerPoint, film, the web, etc.) helped the students familiarize with the plot of the novel and its language but also provided cultural and other useful knowledge extended from the reading.

In what follows, the main conclusions drawn from this study will be presented by emphasising the findings which resulted from an examination of the students and teachers' perceptions on the use of literature for ELT in private schools in Cyprus – which was the main objective of this study.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In this study I have tried to provide a broad description of the current state of literature in second language classrooms of private schools in Cyprus with a particular focus on students and teachers' perceptions on the use of novels for integrated language and culture teaching and learning. The study focused on the teachers and students' perceptions and subjective opinions concerning the value of using literature in the language classroom as well as the manifold roles of literature in English language learning and implementation which were observed in private schools in Cyprus. The participants identified literature as a powerful tool for the language teaching arsenal which can be used to diversify and complement the repertoire of classroom materials. This research about the use of literature with language learners in Cyprus has shown that both the teachers as well as the students are very aware of the perceived beneficial outcomes related to its use, where the most indicative reasoning for their implementation in language courses lies in the observation that literature not only can be used for language enrichment and increase of the students' language awareness, but it can also transcend the mere practice of language skills. In what follows, I will present the major findings by taking each research question separately and providing an overview of the most important outcomes.

### 6.1 Research question one

Yes, literature is currently being used as a means of language teaching in Cyprus. However, this question, was never primarily aimed to examine whether or not literature was used with language learners in the classroom in the first place; this could easily be noticed by looking at the schools' curriculum, even though scrutiny would still be a requirement regarding the implementation of literature in language programmes. Rather, this question focuses on whether literature is being used for study or as resource for language teaching in private schools in Cyprus (Carter and Long, 1991). The findings show that teachers in Cyprus do not use literature exclusively in its institutionalised sense – where students are required to respond to literature critically by writing about literature – a condition which is the primary focus in the literary studies. Rather, teachers have been using literature as a resource in order to increase the students' language development and skills.

### 6.2 Research question two

The answer to this question can be considered in the context of the answer provided in research question one. Literature and language are not, by any means, perceived as polarised entities; the findings show that there are many arguments in favour of language-based approaches where the importance of student-centred and process-based methodologies is highly valued in the context of English language learning and implementation in schools in Cyprus. However, the eminent contribution of literature, with a particular emphasis on the implementation of novels, in exposing students to

literary experiences is highly recognised by both teachers and students as an important consideration which contributes to the students' motivation in learning the language. In this respect, literature can be appreciated as a mainstay of language teaching in that it intensifies the students' efforts to learn a language because of the personal, educational, emotional, and cultural engagement it nurtures with the learners.

### 6.3. Research question three

Yes, the findings have shown that novels are currently being used by language teachers as a means for accessing the culture of the target language, and the students are inclined to a deep appreciation of the novels' contribution by becoming more aware of the cultural background. Novels are perceived as a representation of the culture around which they were written, even though this should not be seen as a purely factual documentation of the cultural elements of that time (Lazar, 1993). Additionally, teachers have demonstrated that novels can contribute in developing the students' understanding of other cultures, and the cultural diversity depicted in novels can be exploited for language purposes since they offer manifold opportunities for language practice, discussions and writing tasks. In this view, novels are one of the few authentic materials that can be used for integrated language and culture teaching and learning. At the same time, they can provide an indirect route to understand and appreciate other cultural backgrounds and contexts.



#### 6.4 Research question four

The findings have shown that novels are perceived by the participants as the most appropriate form of literature in ELT in Cyprus, followed by short stories. Poetry and plays do not earn much popularity in terms of their use and implementation mainly because teachers do not believe that students demonstrate the same interest in them as they do for novels. The study has shown similar results regarding the students' preference in using literature for language learning purposes, since they also agreed that novels were considered to be the best option, again followed by short stories. The main explanation behind such a selection can be given by considering the students' exposure to novels in their L1 and their familiarity with the genre. Additionally, the variety of topics and themes expounded in novels correspond to the students' interests and personal engagement, an occurrence which justifies the students' preference in novels. The selection of novels and short stories as the most popular and appropriate forms of literature should not be surprising, since it can be attributed to the characteristics and features that these two genres share in common.

#### 6.5 Research question five

Teachers are seen to be explicitly in favour of the involvement of literature, and novels in particular, for language teaching purposes. They consider novels an invaluable and constructive authentic material in the sense that is not fashioned for language teaching purposes, and it can therefore offer abundant authentic samples of language in use. Students are exposed to genuine language and they can use novels to contextualise

language learning by gaining familiarity with many features of the written language, the grammar of the target language and the stylistic and rhetorical devices. Based on both the qualitative as well as the quantitative data I have gathered for this study, teachers believe that novels can be used for the students' linguistic development and language enrichment which can provide extended language practice for the students' productive and receptive skills. Additionally, extensive reading and systematic exposure to novels is considered to enrich the students' receptive vocabulary and introduce them to vocabulary learning techniques (i.e. guessing the meaning out of context) which can be employed without the intervention of the teacher in setting out the meaning of unknown words. Moreover, a wide range of language-based activities and games can be directly extracted from the language classroom and adapted to meet the students' needs.

Teachers also believe that students can be greatly benefited by the exposure to the wider educational functions of novels which allow them to engage imaginatively and get personally involved in the learning process by identifying with the characters and increasing their emotional awareness. This not only keeps them motivated in learning the language, but they also enjoy the educational and linguistic journey. Furthermore, the development of students' interpretative skills is a recurrent theme that many of the teachers have pointed out has been achieved by using novels for language teaching purposes.

Lastly, the teachers' beliefs about the students' perception of using literature in the L2 imply that students do not demonstrate a particularly high interest for the involvement of literature in language learning courses; this is mainly attributed to the application of restrictions in the students' construction of meaning and interpretation, where a "right"

answer should always be forthcoming in the students' involvement with literature in their L1.

6.6 Research question six: How do students in Cyprus view the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, in English language learning courses?

Contrary to the teachers' beliefs regarding the students' limited interest in literature, an examination of the students' views on the involvement of literature, and more specifically novels, has demonstrated an awareness in their use for language purposes. The students' negative experiences resulting from exposure to literature in the L1 has not been a recurring issue in the students' responses in the same way as it was proposed by the teachers. This suggests that it is a phenomenon which may occur primarily with students who study in public schools, and where literature – and novels in particular – are treated in a different manner applying some sort of interpretative limitations and restrictions that damage the students' motivation.

The principal reason for the students' choice in reading novels emerges to be their characteristic features which enhance students' motivation. These features include, but are not limited to, the language, the characters and the plot of the novels. Similar to the teachers' beliefs, novels are considered as the most attractive and appropriate form of literature to be used for language learning. The findings have also demonstrated an increased awareness on behalf of the students regarding the linguistic engagement and language practice of all four language skills that is achieved by the implementation of novels in language courses. Lastly, students have recognised the novels' contribution in contextualising the cultural background, acknowledging at the same time their importance in creating the conditions for a vivid representation of cultural experiences

which results in enriching their cultural knowledge and understanding of the people and the language of novels.

6.7 The implications of the Foreign Language Curricula and the educational qualifications of teachers for other contexts.

This study reports on the teachers and students' perceptions on the use of literature in the second language learning classroom in a private school in Cyprus and it presents their attitudes towards literature in general and novels in particular. The results of the study yield some pedagogical implications in terms of what literature to teach and how to teach it focusing, among other aspects, on the students and teachers' preferred genre and the students' linguistic gains. The suggestions made in the study based on the results of the participants' responses offer possible guidelines in the selection of literary texts and they provide further implications for the integration of literature in ELT.

Some important considerations which result from the present study are the possible insinuations it has for the incorporation of literature in ELT in other countries or contexts. For instance, the possible influence of the educational qualifications of the teachers who participated in the study on the students' perceptions and attitudes towards the inclusion of literary texts in the Foreign/Second Language Curricula should be considered for other contexts. The positive attitude that the teachers held towards the use and implementation of literary texts may result from their educational qualifications since we have seen that 31% of the teachers have BAs in Language and Literature and this may imply that teachers are predisposed to regard literature as a useful tool in promoting language acquisition (Figure 21). Moreover, a high percentage of teachers have MAs related to TESOL, ELT, TEFL and Applied Linguistics (60%) and this may suggest a well trained workforce (Figure 22). These results can be considered in relation

to Paran's (2008, p.40) suggestion that the "absence of training...sends out a powerful message that literature is not something that is worth dealing" and that even the teachers who want to use literature in their teaching do not have the "methodological whereabouts" to do so due to lack of knowledge and training.

We have seen that the teachers' role in promoting student engagement with the text is central in facilitating the students' involvement with it and promote productive and meaningful discussions that will endorse student contribution and can affect the students' perceptions regarding the role of literature in relation to language learning (Kim, 2004). Therefore, this may suggest that if the teachers fall back on teaching literary texts the way they were taught (that is teaching literature as a discipline by using traditional methods where the lesson is largely based on teacher-based input), they perpetuate teacher-centred approaches (Kim, 2004; McRae, 1996; Paran, 2008). Consequently, this may suggest that the more academically qualified the teachers are and the more involved they are in the literature-language interface in terms of training, the more likely it is that the students will be able to develop positive perceptions and attitudes in learning the English language through literature by being introduced to student-centred approaches and having a more active involvement in the learning process. Thus, the educational qualifications of the teachers who formed part of the study may have influenced the findings and specifically the students' positive attitudes and perceptions on the constructive benefits of using literary texts for ELT.

Another point that could be seen as a factor that has influenced the findings and may also have implications for other contexts is the existence of a Foreign Languages Curricula which emphasises the need to include literature. It has been previously demonstrated in the discussion chapter that the teachers are teaching to the curriculum and the inclusion of literature in the curriculum generally provides useful guidelines to

the teachers on how to use literature in the language classrooms, a fact which could also affect the students' attitude towards the use of literature for second language learning positively. Hall (2015, p.200) emphasizes that a key question in teaching literature as a second language has always been which texts to study, the order in which they should be taught and the rationale for implementing literature in language courses. Having a curriculum which specifies the learning outcomes and aims following the inclusion of literature can at least give a teacher some guidance, can always be revised and may be a starting point for action research (ibid.).

The inclusion of literature in the foreign languages curriculum in other contexts and in settings without this curriculum seems necessary for letting teachers know what to do with literature and how to do it, and it may also provide guidance to teachers who receive no training in using literary texts in the classroom in the first place. However, the foreign language curricula which incorporate literary texts tend to be vague, conservative, over-specified in terms of excessive reading loads of prescribed canonical work, but under-specified in terms of educational aims and lack empirical evidence to back them (Hall, 2015, p.207). Therefore, having an informative and properly organized curriculum, which provides thought-through justification of the language benefits of the use and implementation of literature may influence both the teachers as well as the students' perceptions and attitudes towards the inclusion of literature in the language syllabus.

## 6.8 Weaknesses of this study

### 6.8.1 Applying the principles of Grounded theory

I believe that one weakness that has to do with Grounded theory is that even though I have attempted to support this partly as a qualitative research, yet some of the principles that relate to qualitative theory, and by extension to grounded theory, were not applied. For example, the data gathering was carried out in only one round for each of the stages of the research. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that grounded theory methodology should comprise of the gathering of data in order to generate hypotheses that will ultimately direct the researcher to reproductive questions that will then help the researcher engage in the next round of data gathering. In this study, I have partially applied the tenets of grounded theory in that I have used intuitions from the questionnaires as the basis for my follow-up interviews, and I have used the insights from both the questionnaires as well as the interviews as the main source for my classroom observations.

However, I believe that the hypotheses and intuitions from both the interviews as well as the questionnaires could have allowed for more specific and detailed data gathering through additional interviews and questionnaires. This, however, was not applied firstly, because of time constraints for completing the data collection and progressing with data analysis, and secondly, because the school as well as the teachers had an inflexible time schedule because of exam preparations which did not allow me to organise follow-up questionnaires or interviews. I would definitely wish to have applied all the principles of grounded theory, and with more time and financial support this could have been achieved.

### 6.8.2 Students' interviews

An additional weakness which came to light was that the interview technique was exclusively based on teachers' interviews. Even though the data I gathered from the interviews were sufficient for proceeding with the data analysis and findings, yet I believe that the application of the interview methodology with students would have benefited the study enormously if both scopes could have been examined. This would have allowed for more richness of data as well as further scrutiny of the students' responses in the questionnaire – a fact that would have provided more explanation and detailed descriptions of some of their answers in the questionnaire. Even though this was my initial plan, the delay that was observed on the part of the school before they allowed me to proceed with the data collection resulted in conducting the data very close to the students' preparation for final exams. Consequently, there was not enough time to interview a sufficient number of students, as was originally planned.

### 6.8.3 Classroom observations

A further weakness that needs to be mentioned refers to the classroom observations I did, and can be separated into two parts:

a) In the empirical data gathering of this study there was a deficiency of teacher observations. Even though I have observed the teachers in the classroom setting, yet I feel that this was only done partially and on a small scale, with two observations of four teachers. If the administration of the school had agreed for more observations, which was also what I initially planned, this would have allowed me for more scrutiny of the use of novels in the classroom. However, I believe that a longer series of classroom



observations, such as a term or even a whole year, would cover all the stages of the use of novels and would provide deeper and more wide-ranging results.

b) The original intention in regards to classroom observations was to organise three more classroom observations of a more advanced level of students. This was initially planned in order to allow me to explore and identify the evolution of the use of novels in the classroom from the first year students in secondary school to the first year students in high school. Additionally, these observations would have allowed me to compare and contrast the techniques used for the two levels, the students' responses and insights, and the activities implemented based on novels and various other matters that exclusively relate to the application of methodological aspects. However, this was not possible since even though the observations were done as planned, the school's Head of English department informed me that instead of using novels as was originally planned, the teachers would use short stories.

## 6.9 Implications for further research

This study has considered the main outcomes of the use of literature, and novels in particular, in L2 settings and it is one of the few empirical studies which was not conducted based on university settings. However, I strongly feel that a further systematic enquiry into the views of the learners regarding their perceptions on the use literature and specifically novels is necessary since the data I have collected from students were exclusively based on questionnaires, and I subsequently believe that there was a lack of richness of data that could be remedied by the use of follow-up interviews and further classroom observations.

I also believe that more empirical studies are needed to put the differences arising in terms of perception, use and functionality of literature with language learners of private schools – as opposed to language learners of public schools under scrutiny. This may be examined by taking, as a point of reference, the teachers' views on the influence of the treatment of literature in the L1 and the interference of this treatment in the use of literature in the L2 for language learning purposes.

One very important issue that definitely needs to be investigated by an extended systematic evaluation of language learning courses which incorporate the use and implementation of novels is the area of testing.

Finally, another area which would be very important to observe is using technology to encourage student engagement with literature for language purposes. This should be particularly examined in light of the preference students demonstrate for internet materials and the important technological advancements which have led to more recent manifestations of applications and approaches to teaching and learning a second or foreign language (e.g. CALL). Film adaptations and audio books should also be considered and examined to make sure that the use of novels is more approachable and accessible to the learners, while also complementing the use of literature for language learning purposes.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A

## Teacher's questionnaire

*Note* that the first teachers' questionnaire attached is blank and is followed by six completed teachers' questionnaires.

### A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus

I would like to thank you for your contribution and participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible. My research focuses on the use and implementation of literature and essentially novels in the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom. I am predominantly interested in the way teachers deal with novels not as part of a literature course but as a language learning technique. As part of this research, I would be grateful if you could reflect on your own beliefs regarding using literature and specifically novels as a component for ELT in Cyprus. All the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential.

#### Personal details (Please circle or state the appropriate answer)

1. Gender:    Male                  Female

2. Age:            21-30            31-40            41-50            51-60            61-70

3. Nationality:

4. First language(s) (L1):

5. Academic Qualifications:

6. Years of English language teaching experience:

7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms?

Please circle.

Yes

No

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why.

9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1      2      3      4      5

10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all           

2= a little             

3= quite a lot         

4= a very great deal

12. What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why?

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

a. Beginner                      b. Elementary                      c. Intermediate                      d. Advanced

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes                      No

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes                      No

16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?



17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle. (Note that you can circle more than one answer)

a. Reading

b. Listening

c. Writing

d. Speaking

18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

20. Would you ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language? Please circle.

Yes

No

1

### A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus

I would like to thank you for your contribution and participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible. My research focuses on the use and implementation of literature and essentially novels in the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom. I am predominantly interested on the way teachers deal with novels not as part of a literature course but as a language learning technique. As part of this research, I would be grateful if you could reflect on your own beliefs regarding using literature and specifically novels as a component for ELT in Cyprus. All the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential.

#### Personal details (Please circle or state the appropriate answer)

1. Gender: Male

Female

2. Age:

21-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61-70

3. Nationality:

Cypriot

4. First language(s) (L1):

Greek

5. Academic Qualifications:

BA TEFL, MA TEFL

6. Years of English language teaching experience:

4

7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms?

Please circle.

Yes

No

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why.

No

9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1      2      3      4      5

10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

It allows the learners to be exposed to a new form of language, where they can express freely their thoughts and ideas, familiarise with the characters, understand their feelings, agree and disagree by using all 4 skills in the lesson.

11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all     

2= a little     

3= quite a lot     

4= a very great deal

12. What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why?

It depends on the level and age of learners. Short ~~sto~~ stories will be more appropriate for younger learners whereas novels will be more beneficial for older learners who have the competence to deal with them better.

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

a. Beginner

b. Elementary

c. Intermediate

d. Advanced

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes

No

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes

No

16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?

They students are fully familiar with both language and literature, since both means are important for the use of language and are interrelated. They need language to understand literature and vice versa.

All 4 Skills and grammar become vivid in using novels in the language classroom, since students can identify grammar and vocabulary in what they are reading and at the same time practise the language through reading, writing, listening, speaking.

17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle. (Note that you can circle more than one answer)

a. Reading

b. Listening

c. Writing

d. Speaking

18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

20. Would you ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language? Please circle.

Yes

No

2

### A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus

I would like to thank you for your contribution and participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible. My research focuses on the use and implementation of literature and essentially novels in the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom. I am predominantly interested on the way teachers deal with novels not as part of a literature course but as a language learning technique. As part of this research, I would be grateful if you could reflect on your own beliefs regarding using literature and specifically novels as a component for ELT in Cyprus. All the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential.

#### Personal details (Please circle or state the appropriate answer)

1. Gender:    Male            Female
2. Age:        21-30            31-40            41-50            51-60            61-70
3. Nationality: CYPRIOT
4. First language(s) (L1): Greek
5. Academic Qualifications: BA English Lit  
MA Comparative Lit  
PGCE English
6. Years of English language teaching experience: 9

7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms?

Please circle.

Yes

No

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why.

It is a possibility, especially if ~~you~~ ~~take~~ ~~into~~ ~~consideration~~ that through writing and grammatical points are presented, ~~which~~ ~~are~~ ~~practised~~ and tested through tone and audience.

9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1    2    3    4    5

10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

Development and improvement in expression as well as exposure to different/various themes, personalities and ideas, which would have otherwise proven difficult to impossible are

11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box. thus facilitated

1= not at all   

2= a little   

3= quite a lot   

4= a very great deal

\* opportunity to express <sup>the concerns</sup> and discuss issues they themselves might be facing

12. What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of

accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why?

All genres are possible, focusing on prose that their literature, handling topics ~~and~~ and issues from all around the world for lower school students and young adult lit for upper school including classics, making the world a smaller place, as well as giving students \*

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please

circle.

a. Beginner

b. Elementary

c. Intermediate

d. Advanced

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes

No

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes

No

16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?

Exposing students to different cultures and issues hence, creating opportunities for both discussion and writing



17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle. (Note that you can circle more than one answer)

a. Reading                      b. Listening                      c. Writing                      d. Speaking

*All of the above*

18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all                     

2= a little                     

3= quite a lot                     

4= a very great deal                     

19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all                     

2= a little                     

3= quite a lot                     

4= a very great deal                     

20. Would you ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language? Please circle.

Yes

No

3

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus**

I would like to thank you for your contribution and participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible. My research focuses on the use and implementation of literature and essentially novels in the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom. I am predominantly interested on the way teachers deal with novels not as part of a literature course but as a language learning technique. As part of this research, I would be grateful if you could reflect on your own beliefs regarding using literature and specifically novels as a component for ELT in Cyprus. All the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential.

