Literature Circles in ELF Literature Classroom Settings

Boulenouar Mohammed Yamin
Faculté des lettres, des langues et des arts
### Université Djilali Liabès de Sidi-Bel-Abbès Algerie

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the major trends related to Literature Circles (LC) as it is commonly known among a number of scholars in Western countries. Without a doubt, any discussion of the teaching of Literature requires particular concern to this innovative model about suitable theories of learning that current research has introduced. What circumstances give support to learning and stimulate its persistence. Today's teachers are obliged to opt for better teaching beliefs to improve the students' intellectual growth. At present, foreign literature teachers, are as a rule in search of special learning attitudes and styles that cater for student needs, desires and emotions. These could be realized only through students-centered components such as supportive and shared learning.
Key words: Literature Circles; Collaborative and Cooperative Learning; Literary competence

Short Picture of Literature Circles

Although EFL course books designers managed to include the most new trade mark and appealing texts intended for learners' age, there is still a usual feedback that the major literary genres poetry, fiction and drama still do not create a learning/teaching environment a suitable atmosphere for enhancing literary **communicative competence** [1] in English as a foreign language merely because literary texts are for the most time intended for advanced learners.As a result, lots of students commonly take for granted as true that the learning of English literature is monotonous and difficult to understand. This thought-provoking situation may well be the end result of the inaccurate literature teaching style. A widespread number of English students accept as true that studying literature is definitely not the appropriate methodology to expand language skills in addition to stimulate awareness in literature study.

To the extent that the definition of the expression 'Literature Circles'[2] is used according to the aims of this paper, one can affirm that I have attempted to put forward some ideas concerning the objectives that have to do with teaching literature to non-native speakers in accordance with Algerian contexts. LC in the EFL literature classroom basically means (see fig 1 below) a small amount of students (i.e. 6/8 students within each group).
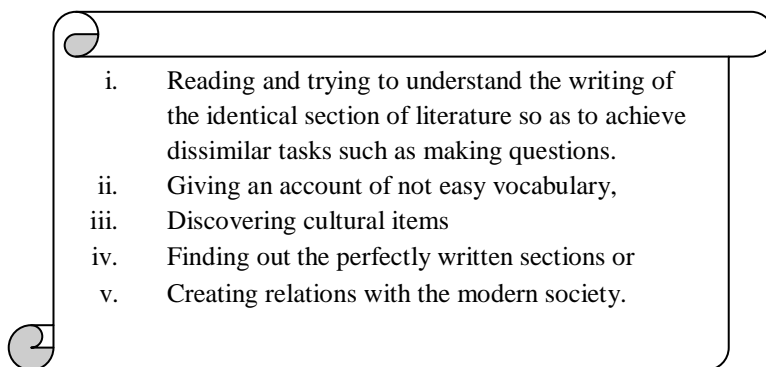
EFL Literature

---
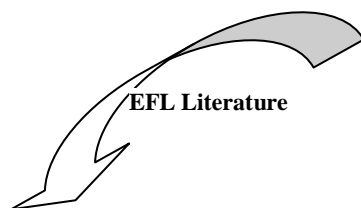
    i.   Reading and trying to understand the writing of the identical section of literature so as to achieve dissimilar tasks such as making questions.
    ii.   Giving an account of not easy vocabulary,
    iii. Discovering cultural items
    iv. Finding out the perfectly written sections or
    v.   Creating relations with the modern society.

Fig 1: Objectives of literature circles

Later, the elements of the groups work together in the classroom and take part in a debate under the supervision of their literature teacher on the section of literature they dealt with.

Background of the study

As a variety of studies were made in L1 classes in Western countries, I have planned to implement this new brand approach in our   Algerian classes. The aim behind this research project was in essence to detect more about not only how teachers can improve the student interaction but also make understandable literature circles within EFL literature Algerian classes so as to enhance student foreign literature competence.

The main question arising from the problem at this step was no more than looking for a successful way to take advantage of literature in the EFL literature classroom. Another more or less important aim was to pay close attention to the possible ways that will obviously expand the student interaction within classroom settings when using literature circles.

The belief put forward is that, as a fair factor of the department of English course, literature circles can provide a refreshing method to encourage student activity in extensive reading using both cooperative learning[3] and collaborative work[4] and offer the possibility to promote reading for enjoyment.

The concept of 'Literature Circles in EFL', which was originally derived from the adult 'book clubs'[5] refers to a set of people who have regular meetings in order to frequently debate the particular book they have read and make public their views, likes or dislikes about it.