**Personal details (Please circle or state the appropriate answer)**

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age: 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70

3. Nationality: South African-Cypriot

4. First language(s) (L1): English

5. Academic Qualifications: BA - MA TEFL

6. Years of English language teaching experience: 4

7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms?

Please circle.

Yes

No

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why.

I strongly disagree with the statement above

9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

- 1=strongly disagree  
 2=disagree  
 3=neither agree nor disagree  
 4=agree  
 5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

- 1    2    3    4    5

10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

I personally believe that there can be only advantages by including lit. in Eng. lang learning curriculum such as enriching vocabulary, improving grammar and writing skills. Moreover a student can become a good reader by using audio-visual aids that may accompany the given literature and learn more about target language culture.

11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

- 1= not at all      
 2= a little      
 3= quite a lot      
 4= a very great deal

in different eras  
 (Elizabethan, Victorian ages etc)  
 and different places of world - America, Africa, Europe where the language is used.

12. What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why?

I think that contemporary lit. will be the most effective since the topics and themes of the book <sup>might</sup> correspond to the interests of the students <sup>and topics within textbook</sup>. Perhaps Modern Classics (Dickens, Hemingway) may interest the students also, since these authors have fascinated and shall continue to fascinate readers in the future.

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

- a. Beginner      b. Elementary       c. Intermediate      d. Advanced

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes      No

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes      No

16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?

Based on experience students may learn new vocabulary and improve their reading and listening skills via the textbooks used in class. However grammar is an aspect of language learning that students find difficult to comprehend and use for themselves regardless of having very good textbooks. By using novels students are allowed to see <sup>via the author</sup> how for example "past simple and past continuous" are used interchangeably to show a sequence of events that happened in the past. This novels enable students "visually" to see how <sup>when</sup> different grammatical forms are used, through examples in the text.

17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle. (Note that you can circle more than one answer)

a. Reading

b. Listening

c. Writing

d. Speaking

→ if audio-visual materials are available

→ depends. IF discussion analysis of book is done in class.

18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

I can not talk on behalf of others. But could be a little if I had to speculate.

19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

20. Would you ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language? Please circle.

Yes

No

Thank you - You're welcome 4

4

### A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus

I would like to thank you for your contribution and participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible. My research focuses on the use and implementation of literature and essentially novels in the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom. I am predominantly interested on the way teachers deal with novels not as part of a literature course but as a language learning technique. As part of this research, I would be grateful if you could reflect on your own beliefs regarding using literature and specifically novels as a component for ELT in Cyprus. All the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential.

#### Personal details (Please circle or state the appropriate answer)

1. Gender:  Male  Female
2. Age: 21-30  31-40  41-50  51-60  61-70
3. Nationality: Cypriot
4. First language(s) (L1): Greek
5. Academic Qualifications: BA + MA
6. Years of English language teaching experience: 3
7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms?  
Please circle.
- Yes  No

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why. *No*

9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum? *Expanding the student's*

*and understanding of Philosophy and life.*

*world*

11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

12. What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why? *Timeless literature with a fairly easy vocabulary.*

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

a. Beginner

b. Elementary

c. Intermediate

d. Advanced

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes

No

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes

No

16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?

*Students introduced to different ways of thinking of great minds*



17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle. (Note that you can circle more than one answer)

- a. Reading       b. Listening       c. Writing       d. Speaking

18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

- 1= not at all
- 2= a little
- 3= quite a lot
- 4= a very great deal

19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

- 1= not at all
- 2= a little
- 3= quite a lot
- 4= a very great deal

20. Would you ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language? Please circle.

- Yes       No

5

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus**

I would like to thank you for your contribution and participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible. My research focuses on the use and implementation of literature and essentially novels in the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom. I am predominantly interested on the way teachers deal with novels not as part of a literature course but as a language learning technique. As part of this research, I would be grateful if you could reflect on your own beliefs regarding using literature and specifically novels as a component for ELT in Cyprus. All the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential.

**Personal details (Please circle or state the appropriate answer)**

1. Gender: Male

Female

2. Age: 21-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61-70

3. Nationality:

Cypriot / Canadian

4. First language(s) (L1):

English

5. Academic Qualifications:

BA + MA TESOL

6. Years of English language teaching experience:

17 years

7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms?

Please circle.

Yes

No

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why.

No

9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1    2    3    4    5

10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?

lexical building, Improve reading comprehension skills.  
Learning to read between the lines & parts of speech

11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all   

2= a little   

3= quite a lot   

4= a very great deal

12. What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why?

Crime, romance, comedy  
These are categories which interest them.

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

a. Beginner

b. Elementary

c. Intermediate

d. Advanced

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes

No

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes

No

16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?

→ keeps them engaged & interested  
→ learn grammar / vocab in context  
→ relieves monotonous learning

17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle. (Note that you can circle more than one answer)

a. Reading

b. Listening

c. Writing

d. Speaking

18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

20. Would you ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language? Please circle.

Yes

No

6

### A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus

I would like to thank you for your contribution and participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible. My research focuses on the use and implementation of literature and essentially novels in the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom. I am predominantly interested on the way teachers deal with novels not as part of a literature course but as a language learning technique. As part of this research, I would be grateful if you could reflect on your own beliefs regarding using literature and specifically novels as a component for ELT in Cyprus. All the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential.

#### Personal details (Please circle or state the appropriate answer)

1. Gender: Male

Female

2. Age:

21-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61-70

3. Nationality: Greek-Cypriot

4. First language(s) (L1): Greek

5. Academic Qualifications: Bachelor's Degree in English Language and Literature, Master of Education (Applied Linguistics)

6. Years of English language teaching experience: Six

7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms?

Please circle.

Yes

No

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why. *No*

9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1      2      3      4      5

10. What are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum? - *Students become familiar with the English culture.*  
 - *Improvement of reading and writing skills.*  
 - *Expand and enrich their vocabulary*  
 - *A pleasant 'break' from common classroom tasks.*

11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all           

2= a little             

3= quite a lot         

4= a very great deal

12. What genre of literature is in your opinion the most effective in terms of accompanying the textbook used in the classroom and why? It depends on the level of the class or/and the textbook. However, stories/novels can be effective because they are easier to read and students are more familiar with this kind of genre.

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

a. Beginner

b. Elementary

c. Intermediate

d. Advanced

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes

No

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes

No

16. If you have answered yes to the previous question, what is in your opinion the most beneficial aspect of using novels in the language classroom?

They can help students improve their writing skills and raise their awareness of the use of the target language ~~and~~ and culture.



17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle. (Note that you can circle more than one answer)

a. Reading

b. Listening

c. Writing

d. Speaking

18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

20. Would you ever use novels as a vehicle for cultural representation of the target language? Please circle.

Yes

No

## Appendix B

### Student questionnaire

*Note* that the first students' questionnaire attached is blank and is followed by five completed students' questionnaires (three for Form 1 and three for Form 4).

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus****Grade: Form 4**

I would like to thank you for your participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible.

**Please circle or write the appropriate answer.**

1. Gender:    Male                  Female

2. Nationality:

3. First language (L1):

4. Second/foreign language(s):

5. Have you ever been taught literature in Greek? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

6. Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms?

Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

8. How interesting/enjoyable is learning English through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all [ ]

2= a little [ ]

3= quite a lot [ ]

4= a very great deal [ ]

9. What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Poems

c. Short stories

d. Drama

10. Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain why:

11. What genre/type of novels do you like the most? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Romance

b. Horror

c. Comedy

d. Historical

e. Adventure

f. War

g. Victorian

h. Fantasy

12. What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. The language                      b. The characters                      c. The plot

Please explain why:

13. What skills have you improved with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Reading      b. Listening      c. Writing      d. Speaking      e. Spelling

14. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

- a. Yes                      b. No

15. What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Guess the meaning      b. Use a dictionary      c. Ignore the word      d. Ask someone

16. Which of the following do you find to be the most interesting/enjoyable? Please circle.

- a. Novels      b. Newspapers      c. Magazines      d. Internet materials

17. What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Vocabulary      b. Length      c. Plot

18. Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

- a. Yes      b. No

19. What do you prefer, reading a novel aloud or silently in the classroom? Please circle.

- a. Aloud      b. Silently

Why?

20. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

- a. Yes      b. No

How?

F1, 16

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus****Grade: Form 4**

I would like to thank you for your participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible.

**Please circle or write the appropriate answer.**

1. Gender: Male

Female

2. Nationality: Cypriot

3. First language (L1): Greek

4. Second/foreign language(s): English

5. Have you ever been taught literature in Greek? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

6. Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms?

Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

8. How interesting/enjoyable learning English through literature is? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all [ ]

2= a little [ ]

3= quite a lot [ ]

4= a very great deal

9. What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Poems

c. Short stories

d. Drama

10. Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain why:

Reading a novel can not only elevate the standards of one's usage of the English language, but it also assists in broadening the horizons of our general knowledge.

11. What genre/type of novels do you like the most? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Romance

b. Horror

c. Comedy

d. Historical

e. Adventure

f. War

g. Victorian

h. Fantasy



12. What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. The language

b. The characters

c. The plot

Please explain why:

Through the eyes of the characters one can analyse each personality and perhaps relate them to the world in general. One can closely view the ideas and the development of each character through the unfolding of the plot.

13. What skills have you improved with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Reading

b. Listening

c. Writing

d. Speaking

e. Spelling

14. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

15. What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Guess the meaning

b. Use a dictionary

c. Ignore the word

d. Ask someone

16. Which of the following do you find to be the most interesting/enjoyable? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Newspapers

c. Magazines

d. Internet materials

17. What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Vocabulary       b. Length      c. Plot

18. Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

- a.  Yes      b. No

19. What do you prefer, reading a novel aloud or silently in the classroom? Please circle.

- a.  Aloud      b. Silently

Why?

The story comes to life when read out loud. It's easier to understand the tone of ~~the~~ each line, and the feelings that the author intends to evoke.

20. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

- a.  Yes      b. No

How?

In a novel the structure is made up ~~of~~ with an amalgamation of features of grammar. As the structure of each line varies, we adopt new ways of expressing ourselves correctly and by far more effectively.

F1, 8

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus****Grade: Form 4**

I would like to thank you for your participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible.

**Please circle or write the appropriate answer.**

1. Gender: Male

 Female

2. Nationality: Cypriot

3. First language (L1): Greek

4. Second/foreign language(s): English

5. Have you ever been taught literature in Greek? Please circle.

 a. Yes

b. No

6. Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms?

Please circle.

 a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

 a. Yes

b. No

8. How interesting/enjoyable learning English through literature is? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all [ ]

2= a little [ ]

3= quite a lot [ ]

4= a very great deal []

9. What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Poems

c. Short stories

d. Drama

10. Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain why:

~~They are boring~~ It is boring as I'm interested ~~more~~  
in scientific subjects as well as maths instead of reading

11. What genre/type of novels do you like the most? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Romance

b. Horror

c. Comedy

d. Historical

e. Adventure

f. War

g. Victorian

h. Fantasy

12. What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. The language

b. The characters

c. The plot

Please explain why:

I believe that plot is what makes the novel interesting especially when it's an action book, you are more attracted to reading it instead of paying attention to the characters themselves.

13. What skills have you improved with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Reading

b. Listening

c. Writing

d. Speaking

e. Spelling

14. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

15. What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Guess the meaning

b. Use a dictionary

c. Ignore the word

d. Ask someone

16. Which of the following do you find to be the most interesting/enjoyable? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Newspapers

c. Magazines

d. Internet materials

17. What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Vocabulary       b. Length      c. Plot

18. Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

- a. Yes      b. No

19. What do you prefer, reading a novel aloud or silently in the classroom? Please circle.

- a. Aloud      b. Silently

Why?

It's ~~more~~ clearer and easier to understand

20. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

- a. Yes      b. No

How?

The way the author presents a character or the way the author creates the setting often involve the use of many adjectives which help me both in learning new words ~~and~~ and writing a better description

F12

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus****Grade: Form 4**

I would like to thank you for your participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible.

Please circle or write the appropriate answer.

1. Gender:  Male  Female

2. Nationality: Cypriot

3. First language (L1): Greek

4. Second/foreign language(s): English (some French).

5. Have you ever been taught literature in Greek? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

6. Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms?

Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

8. How interesting/enjoyable learning English through literature is? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all [ ]

2= a little [ ]

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal [ ]

9. What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Poems

c. Short stories

d. Drama

10. Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain why:

I love reading novels to refine my vocabulary and English.

11. What genre/type of novels do you like the most? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Romance

b. Horror

c. Comedy

d. Historical

e. Adventure

f. War

g. Victorian

h. Fantasy



12. What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. The language

b. The characters

c. The plot

Please explain why:

(Lang) ~~where~~ I read I try to think ~~about~~ what ~~was~~ in the author's mind when ~~writing~~ it. And I try to find symbols/parallelism/ messages et  
 (Plot) In the same time, it should be an interesting plot for the reader to continue reading.

13. What skills have you improved with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. Reading

b. Listening

c. Writing

d. Speaking

e. Spelling

14. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

15. What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

At the beginning I guess. If it is important I ask someone if not I ignore it

a. Guess the meaning

b. Use a dictionary

c. Ignore the word

d. Ask someone

16. Which of the following do you find to be the most interesting/enjoyable? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Newspapers

c. Magazines

d. Internet materials

17. What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel?

Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

None: (If I must circle Length)

a. Vocabulary

b. Length

c. Plot

18. Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

19. What do you prefer, reading a novel aloud or silently in the classroom? Please circle.

a. Aloud

b. Silently

Why? Because you hear what you read, thus it <sup>develops</sup> helps your listening and 'common ~~language~~ talking' too. Also, it helps you understand ~~the~~ the text.

20. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

How?

B23

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus****Grade: Form 1**

I would like to thank you for your participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible.

**Please circle or write the appropriate answer.**

1. Gender: Male

Female

2. Nationality: Cypriot  
Greek

3. First language (L1): Greek

4. Second/foreign language(s): English

5. Have you ever been taught literature in Greek? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

6. Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms?

Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

8. How interesting/enjoyable learning English through literature is? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all [ ]

2= a little [ ]

3= quite a lot [✓]

4= a very great deal [ ]

9. What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Poems

c. Short stories

d. Drama

10. Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain why:

Because its quite interesting and you can learn better the English language.

11. What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. The language

b. The characters

c. The plot

Please explain why:

The language because sometimes the authors use dialect and its nice to learn how other people speak. The plot because i like it when the plot has suspense<sup>2</sup>

12. What skills have you improved with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Reading    b. Listening     c. Writing     d. Speaking    e. Spelling

13. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

- a. Yes    b. No

14. What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Guess the meaning     b. Use a dictionary    c. Ignore the word     d. Ask someone

15. Which of the following do you find to be the most interesting/enjoyable? Please circle.

- a. Novels    b. Newspapers    c. Magazines     d. Internet materials

16. What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Vocabulary     b. Length    c. Plot

17. Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

- a. Yes    b. No

18. What do you prefer, reading a novel aloud or silently in the classroom? Please circle.

a. Aloud

b. Silently

Why? Because I might make a mistake and I would be embarrassed

19. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

How? I increased my level on writing and I feel more comfortable to speak English aloud.

B17

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus****Grade: Form 1**

I would like to thank you for your participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible.

Please circle or write the appropriate answer.

1. Gender: Male

 Female

2. Nationality: Greek Cypriot

3. First language (L1): Greek

4. Second/foreign language(s): English

5. Have you ever been taught literature in Greek? Please circle.

 a. Yes

b. No

6. Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms?

Please circle.

 a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

 a. Yes

b. No

8. How interesting/enjoyable learning English through literature is? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all [ ]

2= a little [ ]

3= quite a lot []

4= a very great deal [ ]

9. What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Poems

c. Short stories

d. Drama

10. Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain why:

Because is quite boring

11. What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. The language

b. The characters

c. The plot

Please explain why:

Because I like it when the plot has suspense



12. What skills have you improved with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Reading    b. Listening     c. Writing     d. Speaking    e. Spelling

13. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

- a. Yes    b. No

14. What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Guess the meaning     b. Use a dictionary    c. Ignore the word     d. Ask someone

15. Which of the following do you find to be the most interesting/enjoyable? Please circle.

- a. Novels    b. Newspapers    c. Magazines     d. Internet materials

16. What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Vocabulary     b. Length    c. Plot

17. Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

- a. Yes    b. No

18. What do you prefer, reading a novel aloud or silently in the classroom? Please circle.

a. Aloud

b. Silently

Why?

Because i'm shy.

19. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

How?

Now, I ~~read~~ write better competition than earlier this year, and I can read better.

B16

**A questionnaire for the use of novels in EFL and ESL classrooms in Cyprus****Grade: Form 1**

I would like to thank you for your participation in my research by filling out this questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it back to me as soon as possible.

**Please circle or write the appropriate answer.**

1. Gender: Male

Female

2. Nationality:

chipriot

3. First language (L1):

Greek

4. Second/foreign language(s):

- english

5. Have you ever been taught literature in Greek? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

6. Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms?

Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

8. How interesting/enjoyable learning English through literature is? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all [ ]

2= a little [ ]

3= quite a lot [ ]

4= a very great deal []

9. What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Poems

c. Short stories

d. Drama

10. Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

Please explain why:

They travel you in  
different worlds

11. What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

a. The language

b. The characters

c. The plot

Please explain why:

When the plot is full of mystery and  
suspense it makes the story very interesting

12. What skills have you improved with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Reading    b. Listening     c. Writing     d. Speaking     e. Spelling

13. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

- a. Yes                      b. No

14. What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Guess the meaning     b. Use a dictionary    c. Ignore the word    d. Ask someone

15. Which of the following do you find to be the most interesting/enjoyable? Please circle.

- a. Novels    b. Newspapers    c. Magazines    d. Internet materials

16. What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Vocabulary     b. Length    c. Plot

17. Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

- a. Yes                      b. No

18. What do you prefer, reading a novel aloud or silently in the classroom? Please circle.

a. Aloud

b. Silently

Why? I can concentrate more

19. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

a. Yes

b. No

How? When the story is in the past tense, I can learn the verbs ~~are~~ or when there is a dialog dialogue I read the verbs ~~are~~ in the present tense. Generally reading expands my vocabulary and my writing.

## Appendix C

### Teachers' interviews

Two interviews have been included in the appendix. *Note* that in the two interviews, the letter 'N' refers to the interviewer whereas the letters 'A' and 'M' refer to the two interviewees respectively.

#### Interview 1

**N: Can I have your name and surname please?**

A: Alex Kyriakou.

**N: And how old are you?**

A: 32 years old.

**N: How many years of teaching experience have you got?**

A: 3 years

**N: Have you ever used literature in the language classroom?**

A: Yes, even though I didn't have the chance to do a lot, for example, I remember using it in one of my classrooms as part of speaking practice because I felt they needed improvement and I wanted them to use literature as a speaking activity since they would have more topics to talk about which would probably have deeper meanings and raise discussions in a way which cannot be done otherwise. It was used instead of asking the more obvious and simple questions like "what did you do during the weekend?". I asked them to read the story at home and we discussed about it during the next lesson, trying to locate and talk about the main ideas, as well as the themes and motifs found in the narrative. Usually, I preferred to use a bit 'easy' and comprehensible writers and I avoided using readers (simplified texts) and for that purpose my preference was stories written by Hemingway which are a bit easier.

**N: So you have mainly used short stories or have you also used novels?**

A: No, I have never used novels, just short stories.

**N: How often do you use it in the classroom?**

A: It depends on the students' level and competence, and for that reason, I have only used it just once in the entire classroom but in my private tutoring and phrontisterion I use it all the time. That is, for all the students who needed additional speaking practice and perhaps they were a bit shy but I knew that they would benefit from the use of

literature in terms of speaking, I would employ literature quite often for deeper discussions.

**N: You have said that for the entire classroom, the use of literature is much more limited whereas in your private lessons and tutoring you use it all the time. Why have you made such a distinction, is there a reason for not using it quite as often for the benefit of the whole class?**

A: Perhaps because I believe that in a classroom, not all students will be interested and be competent enough to accept and work with literature. For that reason I introduced it to my private lessons where I knew that my students would be more interested and could cope with it quite well. In the instances where I had tried using it in the language classroom, at least half of the students did not want to get involved with literature and only a few of them would show interest in learning through it, which was a very small percentage. An additional factor for not using it quite as often in the classroom is because of time limitations associate usually with the students' exams where you need to cover the syllabus.

**N: You said that you mainly focused on using short stories instead of anything else, is there a reason for that?**

A: Because we would manage to read the story bit by bit and do the reading and analysis during every lesson whereas in the classroom the use of literature would be more limited and we wouldn't go deep in the literature and is also a good method for more variety in the classroom. The time management is my main concern for not using novels, since we need something that can work within the time restraints we have and effectively read something and have time to finish it and not leave it incomplete. Mainly it would be impossible for the students to read the novel in a week.

**N: Do you believe that literature can be used as a means to promote English language learning and why?**

A: Yes, because literature attracts the interest of students and people in general mainly, at least at the beginning, for reasons other than language, and language learning takes place subconsciously because you are attracted by the themes and motifs of literature. Thus, learning takes place as I said, subconsciously.

**N: When is in your opinion the best age during which we should introduce literature. If we are about to talk about school levels should we begin an introduction of literature in primary school or secondary school? I would also like your view based on the fact that English language learning has been introduced to students in Cyprus at the first grade of primary school.**

A: The induction of literature should start at the very early stages but perhaps we should begin by introducing children literature first followed by readers and then



gradually, by the time they go to secondary school, the students could manage any kind of literature given to them.

**N: If we should determine the level at which learners should be introduced into the use of literature what would that be?**

A: Elementary, perhaps.

**N: We have previously talked about short stories and you have indicated why you show preference in their use, but if I asked you about novels do you believe they could be used in an ELT classroom?**

A: It depends on the tasks you are about to work on. That is, if it is a classroom of an English speaking private school then definitely the students would be highly benefited by the use of literature and of course, they could only work by using literature without needing anything more as a complimentary material. However, if it is in public schools and phrontisteria, then the pressure applied on the teacher by both the employers as well the time you have available, then it wouldn't be easy to use a piece of narrative in the form of the novel mainly because of its length.

**N: Based on what you said, and taking for granted that novels can be introduced in both public and private schools, then would it be possible that the learners would improve their language skills and competence by the use of novels and why?**

A: Because students will be interested for the expression found in the language of the novels, especially when someone would like to express ideas and things or emotions which go beyond your daily life and routine, then you would like to start using the language which is not of your daily communicative language. It is precisely this motive that can attract the interest of the students to learn more about literature and use it for their benefit language-wise. For example, novels make you think why the author has used a word that you may not understand and have never heard before, or seen before, instead of a more obvious one that is often associated with a particular phrase or idiom.

**N: If we neglect the pressure that you said the teachers feel because of the exams and so on, either at public schools or at phrontisteria, do you believe that novels could be a good way to teach the language or not?**

A: I would definitely suggest this after a certain level. I would also go on to suggest that we, as teachers, could entirely escape from teaching the grammar and introducing it continuously and we could practise this by also teaching the learners some

additional things through novels. However, before reaching at this level, the students need to be learning the basic uses of language and understand a few language learning strategies before moving to the more difficult and unusual (for them) language learning techniques based on the novel. Therefore, the learners need to have acquired the basic knowledge and foundations of language learning before moving on to using the novel in isolation for language teaching purposes without accompanying it with any other materials. But again, the novel could be used as a complimentary material regardless if you are not using it in isolation to teach the language, and we could be using it in combination with some other materials. For example, we could introduce short chapters or easy forms of narratives at an early stage and then gradually develop and encourage learning through literature where classic teaching methodologies and procedures could be replaced by learning through literature.

**N: Talking about novels, I would like to ask you, what genre of novels would you use and why? For example would you prefer Contemporary novels, classics, Victorian novels, horror novels, romantic novels, etc.?**

A: I would say that the most basic requirement needed to answer this question relates to the kind of students we have in the classroom because it is absolutely essential for them to be triggered by the subject and the novel being taught. Therefore if it was a comedy, some students would be more interested than some other students who would be more interested in romance and vice versa. Additionally, if we had more girls rather than boys in the classroom, then I assume that they would be more interested in novels similar to, say, *Pride and Prejudice*. Nevertheless, in my opinion, it is very important for them to understand the more important themes and messages of the novels and not just the surface of what it appears in the novel.

I would definitely not be interested in teaching novels to students if I was about to only touch the surface of it without concentrating on the most important ideas and motifs found in them. So, if they could grasp what I would introduce with the novel then of course I would definitely use novels for that purpose. That is why I believe that contemporary novels could also be appropriate to introduce students to the world of the novel but I would definitely begin with writers who keep their writing style simple in order to talk about abstract ideas or difficult notions. For example, I would start with the writers who talk about timeless values, associated and linked to our lifestyles. That is, love, hate, war, and all those topics.

**N: Then are we talking about classic novels?**

A: I think that classics would be precisely the most ideal genre of literature in order to introduce the language, but at the same time, they would be the dullest. That is why we should be very careful when we select the novels in order to find something which would attract their attention and interest. I wouldn't use Victorian literature especially at the beginning. I might use it only after they had gained an all-around understanding of the world and culture of the people at around that age. For example, they need to

get familiar with what people of that era were allowed to say and what they were prohibited to say, what was considered as taboo and what was excluded from that canon, and some symbolism which was linked to that time period and compare what had existed then with what exists now. Basically, the main reason why Victorian literature cannot be easily introduced to students, especially at the beginning, is because it cannot form a representation of our contemporary lives and lifestyle.

**N: So based on what you are saying they might be used in the language learning classroom but I assume at a later stage and at a higher level?**

A: Yes, and another negative aspect of the Victorian novels is that some of the language being used at around that time is not used nowadays anymore. So we would need a type of language that will be closer to the way language is used today. For example, Shakespeare is perhaps the most timeless example of literature that could be introduced at any given time period, yet it would be tremendously difficult to get an advanced learner of English to read Shakespeare, let alone lower level learners of English. Therefore an introduction is needed. Like for example in music terms, Guns and Roses and ACDC are an introduction of what you may later decide to listen to in metal as a music genre.

**N: We have briefly talked about simplified versions of literature and you asked me, while you were completing my questionnaire, whether I categorise them as literature because you wanted to include them. Would you use them as a tool in language learning?**

A: I really like using readers and simplified versions of literature because they are a good way to introduce the learners into a different kind of narrative. However, on the negative side, the language is much more simplified from the original version and you therefore lose much of the art of the writer who writes the novel. Another negative point is that the messages hidden between the lines and the words that are deleted from the novel are lost and you are only faced with the surface story, which is not that interesting. Take for example, Jane Eyre or Pride and Prejudice. If we only had the surface story of these novels they would be very boring books.

Thus, the positive point about the original forms of the novels is that they are much more interesting. Yet, I doubt that there could be a lot of lower level learners that could identify with the themes I have aforementioned found in the original form of a novel and for that purpose, simplified versions and readers could be a good starting point. Students and young people don't even watch a whole film because even if they try to watch a movie, they will do it by having their mobile phone in their hands and they will play with it and do many other things at the same time. Their attention span is much more limited nowadays and that is why I told you that I personally decided to start the introduction to learning through literature using short stories. Because they can learn new things as fast as they would do while searching on the internet. There aren't many children who will be willing to read a whole book.

**N: What about in terms of language improvement, do you think that simplified versions are helpful in this respect?**

A: Yes, they are, because the vocabulary included in them is of a slightly higher level than the vocabulary they have already acquired. So words can be understood from context and it represents the equation of understanding the meaning of a sentence when in some around 15 words, for example, you only have one unknown word. However, if it is more than that, then you start losing from the meaning of the sentence. Therefore, readers are designed in such a way so as to 'isolate' the unknown words, and the effect is beneficial for the learners since they manage to learn unknown words and they gain some around 10% more vocabulary knowledge. According to their level, the learners will continue to improve by 10% in every level they use readers until they are at a point where the original version of a novel can be introduced.

**N: Now, I would like to talk about the skills that the learners develop through the use of literature. By looking at your questionnaire, you have said that all four skills are involved and improved. Can you please expand on this?**

A: For certain, the skill which is mostly improved is writing but especially if it develops the learners' desire to write something back in response based on what they have just read. The reading skill is definitely improved since it is unquestionably been practiced the most. Listening and speaking are still improved, though not as much as the other two and this can be done if, for example, the learners decide to ask the teacher how a word can be pronounced or read so that they hear it being pronounced properly. Therefore, when someone mentions it again, they will be able to recognise it. For example, if you have always read 'biscuit' with an [u:] sound and not 'biskit' you will never be sure what the correct pronunciation of the word is unless you hear it correctly from the teacher. In the same way, as far as speaking is concerned, if you can learn the word properly it means that you can speak more correctly. A very important skill that readers acquire is that while learners read a text they subconsciously learn how a word will sound even though they may not know how it sounds or they have never heard it before; yet, they can make limited predictions regarding the way it can be pronounced. Even though English is one of the languages which are difficult to know how they sound, gradually they can gain an understanding of the unwritten rules of how something is pronounced correctly and they make skilled predictions.

**N: Again talking about your questionnaire, you have mentioned that the interest of the learners towards literature is relatively low. Why is that?**

A: Well my answer kind of refers to the percentage of the students' interest towards literature. That is, the students who are interested in literature demonstrate great appreciation for it and they really love it but in, say, 10 students perhaps only two are interested.

**N: Do you think that the views, disposition and tendencies that the students in Cyprus have towards learning the English language through literature are related to the students' introduction of literature in their mother tongue?**

A: Yes, it is absolutely true that Cypriot students do not have the best relationship with literature and it is certainly a subject at which very few flourish. If this is an occurrence which takes place in the students' native language we can then suggest that it wouldn't change easily if they had to do with literature in English. However, the most important fact in this is that we should find students, and there are a lot, who will show certain interest towards literature. Nevertheless, this type of students has to overcome two difficulties. First of all, the fact that it is not 'uncool' to read literature and secondly they have to deal with all the people around them who put some pressure on them trying to convince them that reading literature is not 'appropriate'. This happens because we live in a world where knowledge is not considered very interesting or 'cool' and being or acting, better, being stupid wins over any other behavior. Making a comparison between students in Greece and students in Cyprus, where in both cases the mother tongue is the same, I find that there is much more interest from the Greek students for both literature and language learning.

**N: Do you think that the way literature is taught in the students' mother tongue affects the learning of English through it in the English language learning classroom? That is, what is your view on the way literature is approached by the teachers first in their mother tongue and by consequence in the English language?**

A: Even though I am not really sure of how literature is being introduced in the classroom now, from what I can remember literature was not at all being introduced properly and I can only imagine that it is much worse now. For example, in the teachers' minds there was always a right or wrong answer and only one interpretation was acceptable. However this is certainly not the way literature should be treated.

**N: Are you suggesting, then, that we should be blaming the school or the teachers for not letting the students develop a different way of thought and predisposition towards literature?**

A: Absolutely, the schools do not even teach and practise the philosophy of knowing how to think, and be logical. Therefore, students are only exposed to the more superficial type of learning where there is only a true and false answer and things are what they appear to be on the surface. However, nor the world is like that and neither the world of literature. By following this attitude, the school minimizes or even excludes the potential of having students who could read and write literature or about literature and they do not cultivate the students' creative thinking and writing. For example, since I can remember myself reading literature, I was never interested in any person's analysis or reading of a particular work of literature. I have always liked to find my own way to read a novel, for example, and make my own analysis based on

my creativity of thought. And even though we, as students, were introduced to the literariness of language in secondary school there were always limitations as to what you can and what you cannot do with literature.

**N: Do you think that the induction of literature for English language learning purposes would work more effectively in private schools instead of public schools?**

A: Of course, I think that it would be much more effective because students are continuously exposed to the English language and classrooms may be smaller. Additionally, in private schools, literature is being taught separately from other subjects and students can work better and more effectively with literature. Even though private schools still follow the exam based agenda, yet literature functions much better this way.

**N: What are the benefits of introducing novels in the language learning curriculum? As you have said, novels can be used to improve one's knowledge and use of English. Is there anything more than that?**

A: Yes for me it is extremely important that students are being addressed by people who have much better command and use of the English language than the ordinary people and their reflections on life, their feelings and emotions are very important for the students. These people have written literature despite the difficulties of their time and under extremely hard circumstances. Very often, it was not even a matter of money and they simply had the need to communicate their thoughts, which usually did not have to do with everyday concerns and worries, with the readers. Therefore, they thought in philosophical terms and a lot of the things they have written are of timeless value and could even be applied today because of the classic ideas. You also get emotions that you may have never felt before and you can only feel through literature. You acquire ideas that you have never thought before and you are exposed to different kinds of thought. Generally, literature helps you feel a bit more complete as a human being.

**N: Do you believe that literature helps educate a person as a whole; not only in terms of language competence but also in terms of values and behaviours only acquired through education?**

A: Yes, absolutely.

**N: Is in your opinion necessary to introduce the students to the target culture when teaching English, or should English should be isolated from any cultural elements?**

A: Yes, I believe that it would be necessary and beneficial for the learner, even though nowadays, culture moves away from literature and inevitably literature loses

some of its cultural elements. There is a great difference in the way culture is depicted in literature today and how it was done in the past since books used to be people's television. Now, all these have been replaced by the TV, even though books continue to be more active in a way because you need to do something with them. Therefore, to answer the question, literature helps to perceive the culture of the time around which a novel was written unless it is timeless literature, which is not culture of the language but it is culture of the people. Sometimes, the English language may be used to go against the culture of a country, and I am thinking the perfect example which is Caliban from Shakespeare. In that, Caliban had used the weapon which was implied on him against them (the colonizers) and this is very useful for people because it is necessary not to go with the flow but sometimes revolt against it because it is only then that you realize that you have thought something interesting. It would be very concerning for example and according to Twain, to think like everybody does.

**N: Would you go as far as to introduce the target culture to the students which is often found in literature?**

A: If it was related to their understanding of the text then absolutely yes. I would be extremely based on the narrative and I would try to find exemplifications of how things could work in that way. I would not try, for example, to talk about fish and chips first and then what is related to the text and English culture.

**N: Do you think that novels could add to the students' awareness regarding the culture of the language?**

A: Absolutely, there is a great need to discuss and explain why something is presented in a certain way because in many occasions, what is now considered as peculiar was once considered a normal behavior. For example, in Scandinavian Literature it was considered normal to kill and hunt on a daily basis even though now it is quite the opposite. When someone described how perfectly he could kill, it was considered a triumph and acceptable for those times. However, if someone would read this now, they would be wondering about the logic behind it and animal rights. Additionally, hygiene habits were also different since back then, most people used to bathe in barrels and once a month and without having the water changed. If this was described nowadays, it would cause reactions and disgust.

**N: Do you think that it is the job of a teacher to bridge the cultural gap between the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century and now?**

A: Yes, absolutely, the teachers need to explain to the students the differences and bridge this gap.

**N: Can you think of any novels that can be used for cross-cultural representation?**

A: I would say that most of them are like that.

**N: Can you expand on this a bit further?**

A: For example, pride and prejudice is mostly written based on a ‘feminine side’ yet, it should be OK enough to be published by men. Therefore it shouldn’t be violating the morals of that time in order to get published but on the other hand, because it was very ‘feminine’ and addressed people from a feminine side, it should be also acceptable by describing how men viewed and behaved towards women of that era and none of the two sides should win. Something for example that Charlotte-Perkins Gilman did. That short story (*The Yellow Wallpaper*) was strongly opposed to the domination and oppression by men. Even though someone could still argue that it was also restrained up to some level. Thus, there is need to explain to students how it was not considered appropriate to have a complete freedom of speech if you were a woman during those years. Another example is that of George Eliot who used to write as a man for many years because what she wrote was considered acceptable only if it was written by a man and not a woman. Therefore there is need to explain why this occurred.

**N: I would like to use one of the novels you have mentioned to ask how you would introduce a classic novel to address cross-cultural aspects, and I am referring to Jane Eyre.**

A: Well, I would begin by talking about the colours of the novel. Because colours and their significance cannot be questioned especially in defining what they mean in the novel. For example the rooms, emotions, madness, and I would begin with how symbols can be used in the novels. For example, how red cannot only mean red in terms of the colour we look at but that red is also used for other things. I would probably start from there. I would also discuss the oppression that women of that time felt and how limited their ‘voice’ was and that any natural expression was considered hysterical whereas now it is not dealt with in the same way. Another great example of literature is Gulliver’s travel which was written in a way that criticized English colonialism but at the same time, it should be hidden well enough to be read and published during that era. It is also particularly important to demonstrate to students how they should read between the lines in order to understand for example why Gulliver’s travel was allegorically written and not written in a straightforward way that would accuse colonialism, mainly because it was not allowed back then.

**N: Can you think of any other examples of literature that would serve the same cause? You told me something about Dickens could we possibly use him as an example?**

A: Absolutely, Dickens is a great example for this cause especially at his time as for example Shakespeare was at his era but certainly, the use of language in his work is not as amiable. The social division and classification between poor and rich people is still existent today since there are places which show both divisions but the society



doesn't exactly function in the same way since there is now less mud and water and more concrete and water.

**N: Is *Hard Times* let's say a good representation of how the 19<sup>th</sup> century England was back then?**

A: Yes absolutely.

**N: Do you think that it can still function as a mirror of the society and culture today?**

A: Yes, absolutely. It was also very popular because it was written bit by bit and was published in newspapers and journals and people read it systematically. That is why Dickens was one of the very few classic writers who became rich from what they did.

**N: How often would you teach literature in the language classroom?**

A: I would say every other day even though I would begin by using something not as lengthy, especially at the beginning in order to show variety and introduce many types of thought. For example, If we limit the students' exposure to the use of Victorian literature, there wouldn't be so many 'general' things to say about it. I would also take literature which is quite different from each other; for example, I would take contemporary literature such as Carter or Hemingway and then move on to something in the middle and then to something more classic. I would be interested in introducing both male as well as female writers and both American writers and English writers as well as some South African writers and so on.

**N: At this point, I would like to ask you whether you believe that foreign literature which is written in English but not by native speakers, like for example Chinua Achebe, Joseph Conrad etc., could be used in the classroom for language learning purposes?**

A: Yes, definitely, because they are considered as classics and could undeniably work with learners even though they are not native speakers. I would like to insist a little bit on the use of the text as well as text selection. For example, Angela Carter has written books that can be easily associated with the learners' needs and expectations but there are also works like *Bloody Chamber* which is not as close but it can still be read along the lines of other fairytales. There are also some other, more modern works, for example Margaret Atwood and *Happy Endings* and it is a fantastic story which also shows how the writer thinks while writing and there is variety in choosing an alternative beginning and end of the book. Therefore, the examples of the writers you mentioned can of course be used because students need variety especially at the beginning and you could examine where students are more interested. It is like a test

which lets them choose their favorites and helps them discover what they prefer and. We, as teachers, should work accordingly and fill in the areas in which students have gaps.

**N: I would like to concentrate on the aspects of language development while using the novel and ask you to tell me, what kind of follow-up activities would you use with novels?**

A: First of all, I would employ role play since it is extremely useful for language learning and at the same time, very interesting. They could also be asked to reflect their thoughts in writing based on what they have read and ask directed questions which would also trigger their critical thinking and writing skills. I would also, at some level, ask them to write their own poems and short stories and even audio books could be used for improving their listening skills.

**N: As far as vocabulary is concerned?**

A: I would use texts which are relatively easy and subtract some words out of them and ask them to complete it in order to recall their vocabulary. I would also ask them to use unknown words to form sentences. Especially words that the students did not know that can be used in a different way (i.e. figurative language) and explain why this is correct and what it does to the meaning of the sentence, even though it might sometimes sound strange. For example why someone's eyes swim in his head and not move, and explain what is achieved through it.