Fig 2: Structure of a literature circle'

Just as DaLie explains that, a 'literature circle' is a learner counterpart of a grown-up book association in the L1 English classroom. By adopting this style of teaching, one can assert that the crucial objective is to support both student-preference as well as learners' fondness of reading. In the same line of thought DaLie states that the genuine drive of Literature Circles is mainly to permit students to put into practice and expand the skills as well as strategies of proficient readers in English as their non-native language.

LCs are, as mentioned above, a small number of groups of students who join together to have an exhaustive debate about an already chosen literary work. The overall objective of this debate is directed towards students' response to what they have read during their off-site preparation. Among the major students' talks, one may be acquainted with events and characters, the author's craft found in the selected book, or even more interestingly students' personal experiences associated with the story.[6]

Other researchers give similar definitions as to the importance of using literature circles within classroom settings. For example, Daniels[7] favours the idea by saying that 'Literature Circles', as a key element of the English L1 classes in US, refers to a *form of independent reading, structured as collaborative small groups, and guided by reader-response principles in light of current comprehension research.*
By the same token, Furr, states that

(...) literature circles in EFL are magic in that they have the power to transform 'Foreign Language Learners' from passive, rather shy, reticent students into students who eagerly point at their texts in order to support their arguments while sharing their opinions in English![8]

The key procedure of collaborative small groups rests on the belief that whichever autonomous reading is generated by a number of learners. Within each literature circle group, whether it is a character description or an application of critical approach[9].

Description of the Basic Features of Literature Circles

In what follows a comparative table about what literature circles are and what literature circles are not will be given so as to clarify to the simple reader the genuine meaning of literature circles.

A. Literature Circles are...	B. Literature Circles are not...
❖ *Reader-response centered*	❖ *Teacher and text-centered*
a) Part of a balanced literacy program	b) The entire reading curriculum
c) Groups formed by book choice	d) Teacher-assigned groups formed solely by ability
e) Structured for student independence, responsibility, and ownership	f) Unstructured, uncontrolled "talk time" without accountability
g) Guided primarily by student insights and questions	h) Guided primarily by teacher- or curriculum-based questions
i) Intended as a context in which to apply reading and writing skills	j) Intended as a place to do skills work
k) Flexible and fluid; never look the same twice	l) Tied to a prescriptive "recipe"

Table 1: A Comparative table of literature Circles
(After Schlick Noe, K.L. & Johnson, N.J. 1999).

Having already defined the term literature circles in the above section, it is crucial to offer a sufficient and well-ordered description so as to make readers acquainted with the concept of collaboration amongst learners during literature teaching within EFL classroom settings. In what follows major characteristics of the concept are provided:

A. Students select their personal reading materials.[10]
B. Small short-term groups are made, based on book selection. Dissimilar groups read distinct books.
C. Groups encounter on a systematic anticipated timetable. (Road Map)
D. Students make use of written or drawn notes to be in charge of both their reading and discussion.
E. Conversation topics are derived from the students.
F. Group discussions are intended to be free so as natural conversations will take place.
G. The teacher generally behaves as a facilitator, observer, listener and frequently a companion reader, together with the students.
H. Students are assigned title roles to accomplish to each group meeting respectively.
I. The teacher has the duty to demonstrate how students ought to simplify every title role.
J. Evaluation is made by both teacher observation and student self-evaluation.
K. An atmosphere of liveliness and pleasure dominates the classroom setting.
L. Different groups are created around different reading selections.

(Adapted from Daniels, 1994)

It is required from teachers to use prompts during the debates so as to foster genuine answers from students. Teachers may for example refer to characters by saying *"How does the setting affect the characters?"* **or may focus on characters' alternative solutions by uttering** *"What are alternative solutions to the character's conflicts in the text?"* **he may even infer by stating explicitly** *"What connections can you make with regard to the character's situation(s)?"*

Objectives

Established on the abovementioned difficulties related to the difficulty of implementing literature in EFL literature classroom settings, the initial intention with this research was to discover how literature circles motivate the social interaction among Algerian literature learners and stimulate the collaborative learning in the EFL literature classroom settings.

Among other scholars Wendy C. Kasten[11] thinks that literature circles stimulate peer discussions between partners, confrontation of thoughts, and the squeezing out of comprehension, which is an important and common characteristic within literature circles. It is widely known in the field of teaching that classroom interaction as well as social learning will catch the attention of both teachers and researchers for the reason that their field of interest relies mainly on classroom discourse. Consequently, this field research is inclined to obtain supplementary data about the amount and significance of literary discourse in foreign literature learning context in addition to the need as well as the importance of literary texts for an ample achievement of better levels of language skills.

Relying on Nunan's belief[12] which states that this kind of research can make available assistance for teacher education, instructional materials, and curriculum development, it is of paramount importance to take into account both students' performances and literary materials in an attempt to stimulate interaction in foreign literature classes by means of collaborative work inside literature circles in foreign literature.