**N: I would like to ask a few more questions about writing based on your ideas. How can someone be creative but at the same time 'correct' while developing their writing skills?**

A: I admit that it will take time for someone to be correct in the literal sense but nevertheless, it would still be useful. It will be something on which a teacher should insist and concentrate on the students' creativity and praise them quite often for things they write and limit error correction as much as possible. I would focus on what they have done correct rather than what they have done wrong. I would also be looking at their effort to pass the message through their writing and maybe what have they done wrong in the process of doing so. I would also correct grammar mistakes but I would not concentrate on them.

**N: Since you have mentioned grammar, can you think of any grammar exercises that can be prepared by using literature?**

A: Grammar is not very difficult but it is good to find ways in which you can use it; especially in writing a sentence. You begin with a noun, for example, followed by a verb and then you can have a prepositional phrase. Now, if these are in the right order

then it is OK, but if instead of putting a verb students choose to put a noun, then yes that is a mistake and a quite serious one.

**N: As far as tenses are concerned, do you think that learners gain knowledge through novels?**

A: Yes, but mainly when tenses are peculiarly used. For example, if most of the things are written in past simple and maybe past continuous, then if you would like to you past in your past tense then you should use past perfect and therefore you explain that both can be used as past tenses but the one should be used before the other. So literature can be used as further exemplification of how and why tenses are used in the way they appear.

**N: Do you think that novels are authentic materials based on the view that authentic materials are materials that are not primarily designed to teach the language?**

A: Yes, definitely. However, the stake for the teachers is to know why literature is useful for them and why it concerns them. Additionally, they should know why Victorian novels can be used nowadays, for example, and why this is part of our history since we are also a postcolonial state off England.

**N: Do you think that students could find some reflections of their own self, personality and attitudes in literature? If yes, would that help them in learning the language through it?**

A: Yes, definitely, and it is a fact that humans have always been the same there is no much change over the passing of time. They love in the same way, hate in the same way and the only thing that changes is the objects being used. And again, there exist some rules of what can and cannot be said as it happened in the past and this is also projected by the media nowadays.

**N: Would you encourage silent reading or reading aloud in the classroom?**

A: Both are very, and equally important. Reading aloud is useful because you correct while you listen and you correct both the words and how the sentences are heard. The students learn what should and shouldn't be stressed what should be hidden and what shouldn't and students learn that what you stress is the most important. For example, if there is something in italics it should be stressed and we should explain why something is in italics and not written in any other form. Additionally, if we are reading words that are in quotations narrated by the character of a story, those should definitely be stressed and they should be narrated in natural speed and intonation.

**N: There are some follow-up questions that I would like to ask based on your answers in the questionnaire. For example, in the question “what are in your opinion the most important advantages of including literature in the English language learning curriculum?”, you said that it is useful in expanding the students’ world and understanding of philosophy and life. What exactly is it meant here?**

A: What I mean is that they will find other ways to think instead of the everyday thought and they will have deeper questions to ask to themselves in order to understand who they truly are. Generally, philosophy is everywhere and at all times. I would say that all the arts like writing and film are like a market where the interlocutor does not exist and there is someone who is always smarter than you and you are addressed by him. For example, something similar to what used to happen in ancient Greece.

**N: In the question if using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners, you have answered “neither agree nor disagree”. Is there a reason for that or do you think that something should be changed in order for it to be more beneficial?**

A: The role of the teacher is vital in explaining to the students why it is helpful to use literature for language purposes but many times, it also depends on the students and they show not to be interested in the same way I was not interested in literature when I was at school. However, the background in which I grew up, that is my family and neighbors, helped me have a different and very positive stance towards literature. It is very important to make literature cool when it is not considered as cool by most of the people.

**N: In the question “how interested are the learners in learning through literature?”, you said that “their interest is quite low”. What can we do, in your opinion, in order to increase their interest in that?**

A: It is a difficult question, the answer of which is hard to be given. The teachers should find ways in order to make it at least a bit interesting for the learners. It is like trying to prove why mathematics is interesting and can be associated with their daily lives. Everybody says that mathematics is not important but this is very wrong. Mathematics is everywhere in our lives. The most important is that students learn to think in a way which is useful and beneficial, and certainly, there should be stressed why it is important to think instead of not. Basically, learners need to be taught why it is useful not to be ‘stupid’ and what should be questioned in their daily lives and not accept everything for given. They need to have their own judgment and way of thought teaching them what they can earn by doing so.

Interview 2

**N: Can I have your name and surname please?**

M: Maria Violari

**N: How old are you?**

M: 28

**N: How many years of teaching experience have you got?**

M: 4 years

**N: And how many years have you been teaching English?**

M: 4 years

**N: Have you ever used literature in the language teaching classroom?**

M: Yes.

**N: How often do you use it?**

M: Once a week.

**N: So does this happen on a regular basis?**

M: Yes, most of the times.

**N: What genres of literature have you used so far and why?**

M: Mostly short stories and novels. I think students find them more interesting and short stories are easier for them in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Consequently, by finding them easier, it is also a good motive in expressing themselves in different activities assigned by the teacher. Based on my own experience, students find the lesson motivating and challenging when they can easily be part of it. Novels on the other hand, can be used in more advanced levels since learners are competent enough to expand on their ideas and thoughts in a more complex way. In addition, they are now more confident in understanding hidden meanings and they can actually interpret the meaning

of hidden ideas, whereas younger learners usually expect the teacher to guide them through questions. Thus, we have a big difference in teaching literature among different ages in the sense that younger students are more dependent on the teacher in order to understand the text, whereas the more advanced learners are more confident to share their own perspectives. After all, that is the uniqueness of literature; it allows everyone to interpret a sentence, a paragraph, a whole unit differently.

**N: Are you suggesting then, that a learner should begin with a short story and then proceed with a novel?**

M: Yes, I think it is easier for them and easier to understand. It is of great significance not to frighten the students at the early stages of introducing literature in the sense that a short story may have a lot of unknown words, so it is vital not to scare the students. It is also very important to find ways of making them concentrate on the short story itself and not so much on the difficulties they may have to face. Unknown words are usually the most important reason for the students to lose their interest. It is therefore essential to find interesting and stimulating methods of minimizing that fear. This can be done by role play, explanation of some words, games, and guessing the meaning out of context.

**N: Do you think that English can be used as a means to promote language learning and why?**

M: Yes, because grammar or vocabulary, for example, become more vivid in the pages of a story or a novel. For example, students can actually identify some grammatical points being taught and in this way, they become more meaningful. For instance, it is easier for a student to understand the past perfect tense or other past tenses in the sense that they can see how they are used in context and not in a couple of examples written on the board. Based on my experience, students tend to memorise the different grammatical rules and not actually understand how to use them in context. Therefore, the teacher can transform a boring grammar lesson into a more motivating one, where students are asked to search for the uses of a given tense.

**N: Do you think that English should be taught through literature in primary school or secondary school? Bear in mind that the new 0curriculum for primary school learners has introduced English language learning from the first grade.**

M: I think that English should be taught through literature even from primary school in the form of readers. In this way, students can be exposed to literature from very early stages even if they do so at home. I have noticed that students become very excited when the teacher gives them a reader to take home because they believe that they can read it on their own. I have also noticed that young students enjoy readers quite a lot because they start feeling that they actually achieve in understanding the language and they are always excited and want to share the summary of their book in class. What I personally do with young learners, is that I give them a different reader so each one has to prepare a small speech of what happened in their story. Thus, they try to make it sound very interesting to the rest of the students and this also motivates them to read it. Even the shiest student in class is always willing to share his/her own part of the story. At this stage, it is also very important not to constantly correct any possible mistakes because we do not want to lose their interest.

**N: Based on what you said, do you think that it would be more effective for the learners to read something at home and on their own?**

M: Yes because they can do it on their own and during their free time and they can actually write down some unknown words or even try to guess them, they can identify with the characters, or maybe ask the teacher some questions during the following lesson. What I also noticed is that students tend to buy books of the same author of the book they have covered in class. The reason behind this probably lies in the fact that if they liked the book covered in class, or found it interesting, or easy to comprehend, then they automatically think that they will find other books from the same author equally interesting. Also, it is important to guide them, in a sense, in what they are reading. That is, teachers should make sure that students read a story or a novel based on their level. Therefore, a useful idea is to either take some books in class so that the students can actually go through or, suggest a reading list and just give them a short description of the books.

**N: Do you think that novels are a good way to teach the language? We have so far talked about short stories and readers, which are a bit easier. What about novels then?**

M: Definitely. Novels are a good way of teaching the language because as I have said earlier, novels can be the actual representation and most appropriate material to justify what learners have learned in the language lesson. Nowadays, students tend to search for proof of everything we say, so a novel is a good proof of language because they can actually see how, for example, an adjective, a simile, a metaphor, a tense is actually used in context.

**N: What is in your opinion the most important and efficient genre that a teacher can use to teach English and why?**

M: I think short stories and novels; again it depends on the level of the students. For example, poems are usually boring for the students whereas short stories and novels can easily raise their interest either by identifying with the characters or by trying to find the hidden meanings behind different themes in the novel or, reading between the lines of a novel.

**N: Why do you think that novels and short stories are more interesting than poems?**

M: I think that the language of the poems is more difficult whereas in short stories and novels they can actually have a character to follow and a theme and I have noticed that students find poems difficult.

**N: Do you think that this predisposition they have towards poems or even of literature in general sources from their disposition towards literature in their mother tongue and the way it is introduced in the classroom?**

M: Perhaps; in Greek language, poems are also a bit boring because students cannot easily interpret their meaning. There is also a false perception of novels and poems in the Greek language and that is probably because most of them are taught in Ancient Greek, a language that the students are not so familiar with. Consequently, the students usually transfer this view in English Literature as well. I guess it is quite inevitable because students do not usually like literature in Greek so they think that the same will occur in English. It is sometimes extraordinary to notice that students tend to like English literature more than that of their own language.



**N: Do you think that the teachers are to blame for their methodology when they introduce literature in Greek? Does it have to do with the way things are presented to the students?**

M: Yes and no. Teachers have to follow the curriculum assigned by the ministry of education but on the other hand, bearing in mind that they know the general attitude of the students, it is of vital importance to find different methods to present literature in Greek. It is also very important to choose novels or stories which are more contemporary and thus more stimulating to them since the students' needs and likes change throughout the years. It is noticeable that a number of novels are the same and have been taught for 15 years. It is therefore expected that the students will not have the same interest when, for example, they hear that even their parents have covered the same book at school. What is also worth mentioning is the general trend that exists in Greek literature something that is inevitably transmitted to the students. The general notion behind literature is based on two views: the right or wrong, something that prevents the students from expressing their point of view. In this sense, the lesson is done mostly by the teacher in a more guided manner. Another thing that may contribute to the students' negative view of literature is the fact that Greek literature is exam based and tested so the students actually feel the restriction of expressing themselves freely because they need the 'correct interpretation' written down by the teacher. As an immediate result, students are a bit reluctant when they are introduced to English literature.

**N: Talking about novels, which novels would you use if you were to introduce them in your classroom and why?**

M: I think it depends on the students' level. For example, I think that students find horror and comedy more interesting to be introduced in the classroom. Victorian novels and classics are a very good representation of cultural notions.

**N: What about contemporary novels? Would you use them?**

M: Again, it depends on the students' level and interest so if they ask for a contemporary novel then I would definitely use it in the classroom. It is always vital to consider the students' needs because they can actually perceive that the teacher is willing to take their opinion in consideration.

**N: Do you think that there is a difference between classic novels and contemporary novels in terms of language teaching?**

M: I believe that contemporary novels are closer to what they know and what they are exposed to, so they might find it more interesting.

**N: What about simplified versions would you use them?**

M: I would use them in younger ages because it is very easy to lose the interest of the students in case they find a short story or a novel difficult. Thus, it is important not to frighten them at the beginning. I think we shouldn't use simplified versions in more advanced levels because they need to be exposed to the language at some point.

**N: What skills do you believe that the students could develop by reading literature?**

M: All four skills and I think that they are all practised when reading a novel; for example, writing is developed because students can use ideas and vocabulary found in the novel in their own writing, listening is also practised because most of the times students act out roles in reading the characters and practise their pronunciation. Speaking is also practised because usually a discussion is raised where students are supposed to agree or disagree with different ideas and also share their opinions.

**N: Do you believe that learners are interested in learning English through literature?**

M: Quite a lot, I have noticed that they try to identify with the different characters in the novel or short stories and try to share their experiences through discussion in the class and they also like to take roles trying to impersonate the characters. They also try to find the characters that they like best. Students also like the fact that they can express their views without worrying if it is right or wrong.

**N: Is this somewhat of an escape from the routine of the traditional use of the course book in the classroom?**

M: Yes, students find it an escape from the routine of having scheduled teaching of grammar, vocabulary and reading. And they can easily express themselves with short stories and novels whereas they cannot do that from reading the course book which is

more fixed and the questions usually come from the teacher. Students are more involved in the lesson and they can actually find their own rules applied in a novel and certainly, these become more vivid by the use of literature in the classroom instead of having the rule written on the board.

**N: What are the benefits of including novels in the language learning curriculum?**

M: The expansion of their vocabulary; for example they can try to guess the meaning of the vocabulary in novels and that would also be helpful for their exams. They can also practise their 4 language skills and express their own ideas without having someone to tell them that there is a right or wrong interpretation. They also familiarise themselves with their characters.

**N: What do you think about the general educational context of introducing novels in the classroom?**

M: Because they are introduced to different themes and ideas which they can also apply in their lives through the characters found in the novels.

**N: Is it necessary to introduce the students to the target culture or should we isolate the cultural elements which are often associated with language learning?**

M: Students should be introduced in the target culture because language and culture are interrelated and essential when reading a novel. Therefore, students can acquire a cross-cultural awareness and be exposed to different cultures and customs through novels. Novels are a reflection of a given culture so students can find similar or different customs from their culture and compare them. They can also understand the attitude and behavior of characters based on culture and cultural beliefs of those times.

**N: Can you think of any novels that can be used for cross cultural representation?**

M: I think Jane Eyre and Hard Times because they include classic themes and motifs that project the social and cultural classifications of the 19th century England.

**N: How often would you teach literature?**

M: I think twice a week because once a week is not enough since students tend to forget what they have been taught and it is very important to have a continuing flow of teaching literature in the lessons. I think that once a week is not really productive

because the teacher would spend a lot of time to revise what was taught during the previous lesson and by teaching it once a week we also undervalue the role of literature in the students' minds.

**N: What kind of follow-up activities can you have when teaching literature?**

M: Quite a lot actually, for example, we can assign role play where students can practise out dialogues and they really like that. We can also have discussions in a bit more advanced levels by having students agree or disagree on different ideas in the book. It could also be done in younger ages but usually students are a bit shy to do that. We can also have grammar activities where the teacher would ask from the students to spot different grammatical points instead of giving them the rule and we can also tell the students to find the different figures of speech and learn how they can identify metaphors and similes. We can also assign them to write a composition using these similes and metaphors and they can also have a writing task of a description of a person using adjectives that they may find in the book. Lastly we can have games, for example the teacher can assign students to find unknown words and through games the students have to guess the meaning out of context or find synonyms.

**N: Do you think that novels are authentic materials? By authentic materials, I mean something which has not been primarily designed for English language teaching purposes?**

M: Yes, novels are authentic materials because they are not designed to teach the language and I would definitely introduce them in the classroom instead of having only newspapers and magazines, since we need a variety of authentic materials in the classroom.

**N: Would you encourage silent reading or reading aloud when reading a novel and why?**

M: Both, because reading aloud can be introduced during the lesson where students can practise their speaking skills, and I have noticed that younger learners feel excited when they are told to read aloud. This is very beneficial because they can practise their use of English. They also feel competitive and they try to give their best in terms of fluency and pronunciation in the class whereas silent reading could be done at home.

## Appendix D

### Foreign Languages Curricula for secondary schools in Cyprus.

#### FOREIGN LANGUAGES CURRICULA

##### 1. INTRODUCTION

The teaching of Foreign Languages aims at students' acquiring the essential communicative competences which will allow them to interact effectively in other languages apart from their mother tongue, hence, expanding their cultural experiences and developing positive attitudes and behaviours towards others. All citizens of the Republic of Cyprus, as European Citizens, should learn at least two more European languages other than their own.

##### 2. STRUCTURE OF THE CURRICULUM

###### 2.1 MAIN PILLARS OF THE CURRICULUM AND THE SYLLABUS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The Foreign Languages Syllabus is organised and structured according to the basic principles of the Curriculum for the Public Schools of the Republic of Cyprus and is based on three basic pillars which concern:

**a. A cohesive and adequate body of knowledge.**

Through the teaching of the subject we aim at:

- the adequate learning and understanding of languages, either orally or in writing, on an individual or collective level (School classroom)
- the expansion of the students' knowledge and experiences with particular elements from other languages and cultures

**b. Fostering of values, adoption of attitudes and display of behaviours which constitute democratic citizenship.**

Through the teaching of the subject we aim at:

a more comprehensive understanding of students' mother tongue and civilization, the increase of self-awareness and self-esteem but also the acceptance of otherness and the respect for the people of different languages and civilizations, the awareness of cultural differences in a way which will contribute towards the improvement of mutual understanding between people through language and cultural diversity, the fostering of a feeling of social justice and an attitude against xenophobia, racism and intolerance, the students' socialisation in a way which will ensure sensitivity towards the handling of phenomena of otherness evident in the multicultural societies we live in, the fostering of refined aesthetic criteria and constructive use of students' free time with their involvement in creative activities.

*c. Fostering qualities, competencies and skills required by the society of the 21st century - key competences.*

Through the teaching of the subject we aim at:

the possibility of communication and interaction, orally and in writing, initially in its basic form and eventually in its developed and more complex form, the competence of empathy and the skills of interpersonal communication as well as the readiness to seek alternative ways of expression and the skill to convert theory into praxis, the skill to identify the mechanisms of learning and apply them for further development.

*2.1.2 PHILOSOPHY OF THE SYLLABUS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGES*

The syllabus for Foreign Languages develops a unified and common approach towards the teaching and learning of all languages which constitute part of a broader curriculum. It may also function as a reference for all those who are involved in this field including teachers, trainers, and writers of teaching material, administrative officers and those responsible for evaluating languages by using the total of their actions, their expertise and experience. Last but not least, it aims at breaking the artificial and quite often counter-productive barriers between different languages, educational levels and theory and practice; in other words, what is actually happening in the classroom. In order to improve and update the teaching and learning of foreign languages in Cyprus the syllabus takes into consideration all the aforementioned factors.

*COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE (CEFR)*

Along with the other subjects taught at school the teaching and learning of Foreign Languages contributes towards the individual, cognitive, social and emotional development of the students. Aiming towards this, all modern theories, methods, and good practices in the teaching and learning of languages, as well as the Common European Framework of Reference, have been taken into consideration. Generally, the Syllabus was developed based on the levels which indicate sufficient knowledge of the language as indicated by the European Framework of Reference instead of having as a basis the year of attendance or the amount of time allocated to teaching. This option was taken up to enhance a unified and common approach of teaching and learning of all the languages which constitute part of our curriculum.

## 2.2 THEMATIC UNITS - STRUCTURE OF THE SYLLABUS

### 2.2.1 ENGLISH

The curriculum was developed largely based on the language proficiency levels proposed in the Common European Framework of Reference. There is provision for a single, unified, common approach to the teaching and learning of English in Secondary Education so that there is a smooth transition of the learning of the language from primary to gymnasium and from gymnasium to lyceum levels.

#### ENGLISH A' GYMNASIUM – A' LYCEUM

#### CLASS A' – B' GYMNASIUM LEVEL A2 (CEFR)

##### THEMATIC UNITS

- Personal data
- Description of persons
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Loved ones
- My school
  - Friends from the school environment
- Animals and nature
- Free time
  - Hobbies and interests
  - Sports
  - TV, Cinema
- Travelling in Europe
  - Meeting students from other countries
  - Interests and hobbies
  - Comparison of the school life of children from different countries
  - Introduction to other cultures and civilizations

- Music and songs from different countries
- Gastronomy / Local Cuisine / Food
- Stories and fairy tales from various countries
- Morals, customs, habits and traditions of different communities and peoples
- Holidays and festivals
- Becoming acquainted with the literature and poetry of the target language
- Comparison between the Greek language and the target language
- Biographies
- Inventions / creations
- Environment

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### ***SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES***

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- Role playing, miming and simulations / pantomime
- Treasure hunting with objects and cards
- Introduction of the members of a team (with emphasis on the presentation of foreign students)
- Searching for songs from different countries with the same topic and presentation
- Comparison and illustration of fairy tales from different countries
- Theatrical games and games of communication and intercultural understanding
- Creation of banners / posters
- Development of projects. Collection of information for places, accommodation, sights and museums
- Watching movies with songs, dances, cultural elements



- Presentation of heroes, mythological characters of different cultures
- Writing and illustrating fairy tales in groups
- Cartoons / animations
- Creation of internet newspaper and magazine
- Getting to know Europe
- Connecting with other schools through electronic mail for the joint development of projects
- Twinning of classes through the internet
- Multicultural day
  - Immigrants living close to my school
  - The importance of languages
- Greek-English friendship day

Having concluded their learning students of the A' and B' Gymnasium levels should be able to:

#### ***SKILLS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ORAL LANGUAGE***

- use phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms their family and other people, living conditions, their educational background and so on,
- ask and answer simple questions and exchange ideas and information concerning familiar subjects in predictable daily situations, handle very short social transactions (students should not be expected, however, to understand enough to keep the conversation up on their own initiative), communicate about simple and common tasks requiring simple and direct exchange of information about known issues concerning personal, family, school life and leisure time,
- be able to describe or present people, living conditions, everyday habits etc.,
- invite someone and reply to an invitation, ask and give basic information for a trip or moving to another place,

- agree and disagree using simple and clear language, express their emotions using simple and short sentences and talk in simple words about their future plans (vacations, studies etc.),
- ask for and give directions with the help of a map,
- narrate using simple expressions about something that took place in the past or is taking place at present.

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### ***SKILLS FOR UNDERSTANDING ORAL LANGUAGE***

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Students should be able to:

- understand phrases and expressions related to areas of direct priority (e.g. very basic personal and family information, purchases, local geography etc.) provided speech is articulated slowly and clearly,
- understand phrases and expressions that relate to emergencies and handle simple transactions (i.e. in shops, at the post office etc.), grasp the basic idea in short, simple messages and announcements,
- understand essential information included in short, simple recorded texts containing high frequency everyday language and deal with predictable everyday matters, if the speech is slowly and clearly articulated,
- understand narrated texts relevant to events that took place in the past or are going to take place in the future,
- identify the main points in a piece of television news referring to such an event as an accident where the visual context supports the commentary.

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### ***SKILLS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE***

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Students should be able to:

- write simple phrases and sentences in a continuous form to describe everyday aspects of their environment e.g. people, locations, events, activities and personal experiences,
- respond to classified ads and write short, simple, standardized notes related to immediate needs,

- write short, simple texts on topics that interest them, write brief, basic descriptions of events, activities and personal experiences taking place in the past as well as describe events (i.e. trips, accidents etc.),
- write simple e-mails and personal letters to invite, thank someone or make excuses for something, write short, simple, imaginary biographies and simple poems relevant to people or animals they love etc.

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### **SKILLS FOR UNDERSTANDING WRITTEN LANGUAGE**

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Students should be able to:

- find specific, predictable information in simple, everyday material (e.g. advertising brochures, menus, programmes, posters, signs etc.), understand simple personal letters and e-mails, use an idea extracted from the overall meaning of short texts and announcements on specific day-to-day issues to draw conclusions on the possible meaning of unfamiliar words,
- understand short, simple texts on familiar topics which contain high frequency everyday language,
- understand simple and short, friendly letters and e-mails, understand simple instructions on how to use different devices or follow simple and short recipes.

### **CLASS C' GYMNASIUM – CLASS A' LYCEUM (LEVEL B1 – CEFR)**

#### **THEMATIC UNITS**

- Entertainment
- School Life (school activities)
- Nutrition and Health
- Music, Art
- Biographies
- Educational Matters
- Introduction to the Literature and Poetry of the target language
- Technology, P.C., the Internet
- Global Problems (poverty, hunger, natural phenomena and disasters, accidents, etc.)
- Young generation problems

- Human Rights and International Organisations
- Environment and Environmental Problems
- Mass Media
- Discovering Europe:
  - Meeting with students and teachers from other countries
  - Getting to know other cultures and civilisations
  - Fairy Tales and Stories from other countries
  - Comparing cities and lifestyles
  - Holidays in Europe
  - Speculating on problems and exchanging views on their solution
  - Comparing educational systems and school life
  - The importance of languages

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### **SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

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- Dramatisation and role playing
- Drama
- Role-play and simulation
- Presenting and describing a painting, presenting an artist and his era
- Searching for songs on the same topic from different countries
- Identifying and registering problems
- Organising a workshop on literature
- Interviews
- Questionnaire / Research
- Gathering information from the Internet and using it appropriately
- Comparing educational systems
- Contacting European schools through the Internet to create online newspapers, or journals
- Creating Web Blogs and wikis to exchange ideas and material
- Seeking for issues of common interest (school life, sports, nature, environment etc.)
- Publish printed material (magazine or newspaper) with project work of the students' of a class
- Listen to radio broadcasts or watch television programmes
- Debates / open discussions
- Linking classes from different countries through the internet
- Organising a multicultural day
- Organising a day celebrating Greek-English friendship

By the time the students complete the levels corresponding to those of C' Gymnasium and A' Lyceum they should be able to:

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***SKILLS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ORAL LANGUAGE***

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- take part in discussions on issues that are familiar and interesting or that are related to daily life, express their feelings and describe their future plans and ambitions,
- understand the approximate meaning of some unknown words from the context and understand the meaning of sentences provided the topic is familiar, refer briefly to causes and give explanations, express opinions and plans, exchange, check and confirm information collected, address less common situations and explain why something is a problem,
- express thoughts on abstract cultural issues such as films, books, music, etc.,
- briefly extend on topics related to important issues of general interest such as those connected with global issues, issues on educational matters, environmental matters etc. and exchange views while engaged in discussions with friends.

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***SKILLS FOR UNDERSTANDING ORAL LANGUAGE***

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Students should be able to:

- understand simple, objective type information on common topics grasping the general meaning as well as the details as long as the speech is clearly articulated and familiar idioms are used,
- comprehend the context of broadcast programmes of informative type or recordings related to topics of personal interest,
- follow and understand a conversation that has to do with familiar or current issues such as family, school, holidays, leisure time, athletics or sports activities, cultural events etc. provided that the speakers talk slowly and clearly, repeating, if necessary, some words or expressions at request. They should be able to grasp the most important points on hearing a broadcast programme or while watching a television programme provided the speech is slow and clearly articulated. They should understand friendly letters and electronically sent messages where events are described or feelings and wishes are expressed and should be able to respond accordingly. They should be able to infer the meaning of unknown words from context in texts relevant to their fields and interests,

- understand the information on brochures, simple technical information, instructions on how to use different appliances etc.,
- highlight the most important points in simple articles found in newspapers and magazines, understand the plot in literary texts such as fables, poems etc., follow a speech, provided the topic is familiar and the presentation is clear and well organised,
- understand most of the content of recorded or audio broadcast information relevant to familiar topics provided the speech is delivered in a slow and clear manner,
- watch films in which the development of the plot is based, to a great extent, on visual elements and the action and in which the plot is clear and the language clearly spoken.

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#### ***SKILLS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE:***

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Students should be able to:

- write notes asking for or communicating information in line with the task, emphasising the point they consider important,
- write personal letters and e-mails describing experiences and impressions (such as trips, excursions, cultural events, accidents etc.), write in narrative form to describe feelings and reactions in a simple, coherent text,
- write summaries, reports or express their opinion in relevance to accumulated, specific information for ordinary or other issues with some confidence, describe the plot of a book or a film and also describe their reaction,
- write, in a simple manner, short articles on issues of their interest and be in a position to reason and briefly explain their views, plans and actions.

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#### ***SKILLS FOR UNDERSTANDING WRITTEN LANGUAGE***

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Students should be able to:

- understand texts relevant to their areas of interests and which include high frequency everyday language,
- work out the approximate meaning of some unknown words from the context and comprehend the meaning of the sentences, provided the topic is

known to them, understand descriptions of events, feelings and wishes in personal messages and letters,

- read fluently informative texts on topics relevant to their interests and understand [what they read] at a satisfactory level,
- recognize the important points in newspaper articles relevant to known topics and the general course of an argument in a text and spot the main conclusions.

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

I am not disappointed when I encounter unknown lexical items while reading or listening to a text; I am ready to face a potential difficulty in producing speech (oral and written) and I am not embarrassed when I am uncertain about the correct choice of words and style as a means of communication.

I try to work autonomously in my effort to understand oral language making predictions about the content of the oral message, paying attention to the paralinguistic elements used by the speakers, making use of the context so as to comprehend the message.

In order to understand a written text, I use the following techniques: text classification (i.e. letter, article etc.), use of dictionaries, recognition of related words belonging to the same family-group, checking of definitions and examples, using context to understand the meaning of words, simplification of syntax, production of synonyms and paraphrasing, use of phrases (phrasal verbs), recognition of parts of speech, use of general background knowledge relevant to the topic of the text, making assumptions about the content, using information about the ideas in the text provided by non-linguistic elements that very often accompany the text (i.e. pictures).

For the production of spoken language I change the volume and pitch of my voice in my speech, use different paralinguistic elements to convey the exact meaning I want, I make sure I know the essential vocabulary in each case when participating in a communication, and in the case that I do not know a word I paraphrase to express the meaning I want, I make sure I have the required lexical and grammatical knowledge to produce correct spoken language and I try to organise my thoughts and the meanings I want to express, I am able to interpret the utterances of my interlocutors and can respond immediately to the stimuli received from them.

For the production of written language I examine my paper systematically and ask myself questions to check what I am writing, why I am writing and how each item I refer to relates to the topic I am writing about. I self-assess my work to spot my mistakes by myself, to better understand them and avoid making them in the future. I compare the structures or even the expressions used in the foreign and my native

language so as to understand to a greater degree the system of the language I am being taught and use these elements faster and more effectively. I try to take the courage to produce language even if it is uncertain that it will result in a successful communication. In this way I secure my participation and the contact I ought to with the foreign language, which contact leads to learning the language successfully. I practice in the ways in which I can organise the writing of a text.

### ***INTERCULTURAL ASPECTS***

The acquired knowledge, comprehension and ultimately the understanding of the relations of similarities and differences as seen from within the student's home community and compared to the community speaking the target language make up the intercultural aspect of teaching a foreign language. This includes, among other things, getting acquainted with a whole range of geographical and social differences that exist in both communities. The process is enriched by the notion of more general cultural differences as seen on an international level which, of course, are not restricted to those observed in the mother tongue and the languages being studied. This more general view [of learning a language] helps students adopt the appropriate, in each case, attitude [towards the target language] as far as the similarities and the differences of the two specific communities are concerned. It is expected, though, that students at the elementary level of learning a foreign language will differ significantly from other students in the range of intercultural awareness they have depending on the degree of having been previously exposed to a multicultural environment or other languages. At the elementary level, students should have an understanding of any possible cultural diversity, and thus know how to avoid social impropriety, as this is defined by the prevailing cultural practice in the community speaking the target language.

### ***3. Teaching Methodology***

The methodologies used are defined by the principles of the 'communicative approach' as well as the approach upon which the CEFR (action orientated approach – task-based approach) is built up. In general, these refer to the cognitive approach which adopts a holistic approach to learning: whereby people use all their senses to develop the language they receive from their environment.

#### ***FEATURES OF A COGNITIVE APPROACH TO LANGUAGE TEACHING.***

a) Recognises the importance of the environment while teaching/ learning: the natural environment (e.g. the teaching place and potentialities offered), the social



environment (e.g. the educational institution and the intertwined constraints, the students' knowledge of the world, the native language and the cultural background of the students, etc.). Learning takes place in a specific context.

**b)** Takes into consideration the feelings and the mental attitudes of learners / instructors (e.g. the relationship between pupils and teachers, the atmosphere in the classroom), the convictions and perceptions of students and teachers in relation to the subject taught (e.g. what the students believe about the foreign language they are being taught and the culture they are being exposed to and how they feel about these).

**c)** Tries to respond to the needs of the students, paying particular attention to individual parameters such as the various incentives (e.g. intrinsic/extrinsic) and the attitudes, the kinds of learning strategies (e.g. memorisation, ability to dare to use the language, use of dictionary etc.), the learning styles (e.g. analytical, visual, dependent on or independent from the environment etc.) as well as the types of intelligences (e.g. linguistic, logical-mathematical, interpersonal etc.).

**d)** Pays attention to the acquisition of positive knowledge. Linguistic knowledge and competence includes vocabulary, morphology (e.g. conjugation of nouns and verbs, etc.), syntax (e.g. agreement of tenses, the way tenses are used, writing complex sentences etc.), and the meta-language (e.g. what is the subject, the personal pronoun etc.), concentrates more on the acquisition of procedural knowledge which is subject to positive knowledge: students should be exposed to samples showing the use of the language taught and must learn how to use this language.

**e)** Attaches importance to the individual and autonomous learning: it is to the students' advantage to learn how to study on their own.

**f)** Considers the expression of personal opinion and interaction as important elements. This consists of interaction with the teacher, being involved in dialogues with peers so as to use what they have learned, collaborating with classmates (as in role playing, taking up different parts, carrying out different tasks), using electronic programmes, etc. Teamwork, which is organised and carefully planned, is necessary in the language class.

**g)** Pays particular attention to the variety of channels used through which the information is delivered: teachers should provide a rich learning environment for their students and use a variety of visual, audio, written or digital material, texts suitably adapted for the lesson, as well as authentic material.

### **PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS**

Some practical applications are as follows:

- Since all classes are mixed ability classes, teaching should be differentiated so as to provide for learning in accordance with the interests, needs, abilities, learning styles and the kinds of multiple intelligences the students have. For example, a task has many different aspects of difficulty and the student has the opportunity to choose the one he thinks he is able to carry out - action plan: projects.
- As far as teaching is concerned an 'eclectic' approach is adopted with particular emphasis given to the communicative approach. A careful combination is made of principles and techniques from different teaching methods which are deemed necessary depending on the specific text.
- Teaching focuses on the student whereas autonomous learning, initiative and co-operation among the students are encouraged.
- Students work together, individually, in pairs or groups and the talking time they have available in class increases.
- The teacher creates the proper atmosphere for learning in class: free of stress and anxiety, he is democratic, gives advice, motivates, guides, facilitates, monitors and controls.
- The foreign language is used within a framework that includes the functions, the notions, and the topics for reference. The four skills are integrated in every lesson, if possible, as well as some sub-skills and processes. Apart from their books (course book, workbook, grammar, and dictionary) which are determined by the Ministry of Education and Culture, supplementary and authentic material is also used (newspapers, magazines, DVD, posters, songs etc). These are combined with appropriate exercises prepared by teachers, providing the students with the opportunity to work according to their different learning styles and personal preferences.
- In addition to the known techniques which are widely used, the foreign language is consolidated through focusing activities, games, presentations, drama, role playing, scenarios and activities that stem from authentic communicative situations and involve all the language skills.
- For the successful implementation of the Curricula concerning the teaching of foreign languages it is necessary for these to be complemented with additional activities such as:
  - The co-operation of schools with the Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes

- The celebration of Europe Day
- The celebration of the European Day of Languages
- The European Language Label
- Competitions and International Days
- Debates
- Educational visits to places in Cyprus and abroad where the languages taught are spoken
- It is recommended that students be informed about studies in different countries of which the spoken language is taught in schools - which is something that all embassies should do

## Appendix E

## Classroom Observation 1 Yellow Part A

*Note* that the letter ‘T’ refers to the teacher whereas the letter ‘S’ refers to a student (‘S’ is used followed by a number to indicate that more than one students have replied to a particular question). Similarly, ‘Ss’ refers to more than one students or general responses received by the students.

**Teacher begins with some general questions related to the book:**

T: Who is Jess and who are the main characters?

S1: Jess is the protagonist.

S2: The main characters are Leslie, Ellie and Brenda.

S3: Also Joyce Ann and Miss Edmunds.

T: Tell me some more things about the characters.

S1: May Belle admired Jess more than any other of his sisters.

S2: Jess is the fastest kid in school.

S3: Jess wants to be the fastest kid for his dad.

S4: At home, he used to do all the household chores.

T: OK, great.

T: Why did he want to make his dad proud?

S1: Because every day dad came from work and he didn’t pay any attention to him and he didn’t talk to him at all.

S2: He wanted it to be like the old days.

T: Have we been told any information about the neighbors?

Ss: No.

**Teacher now asks the students to identify some figures of speech:**

p.1 T: ‘...once he began running he would be hot as popping grease’

Ss: Simile

T: What is a simile?

Ss: When we use a phrase to compare two different things.

T: What do we compare in this case?

Ss: Jess to a popping grease.

p.2 T: ‘He had to be the fastest-not one of the fastest or next to the fastest, but the fastest’

Ss: Repetition

**Note on the teacher’s use of sign language.**

T: Find the vocabulary word. Teacher mimes some of the professions.

p.5

T: Teacher mimes.

Ss: Dig.

T: What?

Ss: A hole.

T: Teacher mimes.

Ss: Hauling

T: What?

Ss: Maybe water or rocks.

T: One of the oldest Olympic games found on page 5?

Ss: Wrestling.

T: I gave a test back and the girl got a 95%. I am very .....of her.

Ss: Proud.

**Teacher reads extract 1 aloud in the classroom:**

- p. 5 'Even his dad would be proud. Jess rounded the corner. He couldn't keep going quite so fast, but he continued running for a while-it would build him up. May Belle would tell Daddy, so it wouldn't look as though he, Jess, was a bragger. Maybe Dad would be so proud he'd forget all about how tired he was from the long drive back and forth to Washington and the digging and hauling all day. He would get right down on the floor and wrestle, the way they used to. Old Dad would be surprised at how strong he'd gotten in the last couple of years.'

T: Why does the writer begin with the word even?

Ss: Because his dad wasn't proud of his son very often.

T: Why would May Belle tell their dad about Jess' running achievements?

Ss: It shows that she loved her brother.

T: What does the word Daddy show?

Ss: It shows love and affection.

T: What does affection mean?

Ss: When you show how much you love someone.

T: Why didn't dad have time for Jess?

Ss: He came late from work.

T: For how long has this been going on?

Ss: For two years.

T: Synonym for strange/weird?

Ss: Peculiar.

T: Authors set the scene at the beginning of the book. What information do they give?

Ss: When, Who and Where.

T: When? Chapter 1.

Ss: Summer, August, just before school.

T: Who?

Ss: Dad, mamma, Brenda, Ellie, Jess, Leslie, the new neighbors, Gary Fultcher.

T: Where?

S1: Georgia, USA, father works in Washington, and uses dollars.

S2: House: In a farm, old house.

T: How do we know that it was an old house?

Ss: Because the floor screeched every time you stepped on it.

T: Do the authors give this information directly or indirectly?

Ss: Indirectly.

T: Why do authors give it indirectly?

Ss: To let us, the readers, discover, imagine the setting.

T: What is a dialect?

Ss: Different grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation than Standard English.

T: Where is the dialect used?

Ss: In a particular are of a country.

T: What does Jess learn?

Ss: The Standard English.

T: What do we understand when the characters use the dialect or the standard English?

S1: We learn about their education.

S2: Financial background and social class.

S3: Life in villages, poor families, upper class and low class divisions.

S4: For example , low class people did not talk to the people from the city centre and they don't know how others speak.



T: What is Jess' favorite hobby?

Ss: Drawing.

T: Did Jess draw all the time at school?

S1: No, because the other students would tease him.

S2: No, because it was a girlish hobby. It was his own secret.

T: Who knew about his hobby/talent?

Ss: Miss Edmunds.

T: Who is she? Tell me some facts about her.

Ss: She was the music teacher. She came to school every Friday. Jess was in love with her.