Features of Literature Circles

EFL literature circles are generally described as small student reading groups wherein a realistic structure is offered so as to let students have genuine, significant talks concerning literature in English. In what follows the major features of effective EFL Literature Circles will as a rule have the subsequent ten characteristics (refer to table below):
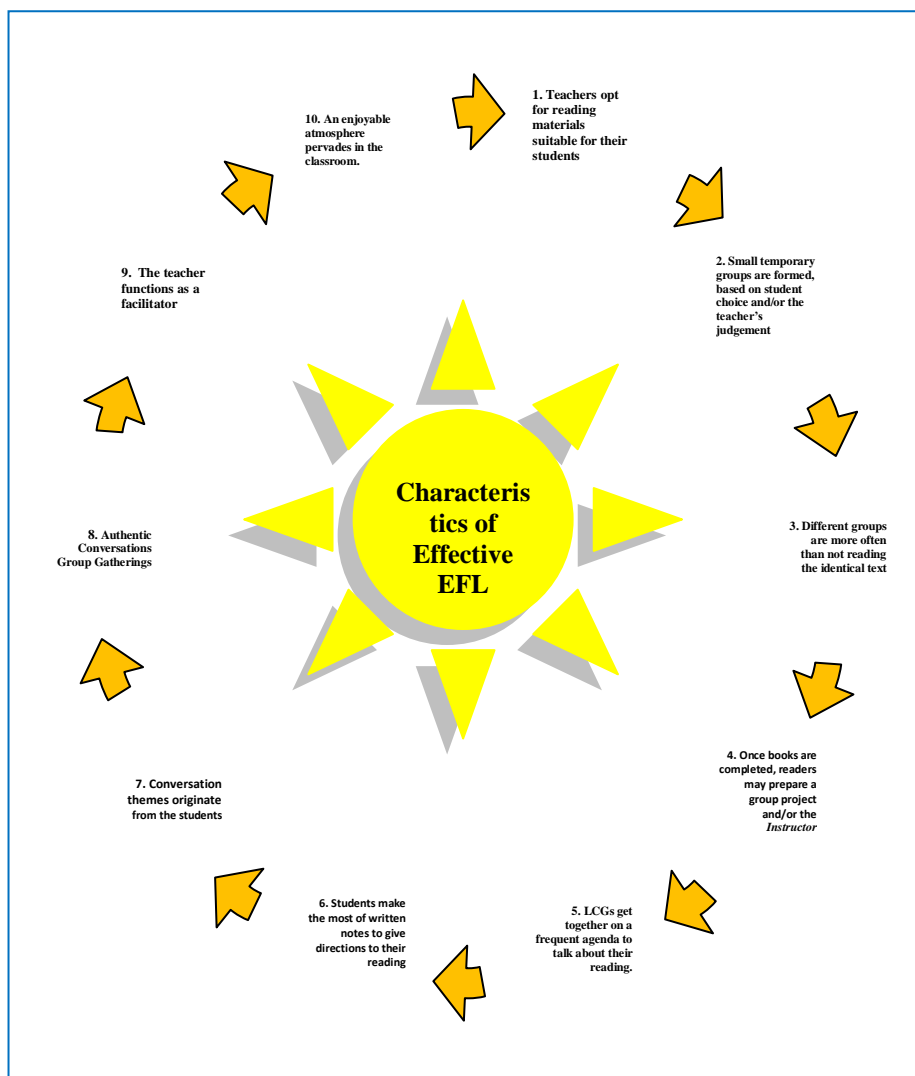
Figure 3: Characteristics of effective EFL Literature Circles (Adapted from Furr, M. 2004).

❖ **Teachers opt for reading materials suitable for their students**

It is of paramount importance for teachers to make a decision about categorized reading resources which encourage reading ease to be employed in literature circles. In doing so, an authentic atmosphere will be created; thus, permitting students to contribute positively in meaningful discussions, i/e. "real life" about the texts/stories that they've dealt with before. Hence, it will be possible for students to read Literature Circle texts without the help of a dictionary. For a detailed description of whether a given text is appropriate for use in an EFL Literature Circle, it is advisable to refer to what Rob Waring and Sachiko Takahashi[13] advocate in ***The Why and How of Using Graded Readers***.

❖ **Small temporary groups are formed, based on student choice and/or the teacher's judgment.**

Within initial literature circle groups, teachers should necessary supervise group dynamics in order to have no less than one extrovert student in every little group. Having two sociable students among groups of 6/8 students will help generate a good small learning environment. There will

usually guarantee a promising literature circle, especially in the beginning of the literature module time when this new initiative is endeavoured within classroom settings.

> ❖ **Different groups are more often than not reading the identical text.**

One of the advantages of launching EFL literature circles within non-native classroom settings refers to the freedom offered to students to decide upon the literary work to be discussed inside their respective groups first then inside a larger group which is the literature class. However, experience has revealed certain drawbacks concerning the students' behaviour. Being very interested in, a number of the historical or else cultural backgrounds of the stories they read, our students can; for instance, repeatedly be deficient in both grasping the gist of the story and willing to know more about other components. Having all the groups reading the same book dealt with during the lecture, may possibly permit students to be enthusiastic by the story and then opening debate with all the groups once the latter have made an end to their discussions.

> ❖ **Once books are completed, readers may prepare a group project.**

Following the group endeavours or extra teaching, different groups are established, arranged in accordance with student preference or the teacher's judgment. As soon as the groups end their talks, the lecturer may perhaps next request the groups to create a written work that reproducing the group's composition. For instance, every literature circle group can create a picture describing the most important themes in the narrative in addition to explaining the picture to all the groups. Teachers could instruct learners how to make a straightforward plot map and every LCG will be able after that to represent them on the board and give details about the plot map to the whole group of students.

> ❖ **LCGs get together on a frequent agenda to talk about their reading.**

To succeed in launching LCGs, it is required to set up an inflexible tradition within classroom settings. LCGs. EFL Literature circles ought to gather regularly according to previous fixed timetable so as to expect positive results. Trying LCGs literature discussion circles like a "unique" classroom activity is to be avoided. On the grounds that a large amount of student training phase is a vital ingredient of this fresh teaching approach, it is a necessary to devote one full lecture period as a training session. In other words, teachers can possibly hand in to every student a reproduction of the five Role Sheets and give confidence to students to jot down on the Role Sheets in order that they will keep in mind precisely what to perform afterwards once playing their respective turn within their LCGs. As a final point, by means of the relaxed talks, literature circles encourage an innate mixing of reading, speaking, listening and writing.

> ❖ **Students make the most of written notes to give directions to their reading and their discussion.**

This stage is considered as the "attraction" of literature circles; the Role Sheets (described in the next section below) stimulate every student of a little reading group to understand writing of a literary work from a dissimilar viewpoint in addition to get ready for a small group debate founded on their reading. As a result, students find out that there are not only numerous motives meant for reading but also changing views taking place within whichever specified written narrative.

The function of the Role Sheets is to split reading into minor sub-skills with every student in his respective group carefully focusing on one possibility of dealing with the text. Once every student has studied the literary work from an agreed viewpoint as an assignment, after that the members of

the group gather, and in the course of conversation, these divisions turn out to be in one piece. For example, one learner will proceed like the Summarizer, accordingly his work will be to interpret the narrative from a wide-ranging standpoint with the aim of creating a short plot outline whereas a different group associate will proceed like the Passage Person and perform a close reading of the passage with the intention of indicating sections/episodes which are attractive or bewildering in the narrative. In the end, as soon as the LCG gets together inside the classroom to debate, the entire skills of a grown-up student are reconstructed; as a consequence the divisions develop into a solid entirety.

As soon as an LCG is successful, one is able to straightforwardly make out lots of EFL students functioning in something similar to what Vygotsky[14] entitles the "zone of proximal development;" to be exact, EFL students are capable of talking about subjects in English as well as being able to give answers to difficulties in partnership with their members.

❖ **Conversation Themes Originate from the Students.**

For the reason that teachers are always attempting to encourage the stress-free debate of narratives within classroom settings, it is very essential to let students to create the themes intended for conversation. This is habitually extremely not easy for teachers because the latter often resist change. Teachers stick to "teaching" students and do not give opportunities to the learners to discover the themes or other features related to narratives. Here again, one can refer to the Role Sheets as they offered good opportunities to students to talk about the narratives according to a given framework inside their respective LCGs.

❖ **Authentic Conversations Group Gatherings**

Group gathering seek to be usually open, ordinary talks concerning books, therefore individual relations, deviations as well as open-ended questions are required. In other words, members of the LCGs are urged to contribute by expressing overtly the viewpoints concerning the literary narratives studied for literature circles.

❖ **The teacher Functions as a Facilitator**

Among the other functions adopted by the teacher function, is without doubt the crucial role of the facilitator, and not the one of a group member or even an instructor inside LCGs. It is required to give opportunities to members inside their respective groups to accept and know how to cope with internal responsibility intended for carrying out the literature circle discussions. Providing extra historical or artistic information to the members of LCGs in the form of a "mini lecture" in easy English can positively enhance students' linguistic knowledge.

❖ **An Enjoyable Atmosphere Pervades in the Classroom.**

A spirit of liveliness and entertaining mood pervades inside classroom settings. Clearly, the LCGs are enjoyable areas of significant learning, in which students state that they love what they are doing. Teachers have just to keep in mind that the enigma is to encourage relaxed discussions regarding wonderful literary narratives.