T: Give me a description of her.

Ss: Hippy, because of her clothes.

**Teacher reads extract 3 aloud in the classroom.**

'Jess drew the way some people drink whisky'

T: Why is whisky compared to drawing?

S1: People forget their problems with whisky as Jess does with drawing.

S2: People are addicted to whisky as Jess to drawing.

S3: Jess cannot live without drawing as people who drink whisky.

T: Why did Jess draw animals with problems?

Ss: He wanted other people to have worse problems than him.

## Appendix F

## Classroom Observation for 1Orange part A

**Teacher begins with some general questions regarding Chapter 6.**

T: What happens in chapter six? How does he feel about his sisters teasing him?

S1: Angry

S2: Sad and unhappy.

T: How would you feel if you had to buy a present for your friend at Christmas?

S1: I wouldn't be stressed I would feel happy to buy something.

S2: It wouldn't be something expensive, just meaningful.

S3: Because I know my friends, I would know what they like.

T: How does Jess feel?

Ss: Very stressed.

T: Why? What issues stress him out?

S1: He doesn't have enough money.

S2: He stresses about the gift.

**Teacher reads extract 1 aloud in the classroom:**

p.64

“So there was no money, and he seemed paralysed in his efforts to make anything for Leslie. She wouldn't be like Brenda or Ellie. She wouldn't laugh at him no matter what he gave her. But for his own sake he had to give her something that he could be proud of.”

T: What does this line mean? What does it feel when something or someone is paralysed?

S1: Unable to do something.

S2: Don't control the body.

T: Was he really paralysed?

Ss: No.

T: What figure of speech is it?

Ss: Metaphor.

**Teacher reads extract 2 aloud in the classroom:**

p.65 'If he had the money, he'd buy her a TV. One of those tiny Japanese ones that she could keep in her own room without bothering Judy and Bill. It didn't seem fair with all their money that they'd gotten rid of the TV. It wasn't as if Leslie would watch the way Brenda did-with her mouth open and her eyes bulging like a goldfish, hour after hour. But every once in a while, a person liked to watch. At least if she had one, it would be one less thing for the kids at school to sneer about. But, of course, there was no way that he could buy her a TV. It was pretty stupid of him even to think about it'.

T: Apart from the drawings, he wanted to but a TV. Was that a good idea?

Ss: No he didn't have enough money, how would he buy a TV?

T: If he could buy a TV, how would that be beneficial for her?

Ss: Other kids wouldn't make fun of her.

T: How does he feel about thinking of buying a TV?

Ss: Stupid.

T: The writer writes the word stupid again and again why?

S1: She wants to stress how he felt.

S2: It is repetition.

T: How did Brenda watch TV? I want you to show me.

**Students imitate Brenda watching TV opening their mouths and bulging their eyes.**

T: What is this phrase is literature?

Ss: Simile.

T: Comparing what?

Ss: Comparing Brenda to a goldfish.

**Teacher reads extract 3 aloud in the classroom:**

p.65 ‘It was a wonder someone like Leslie would even give him the time of day. It was because there was no one else. If she had found anyone else at that dumb school - he was so stupid he had almost gone straight past the sign without catching on. But something in a corner of his head clicked, and he jumped up, pushing past Leslie and May Belle.’

T: What does it mean when we say it was a wonder?

Ss: That it was like a miracle to be friends with Leslie because he was stupid.

T: We said that the word stupid is repeated. When someone feels stupid, what exactly does he feel?

S1: That he cannot do many things.

S2: This shows that he doesn't have confidence.

T: Good. This is why the word stupid is repeated, to show the effect of his low confidence.

T: Where is Jess?

Ss: In the bus.

T: Then why does he jump?

Ss: He had an idea.

**Teacher reads extract 4 aloud in the classroom:**

p. 65 ‘‘See you later he mumbled, and shove his way up the aisle through pair after pair of sprawling legs’.

‘Lemme ofh hear, Miz Prentice, will you?’

‘This aint your stop’.

‘Gotta do an errand for my mother’ he lied.’

T: What does the word aisle mean? I would like you to show me.

Students demonstrate in the classroom what an aisle is by using the spaces provided.

Then they explain in Greek what an aisle is.

T: What are the words Lemme and ain't? Is it the standard?

Ss: No, it is a dialect.

T: What does it mean?

Ss: Let me and isn't.

T: What is an 'errand'?

Ss: To do something for someone.

T: Good, but I will write a better definition for it: errand= collecting or delivering something to somebody taking a short trip.

T: Does Jess have to do an errand?

Ss: No, he lied.

**Teacher reads extract 4 aloud in the classroom: All the other information are based on p.66**

p. 66 'Puppies' it said. 'free'

T: What does this mean?

Ss: Puppies are a very nice gift. And they are free.

T: How do we know that?

Ss: There is a notice on the door.

T: Not a notice, how do we call it?

Ss: A sign.

T: In the text it says 'squirring in his arm'. What does that mean?

Ss: That P.T. is afraid.

T: How did Jess feel about P.T. peeing on him?

Ss: He didn't care.

T: How do we know?

Ss: Because it says 'he couldn't be mad'.

T: When is Christmas Eve? Tell me the date.

Ss: 24th December.

T: What does it mean when he says 'It sprays worse'n a water pistol'?

Ss: That he might pee at her.

T: What does Jess ask from Leslie?

Ss: To meet him at Terabithia.

T: Where is the rest of the family?

Ss: They went to the mall.

T: If Jess and Leslie didn't swing on the rope, they wouldn't be able to enter Terabithia. How did P.T. enter Terabithia?

Ss: He walked through the gally.

**Teacher asks some questions based on p. 67**

T: 'Once in a rare while there was something he could teach Leslie. 'Boy' he said happily.

T: Why did he feel so happy?

Ss: Because it was the first time to teach Leslie something.

T: What did Leslie show to Jess?

S1: The books and how to enter Terabithia.

S2: How to take revenge against the bullies of the school.

T: What is the dog going to be for Terabithia?

S1: Protector.

S2: Guard.

T: What do you know about the pine forest?

Ss: It is a place for great joy and great sorrow.

T: Imagine that you are Leslie and I am Jess. Tell me the exact words you would use to express your enthusiasm about the present. Jess said 'Oh, yeah yeah'. What would you say?

**Teacher asks them to note the pitch and intonation pretending their enthusiasm.**

S1: Thank you, thank you, thank you.

S2: Fantastic present....(then screaming from joy).

S3: This is the best present I have ever received in my life.

T: What was Jess' problem?

Ss: He couldn't express his feelings.

T: Have we seen this before?

Ss: Yes.

T: When?

Ss: At the creation of Terabithia where Leslie's vocabulary was better in comparison to Jess.

T: How did Jess feel about the present?

Ss: He feels a bit uncomfortable.

T: What did he do?

Ss: He began barking to the dog.

T: What did that show?

S1: That he was happy.

S2: That he was excited.

S3: That he felt uncomfortable.

T: 'The puppy raced around him in circles, yelping with delight.'

T: What does the word delight mean?

S1: Joy.

S2: Happiness

T: Can you tell me a synonym for the word 'noble'? Kings and queens belong to this category.

**Students do not know the answer.**

**Teacher plays the game hangman with them to find the synonym for the word noble mentioning that the synonym is very similar in Greek.**

A-----s.

**The word is Aristocrats. The students are enthusiastic and curious about the new word. They are also competitive.**



## Appendix G

## Observation for 1Orange part B

**Teacher checks h/w. Teacher reads extract one aloud in the classroom.**

p.69            ‘He had received a racing car set, which he tried to run to please his father. It wasn't one of those big sets that they advertised on TV, but it was electric, and he knew his dad had put more money into it than he should have. But the silly cars kept falling off at the curves until his father was cursing at them with impatience. Jess wanted it to be OK. He wanted so much for his dad to be proud of his present, the way he, Jess, had been proud of the puppy.’

T: Do you know what racing cars are?

Ss: Yes.

T: Jess tried to please his father. What does it show?

Ss: He wanted to advantage of it to spend time with his dad.

T: Take advantage is the correct phrase.

T: Did Jess like the present? And how do we know?

Ss: No, he called them ‘silly’.

T: What does the dad buying a toy he didn't like show about their relationship?

Ss: That his dad didn't know many things about his son.

T: In the text, Jess says that the father had put more money into it than he should.

What does this show?

S1: It showed that he loved him in his own way.

S2: He didn't know any other way to do it.

T: What is cursing?

Ss: To say some bad words.

T: Is it proper?

Ss: No, it is improper.

T: Is the word OK proper for a novel?

Ss: No.

T: Then why does the author use it in the novel?

S1: It is a simple word for a simple wish.

S2: He only wanted his dad's love.

S3: He wanted his dad to be proud for the present like he was proud for the puppy.

### **Game: Hotspot.**

T: I need a volunteer, a boy to begin with.

**A student goes in front of the classroom and sits on a chair facing the rest of his classmates.**

T: Imagine you are Jess. You have just received the present from your dad. Everyone will ask you a question based on chapter 6 by only using past tenses. You can also use wh- questions if you wish. Jess' responses will also be in past tenses.

Ss: Why did you decide to give Leslie a puppy?

S: Because I didn't have enough money to buy anything else and bought her a puppy which was free.

Ss: Was the puppy an aristocrat?

S: Yes it was. What is another word for aristocrat?

Ss: Noble.

Ss: Did you like Leslie's present?

S: Yes it was the best present I have received in my life.

Ss: What present did you expect from your dad?

S: I wasn't expecting anything in particular because I do not have a good relationship with him.

Ss: Why did you give the present in Terabithia?

S: Because I feel uncomfortable in front of my parents and the only place I felt comfortable was Terabithia.

Ss: Were you in love with Leslie?

S: No I wasn't. But I really love her.

T: Fantastic job, well done.

**Students show great interest in this task. They are eager to participate, energetic and enthusiastic. All students are responsive and they demonstrate interest in participating.**

**Now a girl volunteers to play Leslie's role.**

Ss: Did you love Jess?

S: Yes but only as a friend.

Ss: How did you feel about the puppy?

S: I really liked it because it was very cute.

Ss: Did you know that Jess was afraid of the dark?

S: No I didn't.

Ss: Why did you create Terabithia?

S: Because I wanted to have a place to play.

Ss: What made your relationship special?

S: We understood each other.

Ss: Did you expect that Jess would give you a puppy for Christmas.

S: No I didn't.

Ss: What did you expect from Jess?

S: I expected something simpler.

Ss: Why did you create the rule with the enchanted rope?

S: To make it more special so that no one would enter Terabithia.

Ss: Why did you give that name to the dog?

S: Because it would be the prince of Terabithia.

Ss: Why did you choose that name for Terabithia?

S: Because Terra means land.

T: Bravo, excellent job.

**Teacher continues by asking follow-up questions based on the extracts on p.69**

**Teacher reads extract two aloud in the classroom.**

p.69            "It's really great. Really. I just ain't got the hang of it yet." His face was red, and he kept shoving his hair back out of his eyes as he leaned over the plastic figure-eight track. "Cheap junk." His father kicked at the floor dangerously near the track. "Don't get nothing for your money these days."

T: How does the track look?

Ss: Like a figure-eight track.

T: Come and draw it on the board.

T: Why was Jess' face red?

S1: Because he was embarrassed.

S2: Because he had told a lie.

T: 'His father kicked at the floor dangerously near the track'. This shows what?

Ss: His father's anger.

Teacher writes the word frustration on the board.

T: Do you know what this word means?

Ss: hmmm, maybe angry?

T: Very close, it means anger. How did you know?

Ss: Because we are talking about anger.

T: Why was Jess' father angry?

Ss: Because the father had paid a lot of money and the toy didn't work.

T: What does 'lip stuck out' mean?

**Students show what it means to the teacher by mimicking.**

T: What does it mean?

Ss: It means disappointment.

**Teacher asks some more questions based on page 70**

T: 'Don't take no holiday'. What kind of English is this?

Ss: It is dialect.

T: Why writers use dialect?

Ss: To make it more realistic.

T: How would we say it using correct English?

Ss: Doesn't take a holiday.

T: 'Ellie smiled like a plastic angel'. What figure of speech is this?

Ss: A simile.

T: What does it do?

Ss: Compares Ellie's smile to a plastic doll's.

T: Why plastic?

S1: Because it was fake.

S2: It wasn't real.

T: Why does Jess go outside?

Ss: To milk Miss Bessy.

T: What happened next?

Ss: He met Leslie and prince Terrien.

T: What does this show?

Ss: That Leslie was waiting for him.

T: Tell me a word for silent laugh.

Ss: Giggle.

T: What does it mean to feel like Christmas again?

S1: There was a lot of trouble in the house.

S2: And between the family members.

T: Great. Now, Open your notebooks.

**Teacher writes the students' h/w in the board.**

T: Why didn't it feel like Christmas while Jess was at home with his family?

T: Write down the information in note format (as in bullet point form). Write at least 3 points.

## Appendix H

### 4.3.3.1 Coding for Grade: 'Form 1'

The total number of questions in the questionnaire for 'Form 1' is 19 and all of them were coded in SPSS. The only open-ended questions which were not coded were the follow-up questions (e.g. why-, how-, etc., questions) which were coded differently depending on the given response, and will be presented and analysed at a later stage in this chapter. In what follows, an explanation of the coding procedure of all of the closed questions will be provided, explaining the process of assigning values to the answers of the questions.

Question 1.

Please circle the right answer:

Gender:      Male              Female

Coding: In SPSS, coding comes into values where essentially, I have replaced the names with numbers which simply represent labels. Therefore, in the 'value' box, the option 'Male' was assigned number 1, whereas 'Female' was assigned number 2. Consequently, each time I came across the option 'Male' in SPSS I typed in number 1, and every time I had to note down the option 'Female' I typed in number 2.

### Question 2: Nationality

Coding: In this case, it is clearly impossible to be in position to give a code for each country on the geographical map since this would be very detailed but also meaningless, since the majority of the respondents were Cypriots with very few exceptions found in the students' questionnaire designed for 'Form 4' and not 'Form 1' (e.g. Greek and British-Cypriot). Understandably, then, as all of the respondents of this questionnaire were Cypriots, they were coded by assigning number 1 signifying that this value denotes Cypriot students.

### Question 3: First language

Coding: Coding this question was very straightforward since only one student spoke a different first language than the other 96 students. Thus, I added two 'values' (numbers) which represented two 'labels'. Number 1 represented Greek as a first language, a number representative for the majority of students, whereas number 2 represented Armenian, which was spoken as a first language by only one student.

### Question 4: Second/foreign language

Coding: The distinct feature of this question in terms of coding was that I only had one variable as a response, since all of the students spoke English as a second language. Consequently, the 'value' for the second language was assigned number 1, which represented the 'label' English language.



Questions 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 17 and 19 are grouped together because they were coded in an identical manner:

Question 5. Have you ever been taught literature in Greek? Please circle.

- a. Yes                                      b. No

6. Have you ever been taught literature in your English language learning classrooms? Please circle.

- a. Yes                                      b. No

7. Do you believe that English literature has helped you in learning the English language? Please circle.

- a. Yes                                      b. No

10. Do you like reading novels? Please circle.

- a. Yes                                      b. No

13. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new vocabulary? Please circle.

- a. Yes                                      b. No

17. Do you feel that novels have helped you learn about new cultures? Please circle.

- a. Yes                                      b. No

19. Do you believe that novels have helped you learn new features/characteristics of grammar? (For example: tenses, adjectives and adverbs, articles, prepositions). Please circle.

- a. Yes                                      b. No

Coding: These questions are grouped together for coding since the codes assigned to them are identical. *Yes/No* type of questions belong to the category of dichotomies since they yield either 'yes' or 'no' answers. That is, dichotomous variables contain data that have only two distinct categories (Bryman, 2012, p. 334). Coding *yes/no* questions in SPSS involves providing two values/numbers, where number 1 refers to the answer 'yes' and number 2 refers to the answer 'no'.

Question 8. How interesting/enjoyable is learning English through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all            [ ]

2= a little            [ ]

3= quite a lot            [ ]

4= a very great deal [ ]

Coding: This is a Likert scale question, which measures multiple items and shows how someone feels about a specific area. A Likert scale comprises a series of statements from negative (1 and 2) to positive (3 and 4). Question 8 offers four different statements related to the same object (the experience of learning English through literature) and it therefore yields four different codes. Thus, statements 1-4 were coded with numbers 1-4 respectively where ‘not at all’ is coded using number 1, ‘a little’ using number 2, ‘quite a lot’ using number 3 and ‘a very great deal’ using number 4.

Question 9. What genre/type of literature do you like the most? Please circle.

a. Novels

b. Poems

c. Short stories

d. Drama

Coding: This question provides four categories which cannot be ranked or ordered (this means that they cannot be measured in terms of frequency). For example, we cannot say that novels are more of something than poems or short stories. For the coding process I gave each genre a code/number from 1-4 respectively, so if the answer to the question was ‘Poems’ the code would be number 2, whereas if the answer was ‘Drama’ the code would be number 4.

Questions 11, 14, 16 are grouped together because they share the same coding features:

Question 11. What do you enjoy the most when reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- |                   |                                    |                         |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. The language   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 |
| b. The characters | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 |
| c. The plot       | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 |

Question 14. What do you usually do when you have an unknown word? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- |                      |                                    |                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. Guess the meaning | <input type="radio"/> 1            | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 |
| b. Use a dictionary  | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2            |
| c. Ignore the word   | <input type="radio"/> 1            | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 |
| d. Ask someone       | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2            |

Question 16. What are the most common problems that you face when you are reading a novel? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- |               |                                    |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. Vocabulary | <input type="radio"/> 1            | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 |
| b. Length     | <input type="radio"/> 1            | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 |
| c. Plot       | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2            |

Coding: The coding process for these questions was unquestionably the most demanding since I had to deal with multiple response questions which produced multiple answers or categories, since the participants had the option of producing (circling) more than one answer. In the coding process in SPSS, I created a variable for

each answer. Subsequently, I made a column for each of the categories/responses that appeared in the questions above, and after that I coded each response of the same question with numbers 1 and 2 where 1 was used for *yes* and 2 for *no*, despite the fact that these were not *yes* or *no* questions.

If we take for example question 14, the participant circled the responses ‘use a dictionary’ and ‘ask someone’ but did not circle ‘guess the meaning’ and ‘ignore the word’. Therefore, in the coding phase, number 1 is circled to indicate the respondent’s positive response to the category (where 1 denotes ‘yes’). Similarly, the two remaining categories, ‘use a dictionary’ and ‘guess the meaning’ were not circled by the respondent, a fact that is indicated by coding the responses using number 2 (where 2 denotes ‘no’). I have followed this process for the other two questions, questions 11 and 16 since the coding was identical to question 14.

#### 4.3.3.2 Coding for Grade: ‘Form 4’

As mentioned earlier in section 4.3.3.1, most of the coding procedures followed for the questionnaires answered by students in ‘Form 4’ were identical to the one followed for coding ‘Form 1’. The major difference between the two questionnaire types which led to some different kind of coding was an additional question, namely question 11, which required from students to state the genre of novels they like the most, as seen below:

Question 11. What genre/type of novels do you like the most? Please circle (You can circle more than one answer).

- a. Romance
- b. Horror
- c. Comedy
- d. Historical
- e. Adventure

f. War

g. Victorian

h. Fantasy

Coding: This question was not included in the questionnaire designed for ‘Form 1’ since students had not been introduced into various genres of novels by the time of this research. Question 11 is a multiple indicator which produces many variables (eight in total). As such, I had to follow a similar type of coding to the one applied to the questions 11, 14 and 16 described in the coding process of the questionnaire for Form 1. That is, I created a column for each of the eight categories in SPSS followed by coding the responses I received from the participants, assigning number 1 for ‘yes’ and number 2 for ‘no’. Hence, if the participants circled, for example, ‘adventure’, then in the column named ‘Adventure’ I wrote number 1 (which stands for yes) indicating in this way that the respondent has circled that specific variable in the questionnaire.

It is to be noted that I avoided giving further information about the coding process for the rest of the questions I included in the questionnaire prepared for ‘Form 4’ students since both the questions as well as the coding process are identical and indistinguishable to what I have done for the questionnaire designed for ‘Form 1’.