❖ **Basic Roles for EFL "LCGs"**

There are four basic roles[15] for EFL literature circle groups and one additional role meant for higher-level groups, i.e. the culture collector:
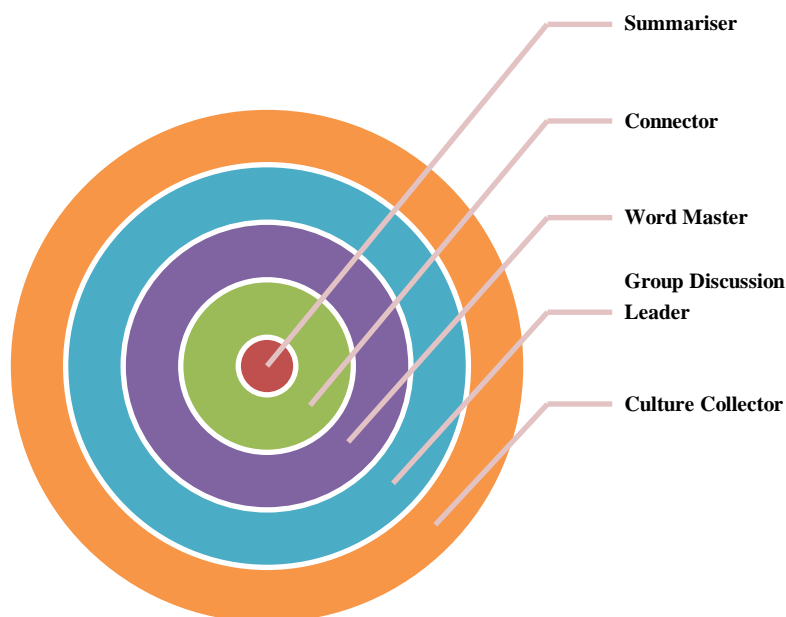
**Fig 4: Major functions
designed for EFL literature circle groups**

i.   The task of the GDL is both to function as a student whose main duty is to facilitate the work and to maintain the progress of the debate within his group. The GDL is supposed to read the literary work at hand many times so as to be able to tell the other members of the group about the probable themes and the major plot of the story selected. Usually the GDL stimulates the discussion by asking open-ended questions related to the story and later invites the rest of the group members to make known their results. It is advisable for teachers to select the best students to become GDL in order to create equilibrium among given LCGs within class sessions.

ii.   It is usually advocated from the SMR to acquaint the members with the summary near the beginning of the talks with the intention that everybody can keep in mind the plot of the story. His summary, which is about a one or two minute long, must be brief and clear. Using personal words, the Summarizer is required to restate the narrative and select the most important events. Being the SMR[16] may compel students to study the narrative many times so as to select the key stages to communicate within their outline.

iii.   Usually students find problems with this role at the introduction of the CNT's role. In effect they believe that accomplishing this role and paying attention to classmates as Connector is not an easy task. In effect the Connector's role is to attempt to discover links between the narrative text and the authentic world wherein he exists. For instance, the Connector can create relations involving the beliefs, judgments or activities of characters within the narrative with family members, acquaintances or classmates.

iv.   Despite the fact that the GDL and the SMR have to study the narrative text and get ready to talk about it from a macro perspective, the WM concentrates on distinct words, expressions, idioms or very short phrases; as a consequence, the WM is does a very deep intensive reading of the narrative text. It is up to the WM to decide upon the small number of words

(usually between 5 to 7 words) which he judges are worth to be dealt with in the respective narrative:

- *"I haven't understood the meaning of this expression _____ ?"* **Or**
- *"Why does the author write the word _____ ten times in the first five pages of this narrative?"* **Or even**
- **What is the hidden message which the novelist wishes to convey in the opening paragraphs of the narrative?**

The Word Master is not limited to explaining difficult words, but must be given confidence to either go to the library or to meet his teacher at the end of a lecture and use an EFL English to-English Dictionary. Actually, all of the Role Sheets have to be recorded in the target language due to the fact that all these Role Sheets are in reality comments which will direct the students' talks. In all, the WM may be requested to not only pay close attention to these literary devices but also give details about their meaning in the narrative at hand.

v. As a final point, we have formed a last role called the Culture Collector (CC). This role emerged due to students' cultural underpinnings and historical backgrounds of some of the stories which we read. We believe to have one student collect cultural issues later on in the semester will enhance an additional level of both attention and difficulty to the debate.