#### 4.3.3.3 Coding process for the Teachers’ Questionnaires

Before beginning to describe the coding process and how I coded my responses, I consider it necessary to provide a similar type of example, as I have done in part 5.1, where a completed and coded questionnaire is provided to more effectively describe how I coded the teachers’ responses in SPSS. Once again, I would like to emphasise

that responses to open questions will not be referred to at this point and will be later discussed in a different chapter strictly referring to qualitative data analysis.

A completed and coded questionnaire:

Please circle or write the appropriate answer.

Code

1. Gender: Male  Female  2

2. Age:  21-30  31-40  41-50  51-60  61-70 1

3. Nationality: **Cypriot** 1

4. First language (L1): **Greek** 1

5. Academic Qualifications: **BA TEFL, MA TEFL**

6. Years of English language teaching experience: 4

7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms?  
Please circle.

Yes  No 1

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why.

Yes  No 1

9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1      2      3      4      5

[ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]         5

11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all      [ ]      1

2= a little      [ ]      2

3= quite a lot      [ ]      3

4= a very great deal      4

13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

a. Beginner      1

b. Elementary      2

c. Intermediate      3

d. Advanced      4

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes      No      1

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes                      No                      1

17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (Note that you can circle more than one answer).

a. Reading                       1                      2

b. Listening                       1                      2

c. Writing                       1                      2

d. Speaking                       1                      2

18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all                      [ ]                      1

2= a little                      [ ]                      2

3= quite a lot                      [✓]                       3

4= a very great deal [ ]                      4



19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

- |                      |                                     |   |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1= not at all        | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1 |
| 2= a little          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 2 |
| 3= quite a lot       | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 3 |
| 4= a very great deal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 4 |

#### 4.3.3.4 Coding the teachers' questionnaire

Please circle or state the right answer

Question 1: Please circle the right answer:

1. Gender:    Male                  Female

Coding: By distinguishing these two gender categories, I aimed to concentrate on independent groups. These groups share the distinctive feature of being unique, meaning that no individual may befall in more than one group; that is why they are called 'mutually exclusive'. In order to identify the grouping variables in SPSS, I created a column named 'Gender' where I labelled the response 'male' as '1' and the response 'female' as '2'. These values are assigned to represent males and females respectively and practically, the two genders are replaced by the values '1' and '2'.

Question 2: Age

2. Age:            21-30    31-40    41-50    51-60    61-70

Coding: As opposed to the questionnaires I designed for the students, in the teachers' questionnaires I referred to the age of the participants by grouping interval variables which refer to the participants' age by categories (e.g. 21-30, 31-40, etc.). I was more interested in examining age groups instead of the exact age since this would allow me more flexibility for drawing conclusion(s) based on ranges. When grouping the variables in SPSS, I created a column called 'Age' where I labelled each age group with numbers 1-5 respectively (e.g. 21-30 was labelled as 1 whereas 61-70 was labelled as 5). Thus, each variable represented a different category from the assigned range.

#### Question 3: Nationality

Coding: Coding this question required providing codes for five different nationalities. In contrast to the students' questionnaires, there was much greater range of diversity since teachers from Cyprus, Greece, United Kingdom, South Africa and Canada answered the questionnaire. Consequently, I had to set up the numerical codes for each nationality assigning number '1' for Cypriot, '2' for British, '3' for South-African, '4' for Canadian and '5' for Greek. By doing so, I ensured that each individual was listed under the category which represented their nationality.

#### Question 4: First Language (L1)

Coding: Despite the fact that there was a considerably wide range of different nationalities among the participants in my questionnaire, yet the languages used as mother tongue were common amongst them. For example, Cypriot and Greek teachers

as well as the Canadian teacher share the same mother tongue (Greek), whereas the British and South-African teachers both use English as a mother tongue. In practical terms, this means that in SPSS, the first language is coded by assigning numbers '1' for the Greek language and '2' for the English language respectively.

#### 5. Question 5: Academic Qualifications

Providing information about the teachers' academic qualifications demanded me to change the variable type from numeric variables (i.e. numbers) to string variables (for wording). The string variables involve inputting data in character form; this means that they represent only the names of cases without providing any further information about the order of cases. That is why the type of data needed to be measured as nominal and not as ordinal, since I was not concerned with the magnitude of one case compared to another. Therefore, the coding was done based on the academic qualifications as they were provided by the teachers in the questionnaire (e.g. BA English Language or MA TEFL).

#### Question 6: Years of English language teaching experience

This question called for an answer in terms of real numbers which represented the years of the teachers' teaching experience. As such, the coding exclusively depends on the years each teacher has provided where the more the years of experience the higher the number used as a code is (i.e. a teacher with four years of experience would get the

number '4' as a code representing the years whereas a teacher with 15 years of teaching experience would be coded with number '15').

Questions 7, 8, 14 and 15 are grouped together since they were coded in an identical manner:

7. Have you ever used literature in your own English language teaching classrooms? Please circle.

Yes                      No

8. Do you believe that literature should only be studied in isolation without relating it to language learning? If yes, please state why.

Yes                      No

14. Have you ever used novels in your classroom to teach language? Please circle.

Yes                      No

15. Do you think that the learners could benefit from the use of novels in the language classroom? Please circle.

Yes                      No

Coding: *Yes/No* questions belong to the form of dichotomies and therefore deal with dichotomous variables. This means that the dichotomous variables have only two categories, as in the example of *yes/no* questions in this study. Coding these questions involved providing two variables, one for each answer. Consequently the numbers '1' and '2' were considered as the codes for answers 'yes' and 'no' respectively.

Questions 9, 10, 18 and 19 were once more grouped together because of following a similar coding process.

Question 9. Please complete the following by placing a tick in one space only, as follows:

1=strongly disagree

2=disagree

3=neither agree nor disagree

4=agree

5=strongly agree

Using literature as another technique for ELT would be beneficial for the learners

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 11. How interested do you think that learners are in English literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

Question 18. How interested are the learners in learning the language through literature? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

Question 19. If culture is an indispensable part of language learning, to what extent do you believe that novels can increase students' awareness of other cultures and especially that of the target language? Please put a tick in the box.

1= not at all

2= a little

3= quite a lot

4= a very great deal

Coding: The Likert scale questions that I have used for this questionnaire are “multiple-indicator measures of concepts” (Bryman, 2012, p. 336). Even though there has been a debate as to whether Likert scales should be treated as either ordinal or nominal types of data, I decided to consider them as ordinal since the distance between some of the categories of my questions were not equal across the range (this means that there are variables where the distance is not identical across the range). Likert scales follow a scheme of ‘strength of agreement’ – which means that the higher the score the more positive attitude we have when coding data in SPSS.

While providing codes for the questions 11, 18 and 19, the statement ‘strongly disagree’ was coded by assigning it number ‘1’. Similarly, ‘a little’ was given number ‘2’, ‘quite a lot’ was given number ‘3’ and ‘a very great deal’ was assigned number ‘4’. Question 9 was coded in an identical way, with the only exception being that here was a fifth

option which was also the middle-point of the categories or the 'neutral' answer to the question, namely 'neither agree nor disagree' which was coded with number '3'. Therefore, since the categories for question 9 were five, an equal number of codes was entered in SPSS in contrast to questions 11, 18 and 19 which only had four categories, and therefore, four codes.

Question 13. At what level should learners be introduced into the use of novels in ELT? Please circle.

- a. Beginner
- b. Elementary
- c. Intermediate
- d. Advanced

Coding: Coding this question shares similar characteristics to coding Likert scale questions. As mentioned before, Likert scales follow a sense of agreement where the attitude of the statements offered in categories are more positive as we read down the options. In a very similar way, this question shows level progression, beginning with the lowest and gradually ending with the highest level of English. Additionally, the coding is identical to the one applied in Likert scale questions, since each level is coded with a number from '1' to '4' (e.g. Beginner level is coded with '1', Elementary with '2', Intermediate with '3' and Advanced with '4').

Question 17. What skills can learners improve with the use of novels in the classroom? Please circle (Note that you can circle more than one answer).

a. Reading	1	2
b. Listening	1	2
c. Writing	1	2
d. Speaking	1	2

Coding: The coding process for this question is relatively different from the techniques I have applied for coding the questions previously presented. This is due to the flexibility I have offered to the teachers to circle more than one answer. To code this, I created four columns in SPSS, one for each response, and I have treated them as *yes/no* questions. This means that I gave the same codes I gave to *yes/no* questions where the value '1' stands for 'yes' and '2' for 'no'. In other words, someone who circled the option 'reading' is considered to have answered 'yes' and was given the code '1', and if they didn't circle 'reading' they were considered to have answered 'no' and were given the code '2'. The same procedure was followed for the rest of the options, coding 'yes' and 'no' for each response, depending on whether they have circled one of the available options coding them with the equivalent number ('1' for 'yes' and '2' for 'no').



## Appendix I

### Description of Hot spot

*Hot spot* refers to a game played in the classroom and was based on the novel the students read during the observations (*Bridge to Terabithia*). During this game, the teachers asked two students to sit on a chair at the front of the class and pretend that they were the two main protagonists of the book. The rest of the students should ask the two students who were sitting at the 'hot spot' questions relevant to the story of the book by only using the past simple tense and should get a reply in the corresponding tense. For example, "What did you expect from Jess? – I expected something simpler".

The questioning techniques used were wh- questions and students had to reply to those wh- questions. Additionally, they could also ask questions by employing other questioning techniques but they should only be using the past simple tense. The emphasis was placed on getting the tenses right. The same applied for the students' responses, that is their responses should be given in the past simple tense. All the students had to participate and all of them were asked to ask a question to the person on the 'hot spot'. Students had to incorporate new vocabulary in their questions or answers and they were also asked to recycle old acquired vocabulary (e.g. was the puppy an aristocrat? Yes, it was. What is another word for aristocrat? Noble). During the game, there was no teacher intervention apart from praise and encouragement. If the students made a mistake, other students corrected it without the teacher pointing the mistake out. In case the rest of the students failed to spot an error, then the teacher intervened to indicate the error and asked from the students to correct it. This was done to avoid fossilisation." In the classroom, the teacher assigned the roles and characters in the novel to correspond to the gender of the students (e.g. a boy for Jess and a girl

for Leslie). It should be noted that the questions were based on the storyline and the plot of the novel. So did the answers.

## Appendix J

### Unforeseen problems and difficulties

One of the most noticeable difficulties that I encountered while planning my observations was gaining access to the classrooms. I had to visit the school seven times before getting a final reply, and it took more than a month to book an appointment.

My initial intention was to observe two teaching sessions of seven different classrooms of different levels at the same institution. That would have allowed me to collect rich data from different classrooms and various levels, and it would have enabled me to compare the classroom dynamics and the treatment of literature for language teaching purposes in a more systematic and consistent way.

The initial response of the school's Head of Department of English was to allow me observe three 50-minute classes of the same level, because of time constraints for the higher levels, who were preparing for GCSE and other exams. After spending some time in negotiating the final allocation, we agreed that I could observe four classes of first-year students for two teaching sessions (100 minutes in total for each class) and two more classes of fourth-year students, again, for two teaching sessions.

However, an unforeseen problem I had to deal with during the observations was that even though I had agreed to observe two first-year high school classrooms while they were using novels in the language classroom, the day I arrived for the observations the Head of the Department told me that they needed to change their schedule. Therefore, in order to satisfy the students' needs for their English exams, they substituted those classes with drama classes.

Even though this was an unfortunate and unexpected event, yet I decided to continue with the observation regardless of the fact that the materials used were plays for examining the effect of drama stories in language learning.

These observations, however, were not included in the research since firstly, it was not the primary focus of this research, and secondly, because a more thorough investigation is necessary to make any conclusions related to reading Drama for language purposes; it would be inappropriate and insufficient to deduce any assumptions or postulations from an inadequate examination of that matter. However, observing these drama classes was seen as an excellent opportunity to initiate future research plans, comparing the use of novels for language teaching purposes to the use of drama for language teaching purposes.

## Appendix K

### Eliminating threats

- Participant mortality or attrition: This problem refers to the studies where the researcher collects data from the participants (like multiple test or questionnaires) and we have a serious problem because of subject dropout. This may potentially damage the validity of the sample because it often reduces the sample size which is based on a complete pattern, and results in leaving the questionnaire disproportionately answered.

In order to attend to this fear, I have tried to

- a) Ensure that the completion of the questionnaire should be done in a very short time (a maximum of 20 minutes) since the students would easily get bored and soon abandon it, thus not completing all of the questions (usually the last page of the questionnaire) resulting in subject dropout.

- b) The number of open questions should be limited as much as possible without, however, intervening in the process of collecting valuable data.

- The Hawthorne effect: Mellow, Reeder and Forster (1996, p. 334) maintain that this is the “single most serious threat to studies of spontaneous language use” in applied linguistic research. This threat was particularly salient for my classroom observations where there was an increased possibility of the participants responding differently when they knew they were under scrutiny. In order to eliminate this threat as much as possible, I took the following measures:

- a) Firstly, I limited my participation to the observations to the minimum (hence the non-participant observations) in order to avoid ‘contaminating’ the natural flow of the lesson.

b) I have tried to avoid giving guided descriptions or clues to the teachers for my observations, even though they were informed about the nature of my research and my interest in viewing how literature is used in the language classroom. By doing so, I wanted to exploit the ‘natural’ flow of the lesson and for this reason, the questionnaires were given to the teachers after the observations had taken place, and to avoid any ‘leading teaching’ because of the questions included in them.

- Participant desire to meet expectation: This threat is also commonly known as social desirability bias for the reason that the participants are offered some indications to the result(s) of a study, and they would eventually perform according to what they assume it is anticipated from them. The following measures have attempted to limit an indication or bias that favoured desirable attitudes and behaviours:

a) I have tried to avoid providing cues of the anticipated results of the study by not exhibiting a favourable behaviour or preference. To do so, I have designed my questionnaire and interviews in a way that did not reveal any required or ‘appropriate’ attitudes or results.

## Appendix L

## Students and Teachers' results

Students' questionnaire Form 1 Results:

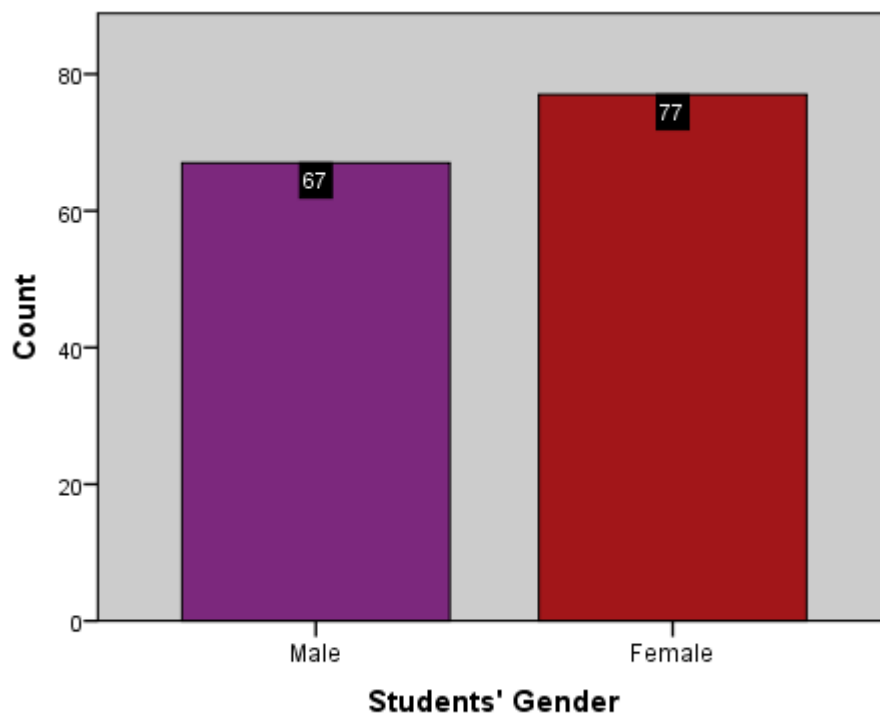
Item 1: Gender

a) Frequencies and percentages for Question 1 (SPSS output)

*Table 1. The students' gender*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	67	46,5	46,5	46,5
	Female	77	53,5	53,5	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

b) Chart for Item 1



*Figure 1.* This figure indicates the students' gender

In the above table and chart, an examination of the students' gender is made to distinguish the total number of male and female students who participated in my research by answering the questionnaire. The data show that from a total number of 144 students, the majority were female students, with the total number reaching 77 (53.5%), followed very closely by male students with a total number of 67 (46.5%).

#### Item 2: Nationality

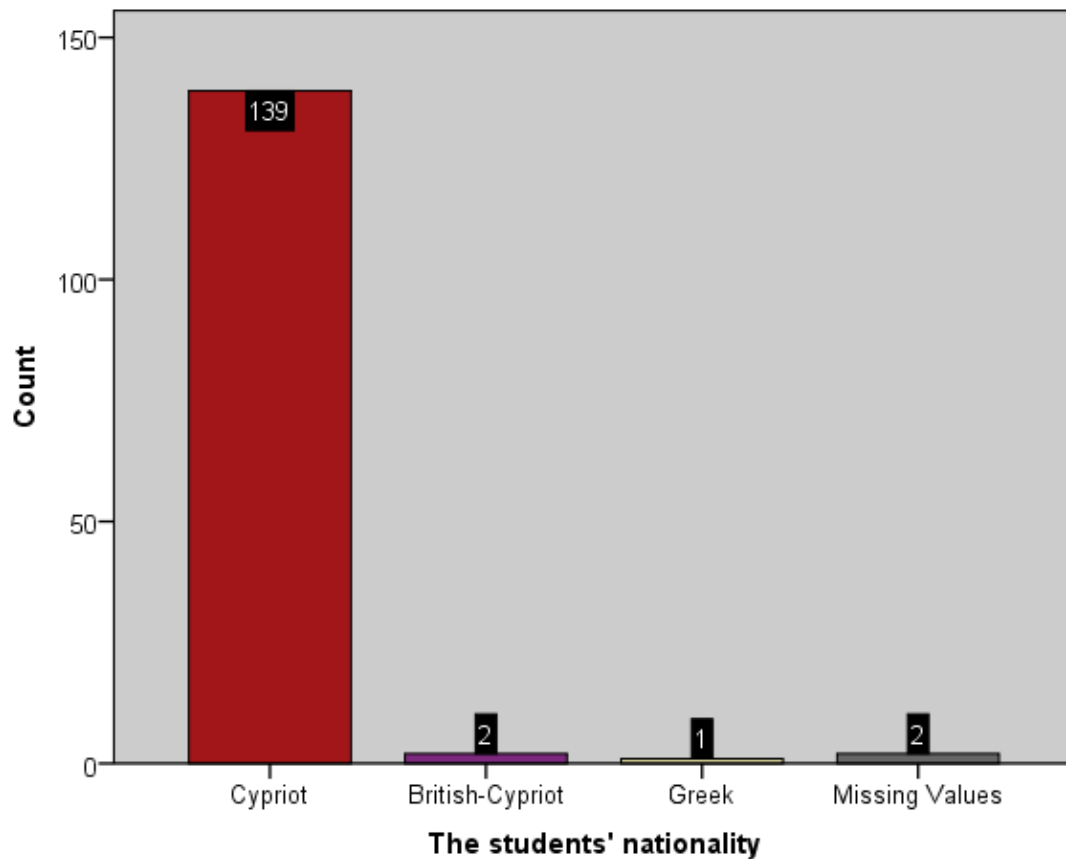
##### a) Frequencies and percentages for Item 2

*Table 2. The students' nationality*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Cypriot	139	96,5	97,9	97,9
	British- Cypriot	2	1,4	1,4	99,3
	Greek	1	,7	,7	100,0
	Total	142	98,6	100,0	
Missing	99	2	1,4		
Total		144	100,0		

##### b) Chart for the students' nationality





*Figure 2.* This figure shows the students' nationality.