Method

The resulting questions were investigated: (1) What are students' beliefs regarding the practice of manipulating Literature Circles by means of fiction? (2) In association with the Literature Circles roles, do students come across a disagreement in the most pleasing, most/least appropriate for literature learning? As 50% of their semester academic grade, students were compelled to read from an ordered set of three books selected by the teacher/researcher. The list of books was meant to exemplify a compilation of genres, likings, levels of awareness, in addition to prevailing background knowledge at a learner fitting amount of vocabulary skill.[17] Each week once students have both read a selected set of chapters and participated in the debate, they were asked to complete a 6-point Likert scale on an appraisal of their opinion concerning the admiration, ability, anxiety, and benefit meant for literature study of participating in a specific Literature Circle role.

Results and Discussion

In response to research question (1), participants showed great interest in the use of Literature Circle Groups within classroom settings. By adopting this new type of teaching, it was clearly identified through in-class discussions that autonomous self-study goals improved greatly due to the fact that collaboration with peers in these interactive, post-reading tasks helped learners to have a very positive perception towards both English and literature.

The second feature involving students' feedback is students' level of proficiency. On the whole, the students with low level of proficiency consent that a LC approach relieved their understanding of the lecture content. Since students with low level of aptitude have restricted access to foreign literature, it was practically not possible for them to express their views as recommended by the introduction of this new style that recent investigation has introduced. If they cannot know the content, it will be difficult for them to link it to their personal knowledge.

Conclusion

This paper has examined an innovative approach of employing EFL in teaching literature to stimulate the group interaction between language learners. The recommended beliefs with this paper was that, the literature circles as a reasonable constituent of the university curriculum can offer a stimulating way to encourage student participation in extensive reading using cooperative learning and collaborative work.

In conclusion, regardless of the students' academic level, literature circles have functioned as an attractive means of engaging students to read a large amount outside of class; to write a lot so as to be ready for the group discussions; to speak in English more than usual within their groups; to enthusiastically connect passages inside a text to confirm their points of view; in addition to ask each other with the aim of guessing what the text truly denotes.

Endnotes

[1] Literary competence requires consent that language can be exploited in a purposeful way to generate figurative connections that "light up" our self-awareness. It necessitates a fairly refined familiarity of the specific type of language used in a particular text, in addition to knowledge of specific literary styles. In all, one can state that literary competence calls for an evident level of linguistic skill.

[2] For ample details see Furr, M. (2004). *How and Why to Use EFL Literature Circles.*

[3] According to Slavin, R. E. (1990) cooperative learning is an educational approach which aims to organize classroom activities into academic and social learning experiences. There is much more to Cooperative Learning than merely arranging students into groups, and it has been described as *"structuring positive interdependence."* Students must work in groups to complete tasks collectively toward academic goals. Unlike individual learning, which can be competitive in nature, students learning cooperatively can capitalize on one another's resources and skills (asking one another for information, evaluating one another's ideas, monitoring one another's work, etc.). Furthermore, the teacher's role changes from giving information to facilitating students' learning. Everyone succeeds when the group succeeds.

[4] Collaborative learning refers to methodologies and environments wherein learners engage in a common task where each individual depends on and is accountable to each other. These include both face-to-face conversations and computer discussions (online forums, chat rooms, etc.). Methods for examining collaborative learning processes include conversation analysis and statistical discourse analysis. Collaborative learning is heavily rooted in Vygotsky's views that there exists an inherent social nature of learning which is shown through his theory of zone of proximal development. (For further details, see Lee, C.D. and Smagorinsky, P. (Eds.). (2000).)

[5] A book discussion club is a set of people who gather to talk about a book or books that they have read in addition to express their judgments, cares, feelings and drawbacks. It is repeatedly described merely a book club, an expression that is also employed to explain a book sales club. Other commonly used terms to depict a book debate club embrace both reading group, book group, and book discussion group. Book discussion clubs can gather in personal house, libraries, bookstores, online forums, and in cafes or restaurants. Another custom also related to book discussion, common reading program or common read, includes institutions persuading their associates to talk about choose books in group settings; common reading programs are for the most part connected with instructive institutions supporting their students to maintain book conversation seminars. (Slezak, Ellen, 2000).

[6] A comprehensive account is given in Daniels, H. (2002). *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs and Reading Groups* (2nd Edition ed.). Portland, Maine: Stenhouse.

[7] One word of caution is needed at this point. As a extensive term assignment, an employment of a critical approach is more efficient illustration of explanation wherein a clear body of thought (i.e. a thought) is shaped onto a literary work with the purpose of clarifying its meaning.

[8] See Mark Furr, M. (2004). In *How and Why to Use EFL Literature Circles.*

[9] Nunan, D. (1992). *Research Methods in Language Learning*. New York, NY: CUP.

[10] In our research teachers and students agreed to deal with literary works according to the official programme of the Department of English

[11] We are thinking, for example, of Kasten, W. (1995). *Literature Circles for the Teaching of Literature-Based Reading.* In M. Radencich, & L. McKay, *Flexible Grouping for Literacy in the Elementary Grades* (pp. 66-80) which develops an interesting exposition of the major ideas related to LCGs.

[12] Nunan, D. (1992). *Research Methods in Language Learning*. New York, NY: CUP.

[13] See Waring & Takahashi (2000: 11)

[14] See Vygotsy, LS. (1978) in *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*

[15] A comprehensive account is given in Daniels, H. (2002). *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs and Reading Groups* (2nd Edition ed.). Portland, Maine: Stenhouse.

---

[16] The summarizer is studying the narrative for general comprehension instead of studying literary language or devices.
[17] See Nation, 2001.

References

- Burda, K. (2000). "Living and Learning: A four-year journey into literature circles". *Primary Voices K-6* 9 (1): 17–22.
- Chiu, M. M. (2000). Group Problem Solving Processes: Social interactions and individual actions. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior*, 30, (1), 27-50.600-631.
- DaLie, S.O. (2001). *Students becoming real readers: Literature circles in high school English classes*, in Ericson, B.O. (Ed.), *Teaching Reading in High School English Classes*. Urbana: NCTE, 84-100.
- Daniels, H. & Bizar, M. (1998). *Methods That Matter: Six Structures For Best Practice Classrooms*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Daniels, H. & Steineke, N. (2004). *Mini-Lessons for Literature Circles*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Daniels, H. (1994). *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom*. Markham: Pembroke Publishers Ltd.
- Daniels, H. (2002). *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs and Reading Groups*. Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Day, J.P.; Spiegel, LS; McLellan, J & Brown, B. (2002) *Moving Forward with Literature Circles*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books
- Fall, R.; Webb, N.; Chudowsky, N. (2000). "Group discussion and large-scale language arts assessment: Effects on students' comprehension". *American Educational Research Journal* 37 (4): 911–942.
- Fountas, I.C. & Pinnell, G. (2001). *Guiding Readers and Writers (Grades 3-6): Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Golun, J. (1988). *Focus on Collaborative Learning*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Harste, J., Short, K. and Burke, C. (1988). *Creating Classrooms for Authors: The Reading-Writing Connection*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Hill, B.C., Johnson, N.J., & Schlick Noe, K.L. (1995). *Literature Circles and Response*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- Hill, B.C., Schlick Noe, K.L. & Johnson, N.J. (2001). *Literature Circles Resource Guide*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- Hill, B.C., Schlick Noe, K.L., and King, J.A. (2003). *Literature Circles in Middle School: One Teacher's Journey*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English. (1996). *Standards for the English Language Arts*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Kagan, S. (1990). The structural approach to cooperative learning. *Educational Leadership*, 47(4), 12-15.
- Kasten, W. (1995). *Literature Circles for the Teaching of Literature-Based Reading.* In M. Radencich, & L. McKay, *Flexible Grouping for Literacy in the Elementary Grades (pp. 66-80)*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Keegan, S. & Shrake, K. (1991). Literature study groups: An alternative to ability grouping. *Reading Teacher* (April).
- Lee, C.D. and Smagorinsky, P. (Eds.).(2000). *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

- McNair, T.; Nations, S. (2000). "Final Reflections: How Fairview became a School where Literature Circles could Thrive". *Primary Voices: K-6* 9 (1): 34–38.
- Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon (1999) *Getting Started with Literature Circles*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.)
- Samway, K.D. and Whang, G. (1996) *Literature Study Circles in a Multicultural Classroom*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.
- Samway, K.D., Whang, G., Cade, C., Gamil, M., Lubandina, M., & Phonmmachanh, K. (1991) Reading the skeleton, the heart, and the brain of a book: Students' perspectives on literature study circles. *Reading Teacher* (November).
- Schlick Noe, K.L. & Johnson, N.J. (1999). *Getting Started With Literature Circles*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- Short, K., and Pierce, K.M. (1990). *Talking About Books: Creating Literate Communities*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Slavin, R. E. (1990). *Cooperative Learning*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Slezak, Ellen, Ed. (2000). *The Book Group Book* (Third Ed.). Chicago: Chicago Review Press.
- Smagorinsky, P. (1996). *Standards in Practice Grades 9-12*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Spear, K. (1993). *Peer Response Groups in Action: Writing Together in Secondary Schools*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Vygotsy, LS. (1978) *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard
- Waring, R. & Takahashi, S. (2000) *The Why and How of Using Graded Readers.* Tokyo: Oxford
- Webb, N.M (1997). "Assessing students in small collaborative groups". *Theory into Practice* 36 (4): 205–213.
- Webb, N.M. (1995). "Group Collaboration in Assessment: Multiple Objectives, Processes, and Outcomes". *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 17 (2): 239–261.