The above chart and table investigate the nationalities of the students who responded to the questionnaire. The data show that the majority of the students, a total number of 139 were Cypriots (96.5%), two of them were British Cypriots (1.4%) and one of the students was Greek (0.7%). Additionally, two missing values were noted (1.4%) and therefore could not be included in any of the identified nationality categories.

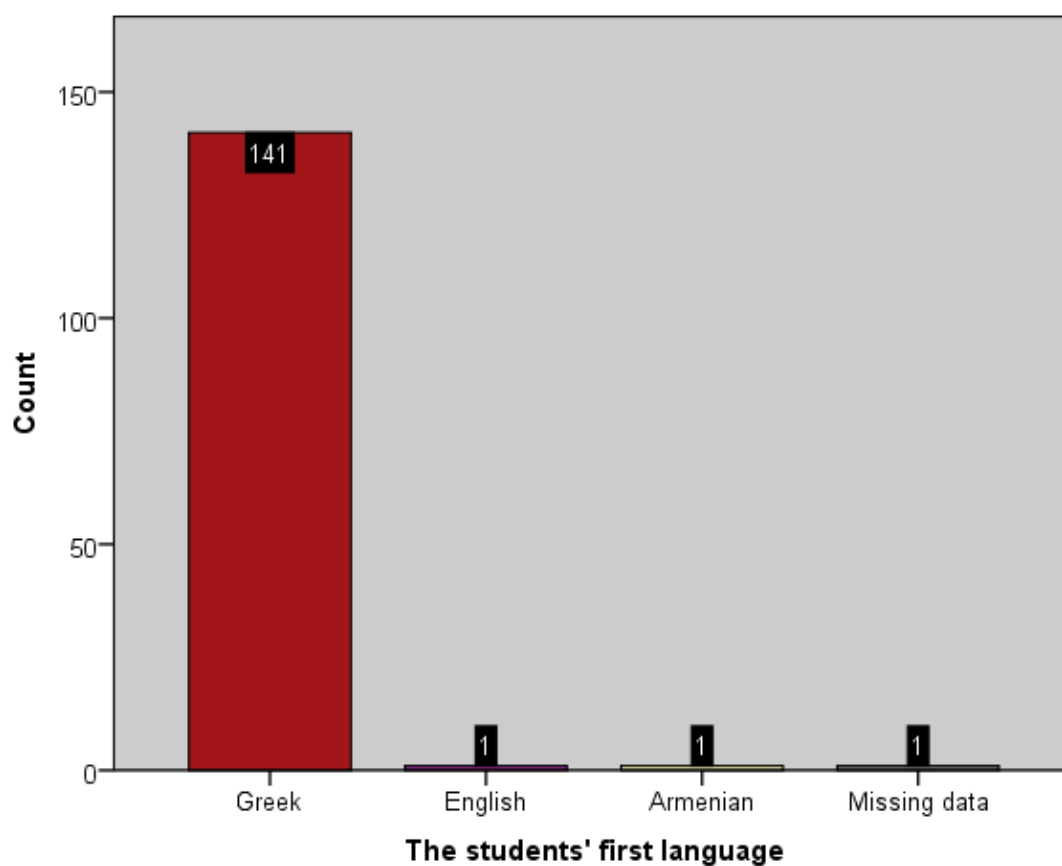
### Question 3: First Language

a) Frequencies and percentages for Item 3

*Table 3. The students' first language*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Greek	141	97,9	98,6	98,6
	English	1	,7	,7	99,3
	Armenian	1	,7	,7	100,0
	Total	143	99,3	100,0	
Missing	99,00	1	,7		
Total		144	100,0		

b) Chart for Question 3 (SPSS edited output).



*Figure 3. This figure shows the students' first language.*

Findings: The students' L1 is investigated in this table and chart, and the data demonstrate that Greek is the prevailing mother tongue for the majority of the students with 141 responses (97.9%). Additionally, one student (0.7%) has English as his or her mother tongue and one student (0.7%) has Armenian for his or her L1. Lastly, there is one missing response (0.7%) that concludes the total number of 144 students and their L1.

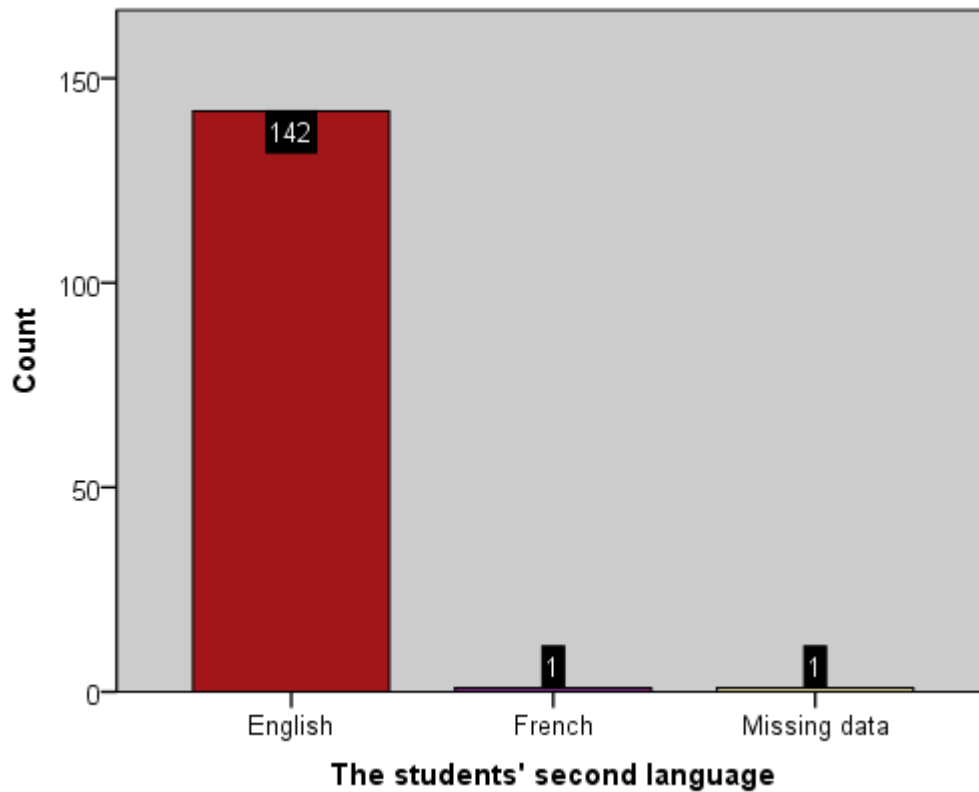
Question 4: Second/foreign language(s)

a) Frequencies and percentages for Item 4

*Table 4. The students' second language*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	English	142	98,6	99,3	99,3
	French	1	,7	,7	100,0
	Total	143	99,3	100,0	
Missing	99,00	1	,7		
Total		144	100,0		

b) Chart for Question 4



*Figure 4.* This figure shows the students' second language(s).

The data presented in the above table and chart are representative of the students' second language. The data show that the English language is undoubtedly the L2 for the majority of the students, with 142 responses (98.6%); one student has French as the L2 (0.7%). There is also one missing response (0.7%) which rounds off the total number of students (144).

Question 5: Have you ever been taught literature in Greek?

- a. Yes                                      b. No

a) Frequencies and percentages for Item 5

*Table 5. Examining whether students have been taught literature in Greek*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	141	97,9	97,9	97,9
	No	3	2,1	2,1	100,0
	Total	144	100,0	100,0	

b) Chart for Question 5 (SPSS edited output)



*Figure 5.* Figure illustrates the students' previous exposure to literature in Greek.

The table and chart designed for this questionnaire question examine whether students had previously been taught literature in the Greek language. Once more, the majority of the students, with 141 responses (97.9%), said that they had previously been taught literature in Greek; only three students (2.1%) had never been taught literature in the Greek language.

## Teachers' Questionnaire Results:

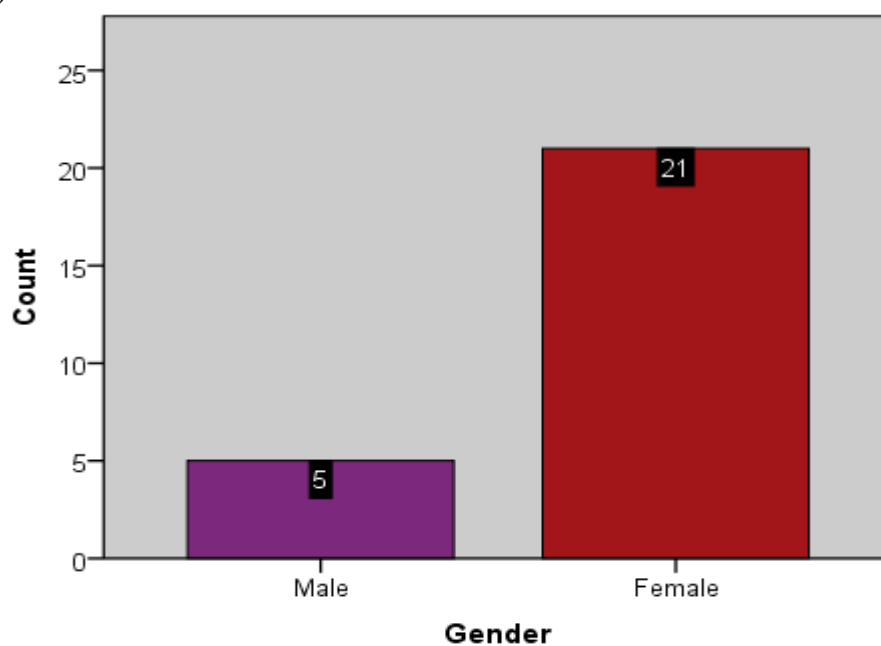
### Item 1: Gender

#### a) Frequencies and percentages for Item 1

*Table a) The teachers' gender*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	5	19,2	19,2	19,2
	Female	21	80,8	80,8	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	100,0	

#### b) Chart for Item 1



*Figure 1.* This figure shows the teachers' gender.

The data found in the table and chart for Question 1 show that the majority of the teachers who participated by answering my questionnaire are female, with a total of 21 responses (80.8%) as opposed to five male teachers 19.2%).

Item 2: Age

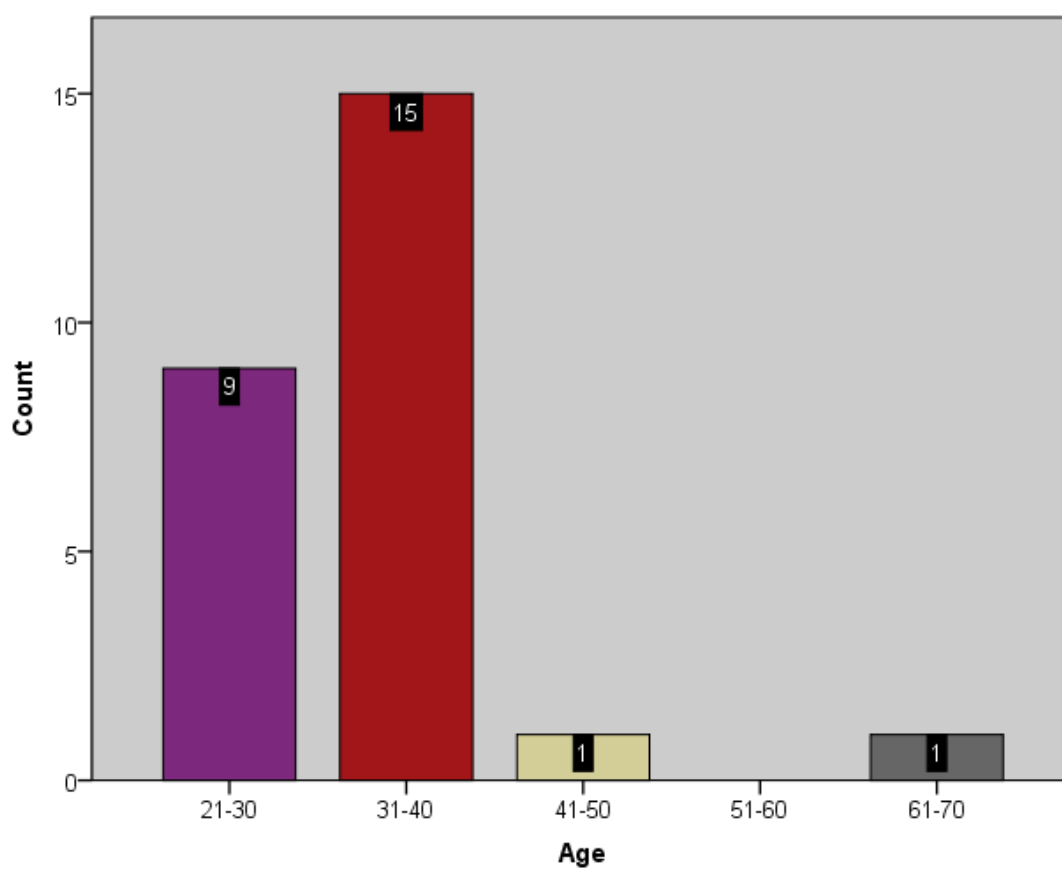
21-30    31-40        41-50        51-60        61-70

a) Frequencies and percentages for Item 2

*Table 2. The teachers' age range*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 21-30	9	34,6	34,6	34,6
31-40	15	57,7	57,7	92,3
41-50	1	3,8	3,8	96,2
61-70	1	3,8	3,8	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

b) Chart for Item 2:



*Figure 2.* This figure illustrates the age range of the teachers.

The table and chart for question 2 investigate the teachers' age groups; the majority of the respondents belong to the age group 31-40 with 15 responses (57.7%) followed by the age group 21-30 which received nine responses (34.6%). The age groups 41-50 and 61-70 have received one response each (which equals to 3.8% for the age group 41-50 and 3.8% for the age group 61-70) and the age group 51-60 has not gathered any responses, indicating that none of the respondents belonged in that age group.

### Item 3: Nationality

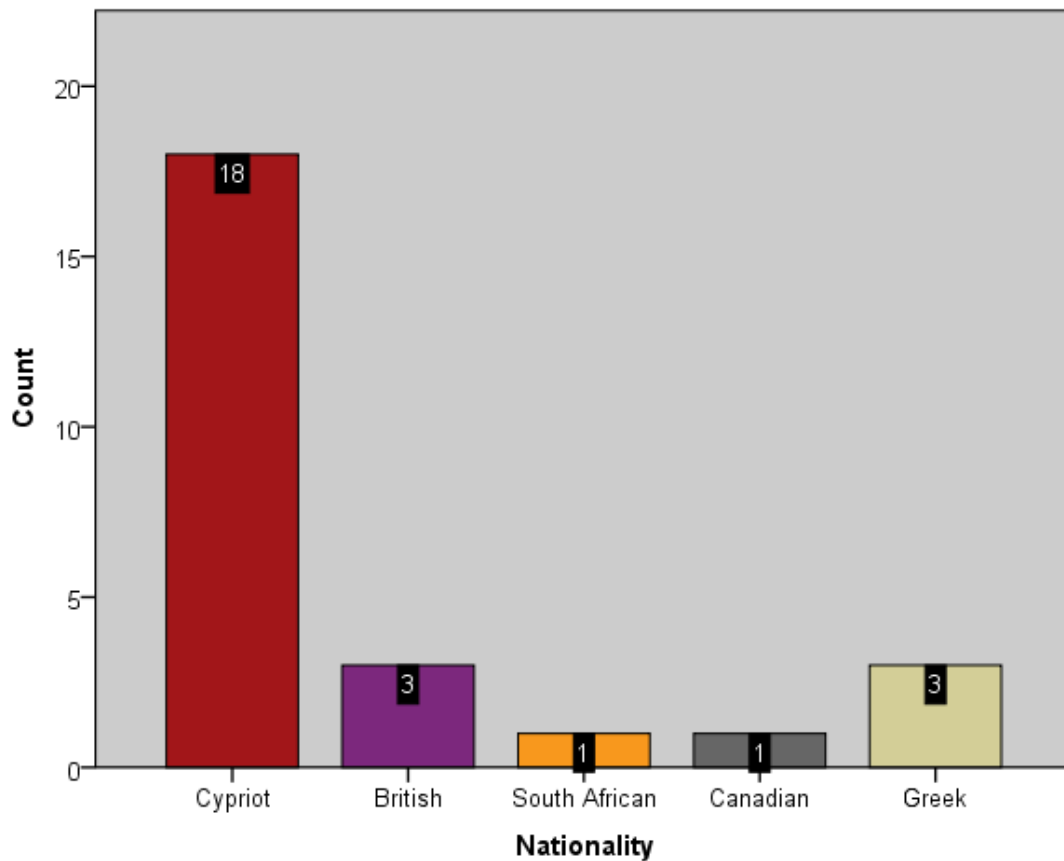
#### a) Frequencies and percentages for Item 3

*Table 3. The teachers' nationality*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Cypriot	18	69,2	69,2	69,2
British	3	11,5	11,5	80,8
South African	1	3,8	3,8	84,6
Canadian	1	3,8	3,8	88,5
Greek	3	11,5	11,5	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

#### b) Chart for Item 3:





*Figure 3.* This figure examines the teachers' nationality.

Question 3 investigates the teachers' nationality and the data gathered from the table and chart show that the respondents shared five different nationalities. The majority and a total number of 18 teachers (69.2%) are Cypriot, followed by three British (11.5%) and three Greek teachers (11.5%). Finally, one of the respondents was South African (3.8%) and one was Canadian (3.8%).

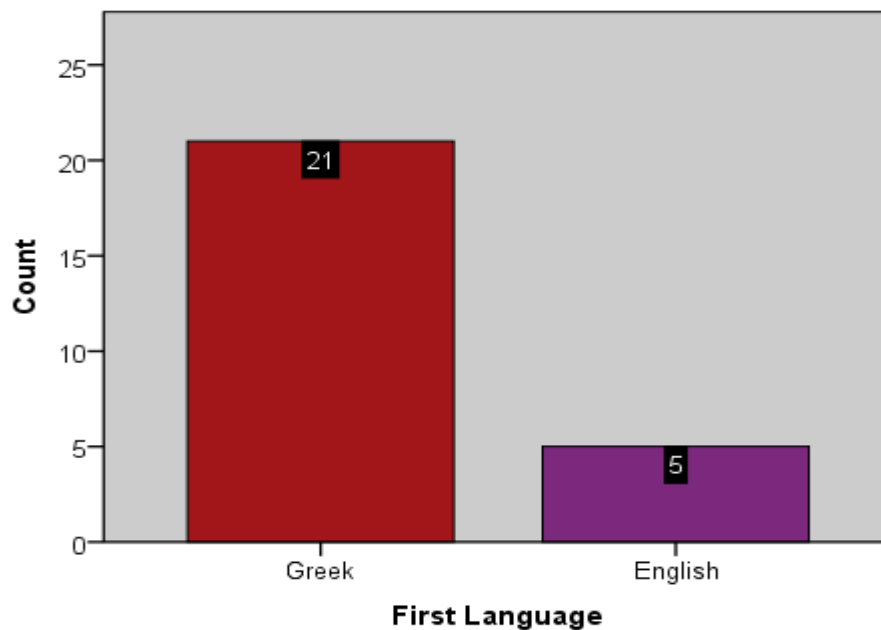
Item 4: First language

a) Frequencies and percentages for Question 4 (SPSS output).

*Table 4: The teachers' first language*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Greek	21	80,8	80,8	80,8
	English	5	19,2	19,2	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	100,0	

b) Chart for Question 4 (SPSS edited output):



*Figure 4.* This figure examines the teachers' L1.

The table and chart designed for question 4 investigate the teachers' first language. The data show that teachers predominantly speak Greek and English as an L1. Analytically, the majority of the teachers speak Greek as a first language, receiving 21 responses (80.8%) while five teachers (19.2%) speak English as an L1.

## Appendix M

Ethical procedures: Private school consent form



# The GC School of Careers

Secondary School

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that the GC School of Careers granted consent to Mr Neofytos Mitsingas to observe Form 1 and Form 4 English lessons in the academic year 2013-2014. Permission was also given for the distribution of questionnaires to students and teaching staff, for the research purposes of his PhD studies.

  
Despa Petridou Pambouli  
Principal