Webliography

- Furr, M. (2004). *How and Why to Use EFL Literature Circles*. [Retrieved: 23/12/2014], from Welcome to EFL Literature Circles: <http://www.eflliteraturecircles.com>

Annexes (All are adapted from Harvey Daniels' *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs and Reading Groups* 2nd Edition. Stenhouse: 2002)
Annex 1: Summarizer Role "SMR"
Annex 2: Connector Role "CNT"
Annex 3: Word Master Role "WM"
Annex 4: Group Discussion Leader "GDL"
Annex 5: Culture Collector "CC"
Annex 1: Summarizer Role « SM » (Literature Circles)
Name:_____
Story: _____
Connector Role:
The Connector's job is to help group members make connections between the reading and the world outside. The Connector should think about how the story relates to his/her own experiences or to the experiences of friends or family members. Also, the Connector can talk about how this story is connected to other readings or things that they have heard about. Here are some questions to begin discussing connections between the reading and the world outside.

- **What has happened in your life that is similar to some of the things that are happening to the people in the story?**
- **Do any of the characters remind you of people that you know? How? Why?**
- **Do any of the characters help you to understand the thinking of real people that you know?**
- **Have you ever had thoughts or feelings similar to those of any of the characters in the story?**

- **Does anything in the story remind you of something in the news or something that you have read?**
- **Some connections I have found between this reading and other people, places,**
- **experiences, events...**

1._____
_____
_____
2._____
_____
_____

Annex 2: Connector Role "CNT"
Name: _____
Story: _____
Connector Role:
The Connector's job is to help group members make connections between the reading and the world outside. The Connector should think about how the story relates to his/her own experiences or to the experiences of friends or family members. Also, the Connector can talk about how this story is connected to other readings or things that they have heard about. Here are some questions to begin discussing connections between the reading and the world outside.

- **What has happened in your life that is similar to some of the things that are happening to the people in the story?**
- **Do any of the characters remind you of people that you know? How? Why? Do any of the characters help you to understand the thinking of real people that you know?**
- **Have you ever had thoughts or feelings similar to those of any of the characters in the story?**
- **Does anything in the story remind you of something in the news or something that you have read?**

Some connections I have found between this reading and other people, places, experiences, events......
1/_____
_____
2/_____
_____
_____

Annex 3: Word Master Role "WM"
Name:
_____
Story:
_____
Word Master Role:
The Word Master's job is to look carefully through the reading and to notice the words and phrases that you do not know or are not sure about. There may be many new words for you, but part of being a good reader means that you know which words you can skip over and return to later, and which words you need to know to understand the reading. If you find words that you do not know, use a highlighter or pencil check in the margin to mark them while you are reading. Later, you may look them up in the dictionary. Please look carefully for the words that really stand out in the reading. These may be words that are repeated often, words used in an unusual way, or words that are particularly important to the meaning of the story. The Word Master's job is to choose 5 words (only five!) that s/he thinks are important and necessary to understand the reading and to prepare the answers to these questions for each of the five words:

- **Where is the word found? (page and place on the page)**
- **What does the word mean? Explain in SIMPLE English.**
- **How is the word used in this sentence?**
- **Why is this word important in the reading?**

Please write the words and the page numbers below, but you can use the back of the paper or notebook paper if you need more space to explain your findings.

Word Page	Paragraph	Definition and reason for choosing this word

Annex 4: Group Discussion Leader Role "GDL"

Name: _____

Story: _____

Group Discussion Leader:

The Discussion Leader's job is to prepare some questions to begin the discussion and keep the discussion active. make sure each group member participates in the discussion. Usually the best discussion questions come from your own thoughts, feelings, and questions as you read. Either as you read or when you have finished reading today's assignment, list some of your questions below. You may also use some of the general questions listed on the bottom of this page. Possible discussion questions or topics:

- **How did you feel when you were reading this?**
- **What did you think about this reading?**
- **Would you summarize what happened? (ask the summarizer)**
- **What questions did you have as you were reading?**
- **Did anything in this section of the book surprise you?**
- **Which character in this story did you like best? Why?**
- **What do you think will happen next? (to be used for a longer story).**

Annex 5: Culture Collector "CC"

Name: _____

Story: _____

Culture Collector:

In this role, the Culture Collector's task is to gather educational and useful data connected with the specific activity to be dealt with. This function emerged as a result of students' cultural keystones as well as wide-ranging backgrounds of some of the stories which groups of students read. Having a student collect artistic and resourceful issues during the semester will trigger learners' attention, knowledge and appreciation throughout the discussions.